

2014

# Strategies for Creating a Unique Culture in Preparation for Campus Relocation: A Process Evaluation

Dana Ague  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Dana C. Ague

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### Review Committee

Dr. Delmus Williams, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty  
Dr. Carol Philips, Committee Member, Education Faculty  
Dr. Jeanne Iorio, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2014

Abstract

Strategies for Creating a Unique Culture in Preparation for Campus Relocation:

A Process Evaluation

by

Dana C. Ague

MA, Crown College, 2007

BS, Crown College, 2004

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

December 2014

## Abstract

The relationship between a college and its founding church changed as the college developed its liberal arts programs and leaders sought to create an independent new culture from the church. Using Clark's organizational saga framework, the purpose of this study was to assess the effects of culture change on this institution. The research questions examined strategies that leaders used to transition the campus to its new reality. A formative, qualitative, process-oriented evaluation was used to collect interview data from 22 institutional leaders and other key stakeholders; data were also collected from institutional documents. The data were then coded and analyzed and themes were developed that led to reported outcomes. The results indicated that the institutional identity of the institution is still in transition and cannot be fully defined until the new culture is firmly established. The results also indicated the importance of strong institutional leadership that is prepared to include stakeholders in implementing and sustaining change. Stakeholders provided the following recommendations to solidify the culture change and the identity: maintain community, receive consistent communication, apply institutional dialogue in decision making, continue momentum and maintain balance, and engage the external community. Social benefits from the study include the students themselves, who benefit from an improved institutional culture that leads to better opportunities for educational engagement. These opportunities increase knowledge retention and produce more productive members of society who better influence societal change after graduation. The results of the study are being reported to campus leadership for their use in the continuing development of campus culture.

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## Section 1: The Problem

### **Introduction**

Both seminal change and change literature theorists note the role that leaders play in organizational change. Imperative to sustaining the change process, transformational leaders assess the current culture, determine its readiness for change, create a vision through sense making, align institutional values, decipher cultural artifacts, communicate clarity, address resistant, establish coalitions, embrace collaboration, and focus on individuals and relationships (Erwin, 2009; Karp & Tveteraas-Helgo, 2009; McRoy & Gibbs, 2009; Morin, 2010; Niemann, 2010) . Leaders alone cannot change an organization. Various other institutional stakeholders also play a part in the process because they must embrace the vision and values of the institution, agree to engage in collaborative processes, and provide feedback to leaders relating to how well the change is going to maintain the essence and identity of the organization throughout the change process.

The purpose of this study was to access how one institution was creating a change in culture to prepare for campus relocation. A long standing relationship between the higher education institution and a local religious organization was no longer sustainable in its current form; therefore, the college needed to find a new base of operation on which to establish an independent identity for itself and a culture separate from the church. In this study, I determined the strategies that leaders were using at a single institution to produce culture change in preparation for a campus transition and to sustain the essence of the institution through the transition and after the move while adjusting to its new

situation. The results of the study will be distributed to institutional leaders as an evaluation tool to help them interpret the impact of these change initiatives throughout the organization.

### **Definition of the Problem**

In this process evaluation, I addressed the steps that a college was making to create a unique identity to prepare for and sustain a seamless move to a new campus. I evaluated the ease with which the campus made this transition. Study findings can be used as an internal assessment for institutional leaders on the process used to make this transition in the life of the college, as well as its impact on the life of the college. In preparation for the study, I collected data from internal administrative documents such as college reports, timelines, and accreditation assessments and drew on interviews of key constituents who held knowledge about the history and interior life of the institution. Those interviewed included administrators, faculty, staff, students, leaders of the church who were instrumental in building and developing the college, and others who were identified as the study developed.

The campus move was being made because the existing collaborative relationship between the college (hereafter referred to as The College) and the church (hereafter referred to as The Church) which nurtured it from its inception has been determined to be no longer sustainable, leading to a separation of the two. Previously, the property that The College used was owned by The Church. While this relationship had worked for nearly 40 years, The College has outgrown the current campus and needed separate facilities in order to expand and sustain itself going forward. Likewise, The Church

needed the space which housed the campus to expand its ministry opportunities into the future.

The College continues to grow, building record enrollments each year, mandating that it find additional space for dormitories, classrooms, and other support facilities including an expanded library, bookstore, and its own athletic venue. In addition, sharing property with The Church was no longer deemed appropriate for either The College or The Church. The Church and The College also shared support services including food service and technology services, and this was also proving more difficult. The College had outgrown its affiliation with The Church, and was engaging in the process of creating a unique identity apart from The Church's organization so that it might continue to grow and prosper.

### **Rationale**

#### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

The College was a private nonprofit, 4-year, baccalaureate level liberal arts college in the Western United States. The College was established in 1970 by a group of vested individuals as an extension of the ministries of The Church with the purpose of offering a liberal arts educational experience. Over the years, The College has drawn leadership and resources directly from the congregation and by attracting donors committed to this outreach. However, the relationship between The College and The Church has changed over the years as administrators and faculty were recruited from outside, as students from outside the congregation entered the school, and external reviews suggested that changes be made. While both The College and The Church value

and want to maintain cordial relations, it has been determined that it is best that the two separate and that a new basis for cooperation be developed. As part of the separation process, The College changed its name in 2005 which signified an initial step away from ties based on a subordinate relationship with The Church and towards the creation of its own identity.

Since 1984, the school has maintained regional accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC, personal communication, December 2005). The institution offers bachelors programs for both traditional and nontraditional learners. Traditional students choose from 10 bachelor of arts degrees including Biblical studies, Christian ministries, communication, English, history/social science, human development, interdisciplinary studies, music, worship leading/musical theater, and psychology or from six bachelor of science degrees including aviation, biology, business, business management, kinesiology, and liberal studies (WASC, personal communication, December 2005). Nontraditional students can choose among bachelor's degrees in business management, Christian ministries, and human development. The faculty consists of 18 full-time members and 59 part-time instructors. The institution employs an additional 41 full-time and 17 part-time staff members to support the work of the faculty. The nontraditional programs include both face-to-face adult education and online offerings, that could account in part for the large percentage of part-time faculty employed (Institute of Education Sciences, 2014).

As of fall 2012, the total enrollment of The College was 742 students, including 373 women (51% of the population) and 369 men (49% of the population; Institute of

Education Sciences, 2014). The College reported that the enrollment for traditional students, those ages 18-22, was 488 students, while the nontraditional student body, including those studying online, was 254 students. The majority of students (636) were enrolled full-time; whereas, only 106 students were considered part-time. The single largest ethnic student group reported at The College was White/Caucasian (40%), but other ethnic groups were also well represented in the student body. Hispanics and Black or African American students were reported to be the second largest groups (15%) each. Other races or ethnic groups who self-reported in the enrollment breakdowns included American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, two or more races, and nonresident aliens. Approximately 21% of students chose not to disclose their ethnicity.

Before the location change could occur, leaders facilitated a transition in culture in order to establish a new framework under which the institution could operate independently as opposed to the one based on the previous close collaboration. The College, having been established as an outgrowth of the ministry of The Church, has been closely identified with it from its inception. The separation in cultures was critical so college stakeholders, including the students served by The College, could begin imagining The College as a unique entity by redefining it as separate from the ministry and its vision and values.

A review of WASC reports, publically available, further illustrates the problems facing The College since its inception. For years, the institution has found working under the confines of The Church ministry restrictive as it attempted to establish itself as an

institution of higher learning. Part of this internal struggle has been because The College has shared leaders with The Church. Numerous WASC reports over the years indicated that there have been repeated and consistent challenges that The College faced in developing a unique identity, while sharing the values and commitment of The Church that created it (Letting, personal communication, February 26, 2007; WASC, personal communication, December 2005; WASC, personal communication, September 2006; WASC, personal communication, January 2008).

Over the life of the institution, the organization has lacked a reliable leadership team that was committed to its development and success. The issues began to surface the year before The College received official accreditation through WASC in 1983. WASC made a recommendation that the institution elect its own, permanent president to ensure continuity. Again in 1985 and 1989, WASC encouraged the organization to assign a high priority to filling all leadership positions. WASC warned The College once more in 1997 that it needed to hire and maintain a full-time president in order to comply with the association's standards (The Office of Institutional Research, personal communication, September 2006). The accreditation body then expressed its concern at the sudden resignation of the institution's president in 2003 and again in 2005 before placing the institution on "show cause" in 2006, requiring the institution to provide evidence as to why it should continue to be accredited by WASC despite The College's inability to meet WASC standards (Wolf, personal communication, July 6, 2006). The lack of consistent executive leadership was only one reason for the sanctions levied on the institution at the time.



Declining enrollments due to a lack of funding and donor support were also issues that plagued the institution throughout its existence, coming to a head during the early 2000s. The revolving and unstable leadership trend did not just affect the identity of the institution, but had a negative impact on student enrollment and alumni relations as reflected in donor dollars. WASC reports also warned the institution that it had to create its own revenue stream separate from that of The Church in order to create a self-sustaining organization (WASC, personal communication, September 2006; Wolf, personal communication, July 6, 2006).

Throughout the course of the study, I referenced many types of institutional documents that help to establish and demonstrate a base for the problem and to reveal the institutional components that led to the change and contributed to elements that are developing in the new culture. Because culture includes a unique set of beliefs, attitudes, and operating norms in every institution, and because it is an abstract concept that cannot easily be measured by numbers or statistical information, documenting the organizational history in this way was required to lay the foundation for conversations about the emerging culture and its impact on the emerging institution. The nuances of culture are not easily accessible from public data but are revealed in studying internal documents and talking to people within the institution. These sources reflect the nature of the organization and its future prospects, while pointing out potential strengths and concerns that should be taken into account as change occurs.

### **Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature**

Culture is often referred to as a set of shared values, beliefs, and meanings that depict and define an organization or climate (Connolly, James, & Beales, 2011). Culture can also include stories, rituals, and ceremonies identified with the people and processes of an institution. Finch, Burrell, Walker, Rahim, and Dawson (2010) argued that organizational culture might be one of the most critical elements in understanding an organization. It enables an institution to grow, expand its reach and reputation, and establish longevity in the higher education system while feeding into the marketing brand that is projected to the public. When pressures from both the internal and external environments require an institution to rethink its system of shared values, beliefs, and how it makes meaning, institutional leaders must understand the organizational change process. In the case of The College, internal factors such as enrollment growth and shifts in leadership along with external factors, including the end of a collaborative relationship and the institution's relationship with its accreditors, require executive leaders to implement effective change processes. These changes must produce a new and independent way of making meaning and sharing beliefs in order to sustain the campus relocation and future of the institution.

Changes in culture often fail because of their complex nature. Decker et al. (2012) noted that failure rates for organizational change implementation and sustainability are as high as 93%. Changing culture can be even more complex because culture is not a tangible aspect of any institution and is hard to measure. Because culture is a set of shared values and beliefs fashioned by individual members of an institution,

leaders may find it hard to define the current aspects of the culture if stakeholder turnover is high (Decker et al., 2012). Changing culture requires changing the vision of the people of the institution and, to be successful, must be accepted by the constituents of the institution and internalized by those operating within it. Creating sustainable cultural change requires decisive decision making and strategic planning led by the executive leadership (Decker et al., 2012). Leaders' involvement is especially important when the current culture has been built within an environment with high leadership turnover and founded on the premise that there exists a relationship with a parent organization that will no longer be sustained.

Whatever the change effort may entail, shifts in the external environment require an increasing number of institutions to create new cultures in order to sustain them. Leaders seeking these types of innovative and all-encompassing changes can review this study and draw parallels between their institutions and the change processes implemented at The College to create a new culture that includes the essentials of what came before but has evolved into something materially different. Where applicable, these leaders can take the ideas documented during the change effort and use them to inform their processes going forward. While I analyzed transition to an entirely new campus, that represents a more significant level of change than most institutions ever face, the processes used in making the transition and the findings illustrated within the case can be instructive to other postsecondary institutions seeking to make changes in how they do business and the image they present. Because the magnitude of change at The College was so large, the enormity of the transformations taking place can amplify the importance

of understanding change and how it affects the cultures of institutions and the sagas that change creates on other campuses. The results of the study may also reinforce or clarify the steps and actions that institutions take in producing change at all levels.

In rationalizing the basis for the problem addressed in this study, I examined public accreditation reports for The College (WASC, personal communication, December 2005; WASC, personal communication, September 2006; WASC, personal communication, January 2008). These reports provided guidelines and suggestions for helping the campus relocation provided by outside experts charged with assessing The College's program and the organization that sent them to campus. This culture change and campus transition will not be feasible without first addressing smaller changes including securing stable executive leadership that will create a vision, implement boundaries of operation between The Church and The College, identify assessment practices for both the academic and business areas of the institution, and assess the changes to be made.

External factors such as accreditation requirements, governmental mandates, and pressures from public entities continue to affect the rate of change required by institutions. Thompson (2010) noted that when change occurs more rapidly in the external environment than in the internal environment, the existence of the organization can be threatened. To deal with the internal struggles while adjusting to meet new needs at the speed of change experienced in the external environment, institutions must be prepared to implement systemic change as required throughout the entire institution. Often this requires a change in the cultural elements of the organization as the

stakeholders shift their beliefs and values to meet a new and more diverse population. To keep up with external demands, the institutional improvements must be continuous and embedded in the fabric of The College or university. These types of double-loop learning processes, to use a term coined by Argyis and Schon (1974), cannot be arbitrarily instituted in a short period of time by eliminating elements that hinder the capacity to change at the speed required. Instead, the change must proactively evolve inside the organization, while building on the organization's strengths and allowing the dysfunctional elements that slow the rate of change to atrophy over time.

### **Definitions**

*Organizational identity:* The ability of the individual to relate and commit to the organization so that individual's goals and objectives reflect those of the collective whole within the institution (Jones & Hamilton-Volpe, 2010)

*Organizational saga:* "A collective understanding of a unique accomplishment based on historical exploits of a formal organization, offering strong normative bonds within and outside the organization" (Clark, 1972, p. 178).

*Sense making:* The process whereby individuals assess both retrospectively and prospectively about their interpretation of reality (Sonenshein, 2010)

*Values congruence:* The ability for leaders to align the values of the change initiative to that of the organization as a whole and to the individual employees. The level of value congruence often correlates with the sustainability of the proposed change (Burnes & Jackson, 2011; Lamm, Gordon, & Purser, 2010).

### **Significance**

All institutions face pressure to change, both internally and externally, that can affect the culture of the organization and how individuals operate within that system. The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how The College was moving to control and shape change in its culture to create a unique identity for itself in preparation for, and in the process of, making a move to a new campus, a transitional event in the life of the institution. The results of the study will provide the institution with an assessment plan to help leaders determine how effective they have been in producing sustainable change and implementing a new culture, while suggesting potential strategies for sustaining the changes made as The College moves forward.

### **Guiding/Research Question**

In this study, I addressed the steps that the constituents, led by institutional leaders, were taking to create a unique culture as they prepared to relocate the campus from its current location to a nearby community. The purpose of the study was to discover how leaders broached change initiatives, created buy-in across stakeholders groups, and sustained the changes in order to stabilize the new culture. I also aimed to determine the degree to which the change process being used and the changes that occurred within The College reflected Clark's (1972) model or the management of the organizational saga. Current research on creating changes in culture in the course of systematic restructuring focuses on the impact generated by institutional mergers, but scholars have not addressed changes in culture warranted by the break up or separation of two entities as described in this study.

In the course of the study, the essential question addressed was the following:

What strategies are leaders using to create cultural change and prepare for the campus transition? Specific questions answered included the following

2. What challenges did leaders anticipate in preparing for the change process?
3. What plans did leaders create in anticipation of the challenges they expected?
4. What role do key stakeholders play in the continuing operations of The College, and how are they involved in the decision making process in the course of the move?
5. What changes do internal institutional stakeholders perceive to be necessary to successfully change the culture?
6. How do the changes permeate the institution across stakeholder groups?
7. What kind of resistance to the anticipated changes developed, and how did leaders address this kind of resistance?
8. How is information about the status of the organization and progress made toward resolving changes communicated to staff, students and other stakeholders, and what was the effect of the communication effort?
9. What changes occurred (are occurring) in the transition from what existed to what is being created?
10. What challenges remain after the change process is complete that may affect new change initiatives in the future?

## **Review of the Literature**

Early literature regarding institutional change was often categorized using two trains of thought: planned versus emergent. Planned change theorists such as Lewin (1947) stated that, to produce sustainable change, institutional leaders must control and focus the change itself. However, that view has changed. Subsequent change theorists argued that change cannot be fully controlled and occurs constantly within an organization (Minzberg, 2003; Pettigrew & Whip, 1992, Schein, 1992; Senge, 1990). Leaders must learn how to adapt to changes as they occur in order to sustain institutions. Scholars studying institutional and culture change have noted elements that can contribute to sustainable change. These elements include understanding the current culture, assessing for flexibility and adaptability, creating a sense of urgency, casting a vision, identifying artifacts and symbols, encouraging communication and collaboration, addressing resistance, and engendering commitment.

### **Theoretical Framework**

**Planned change.** Organizational change events in the life of an institution can be planned or can just emerge as either a challenge to the program or as an unforeseen opportunity. Planned change, as defined by Lewin (1947), is a proactive model for facilitating change. According to Lewin, all organizations function in one of two states: stability or flux. The tension created by these states work against each other with one always overpowering the other at least temporarily. An organization cannot be both stable and in complete flux at the same time. Either the organization will be in a stable state of equilibrium, defined as maintaining the status quo, that is the state in which most



institutions normally find themselves, or it will be in a state of change. However, it cannot be in either state all of the time. Organizations that sit still eventually lose out to competing organizations and values, while those always in flux tire or eventually fall apart because they cannot control dissident elements within them. Lewin and others suggested that most organizations naturally seek stability, but can be made to embrace or at least to accept change. In order to produce change, the organization needs to become destabilized and increase the level of fluctuation (Agboola & Salawu, 2011). Lewin developed the change model around three steps: unfreezing, moving, and refreezing to explain the impact of this kind of fluctuation.

The unfreezing process starts by reducing power exerted by the forces that maintain the stability of the current organization culture by presenting information and data that demonstrates to the institution that a problem exists that needs to be addressed. In a change model, Kotter (1996) referred to as the start of the unfreezing process as creating a sense of urgency that often results from changes that begin outside of the organization or that are not controlled by the organization (e.g., some external threat to the financial well-being of the organization, the hiring of a new supervisor, the introduction of a new product line, or the addition of new staff that has not previously been enculturated to the organization).

Leaders must first address the existence of old behaviors in order to start the change process. Lewin (1947) argued that change cannot be enacted until old behaviors are found to be unstable and patterns of belief are destabilized through the unfreezing process. This freeing of old cultural understandings paves the way for the successful

adoption of new behaviors and beliefs. In the case of The College, the unfreezing process resulted first from external factors including the stipulations of the WASC accreditation reports. Recommendations were given to The College by the accrediting body to create a new identity that would be measurably separate from that of The Church. Once the school began to officially establish clear lines of separation, leaders soon realized that, in order to fully separate The College's identity and its operation from those of The Church, a campus relocation was necessary. In this scenario, the unfreezing process was first initiated by external factors but then established themselves internally as well.

Before new behaviors and beliefs can be stabilized, the moving phase of Lewin's (1947) model must take place. To move the organization to new behaviors, leaders must show how the new aspects of the culture are superior to the old practices, behaviors, and beliefs. This can be done by decree, but it is more effective if it is done in a way that will offer stakeholders the opportunity to buy in to the proposed change (Lawler & Sillitoe, 2010). Without these essential aspects of the moving process, factions can develop and resistance to the change initiative will increase. For The College, leaders included collaborative efforts and open communications in order to encourage movement leading to the changes proposed. The strategic planning committee consisted of constituents from across The College, including the executive leadership team, faculty, staff, and students (Office of Institutional Research, personal communication, January 2008). In order to close the feedback loop, executive leadership must establish open lines of communication with their teams to both move information down the hierarchical

structure and to acquire information about concerns being raised and issues that developed as the mechanics of the change are being discussed.

The refreezing process entails the reinforcement and stabilization of the new behaviors and beliefs to make them an integral part of the institution's systems of operation. The refreezing process is expected to deter people from slipping back into old cultural norms and helps make the desired change permanent. The refreezing process for the culture of The College has started now that the campus transition has taken place. As stakeholders become accustomed to their surroundings and settle into their unique new space, the rate of change will diminish.

Theorists (Minzberg, 2003; Pettigrew & Whip, 1992, Schein, 1992; Senge, 1990) have argued that Lewin's model is not sustainable because institutions do not operate in a vacuum apart from external factors that affect the change process while it is occurring. The scholars have challenged the refreezing aspect of the planned change model in that locking or freezing in a new culture may be difficult given the increasing level of fluctuation occurring in both the internal and external environments. While aspects of Lewin's (1947) change model may be present during the cultural change process at The College, this model does not provide the most effective framework in which to assess the changes occurring in The College. Because cultural change involves abstract factors that are not easily controlled such as espoused values, behavioral norms, and underlying assumptions, as defined by Schein (1992), a planned change model such as Lewin's needs to be supplemented if it is to be used to explain the changes occurring at the institution.

**Emergent change.** Emergent change is characterized as being constant and intertwined with internal and external factors that affect the institution during the change process. The success of the change process is linked to how quickly institutions can assess the need to adapt and then respond to the changes in both the internal and external environments (Mintzberg, 2003). Environmental factors cannot be separated from the change process because they are constantly affecting different aspects of the institution, to include enrollment trends, finances, government statutes, and related issues.

Pettigrew and Whipp (1991) presented a model for approaching change that is aligned with emergent change theory. The basic components of the model include assessing the environment, leading change, connecting strategy and operational change, balancing human resource aspects, and maintaining coherence throughout the change process. In assessing the environment, institutions often use analytical processes including the Political, Economic, Sociological, and Technological (PEST) evaluation or Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis tools. These tools help organizations assess the environmental factors that can affect the institution both positively and negatively. Leading change involves incremental and deliberate actions that imbed new practices and policies into the everyday world of the institution (Lawler & Sillitoe, 2010). Considering human resource aspects allows leaders to factor the human component into the change process. Behavior can be unpredictable and planning for elements of resistance and trouble shooting is an essential part of the change process. Lastly, the leaders' consistency of purpose and practice as the environment changes brings the change into focus and enables the organization to stabilize the new culture.

Change does not occur in a vacuum but affects all parts of an institution. Senge (1990) captured aspects incorporated within emergent theory and added systems thinking to the equation. Like many of the previous theorists cited, Senge believed that all institutional change occurs in a dynamic environment. This environment is a distinct system, not bounded and definable on its own, but with moving elements that continuously affect the change process. In a dynamic environment, all elements of the system keep changing as the change initiative being implemented progresses. Senge claimed that change in any part of the system affects other parts of the system as well. Senge argued that believing change could be produced in an isolated environment or attempts to do so would result in failure. Institutional change cannot be limited to one area of the organization. Change in one part of the system affects the whole system. Intentional systemic change can be hard to control since organizations are constantly in a cycle of dynamic, spontaneous change that can affect the intentional change process.

These ideas of change were expanded upon by other researchers. Kotter (1996) later refined and elaborated on Senge's (1990) view of change management and this view was further refined and elaborated on by other authors, namely Lawler and Sillitoe (2010). Kotter incorporated elements tied to the emergent theory of change and created a model that is used in the business world (Erwin, 2009). Kotter's model includes eight steps for starting, producing, and entrenching institutional cultural change. These steps are

1. Establish a sense of urgency
2. Create a guiding coalition

3. Establish a shared vision and strategy
4. Communicate the change vision
5. Empower employees for broader-based action
6. Generate short-term wins
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change
8. Anchor the new approaches in the culture (Kotter, 1996)

Establishing a sense of urgency is about engaging in an open dialogue that shows the institution why change is necessary (Kotter, 1996). To demonstrate that change is necessary, leaders often need a team of influential members of the institution to help communicate the message. A clear vision, created by leaders, can help constituents understand what they need to generate appropriate changes. To ensure that the organization understands the vision, leaders must continuously communicate the vision through problem solving and decision making. In any change process, resistance will occur. Leaders must prepare to neutralize these obstacles by continually checking for barriers. When creating the plan for change, leaders should build in short-term wins when benchmarking towards full implementation. Assessment during the change process is important, and leaders should set goals that build momentum into and through the process. Lastly, anchoring the change ensures that changes become embedded within the culture of the institution and endure.

Emergent change theories also developed from political models. Baldrige (1971) offered a political or conflict based model for institutional structure and decision making. In the model, previously accepted bureaucratic (formal organization) and

collegial (community of academics) models no longer addressed decision making issues in the modern university. Baldrige used New York University as a backdrop to illustrate a political model that accepted conflict as a normal process resulting from the fact that institutions were made up of divergent interests groups and subcultures. Due to variation in perspective, decision making consisted of negotiation and the application of political influence. Various interest groups—both internal and external—exerted pressure on the decision making process so that policies were created as conflict arose through negotiation and compromise. This model asserted the importance of all stakeholder groups in the institution in producing change that was sustainable. It is from this model that Clark (1972) developed the notion of the organizational saga.

**Burton R. Clark: the organizational saga.** The model used in this study to assess cultural change at The College evolved from emergent change theory. Clark (1970) based the model of how organizations make decisions on the idea that it was more important to understand that all institutions have a saga or culture that has developed over time than to know all of the details of its history. This concept is referred to as the organizational saga and included the institution's history, impressions of events in the history of the organization and informal communication of these impressions among members of the organization at various levels. In this view, the saga became so much a part of the fabric of the institution that organizational history tended to be viewed differently based on the stories, events, participants and stakeholder interpretations of events. This combination of history and perceptions created a belief system that became the definition, pride, and identity around which the group united.

This saga included both rational and emotional elements. The group defined it as intrinsically historical, and this established the rational components of the saga (Clark, 1970). However, these components were constantly being altered and embellished by retelling and rewriting the context, a process that incorporated emotional attachments into the saga and can fundamentally change the meaning of events within it. The group participants, members of the organization, added to the emotional components of the saga and found themselves connecting anywhere from rational purpose to the warmth of emotional sentiment. The saga that developed out of this context often began as a rational explanation for collegial existence and evolved into a description of the formal institution as a beloved (or less than beloved) place. Thus, the three basic components of a saga included its roots in history, its unique and united frame of reference, and the sentimental attachments to the organization along with its operations as valued by the group. Whatever emerged became the basis for explanations of events in the organization and the motivation of those who worked within it when making decisions.

Sagas emerged in stages and institutional members realized their appearance with different characterizations. According to Clark (1972) sagas tended to manifest themselves in two stages: initiation, a relatively short time period characterized by the need for a specific change itself, and fulfillment, the more enduring and predictable element within the change process. Fulfillment was the sustainability and durability that emerged slowly in the social context. Sagas emerged in three different settings: new, evolutionary, and chaotic. New sagas developed out of open systems in newly established organizations where structures had not yet been formally established.



Evolutionary sagas tended to occur in organizations where natural change was happening due to a leadership transition or structural enhancement. The natural process of time and evolution dictated the formation of this type of saga. Sagas created out of chaos emerged when sweeping and immediate changes appeared. Often this was because incremental changes had failed and the institution has begun to decay. When this happened, institutions found themselves at an impasse where they needed to make changes or fail completely.

In many cases, this deep crisis opened the institution to new leadership structures reevaluated the current context while forcing institutional participants to remove past failures and move toward new opportunities. For leaders to succeed in making necessary change, the leader had to understand the elements of the saga—both factual and emotional—to influence the way participants received, understood, and accepted communication in the organization while tailoring communications about what happened within that framework.

***Initiation.*** For the purpose of this study, the context in which The College found itself while starting the relocation process can be characterized as chaotic. Numerous Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation reports, warnings and sanctions created a clear picture of the unsettled and chaotic state that The College was in since it originally received official accreditation back in 1984 (WASC, personal communication, December 2005; WASC, personal communication, September 2006; WASC, personal communication, January 2008). In these documents many incremental adjustments were referenced in attempts to meet the requirements of the WASC standards

before the formation of a new saga or a new unique identity for The College was deemed necessary. These incremental adjustments included creating verbal agreements for services rendered from The Church instead of establishing written contracts, proposing program review plans but failing to follow up by fully implementing them, sharing executive leadership positions with The Church or requiring leaders in the institution to fill multiple roles, etc. (WASC, personal communication, December 2005; WASC, personal communication, September 2006). In the fall of 2006, with a WASC show cause notice for continued accreditation sanctions weighing heavily upon the constituencies of The College, the institution reached the kind of crisis point that Clark (1972) noted required the group members to either completely give up pre-established norms and ways of operating or witness the failure of the institution.

It is at this point in the process of saga creation where either a new leader or small group of individuals entered the organizational scene. Clark (1972) noted that at this stage, members of the institution “may relinquish the leadership to one proposing a plan that promises revival and later strength, or they may even accept a man of utopian intent” (p. 180). In the summer of 2007, The College hired a new president who has, over the course of his term, been a main proponent for the campus relocation. He concluded early in his tenure that campus relocation represented the future of the organization and was working to make it happen since his arrival.

***Fulfillment.*** Once the institution understood the initiation process of saga creation, the definition of the fulfillment process began. During this phase of saga creation, five components generally emerged (personal, program, social base, student

subculture, and imagery) that influenced the change process, and determine its success and often, its sustainability (Clark, 1970). The basic summation of these components lead to an understanding that saga creation could not occur without the collaborative efforts and buy-in of key stakeholder groups in the institution.

*Personnel.* The first group addressed the institution when introducing changes is the personnel of the organization. Clark (1972) paid special attention to the members of the faculty in this part of the discussion because of their key role in governance, but staff was included in these ranks. Clark goes so far as to say that the level of senior faculty acceptance directly correlated with the probability of success for the change. A change idea created by one individual had to receive commitment from faculty members and other key players if it was to flourish past the initiation phase, and all parties needed to remain committed even if key leaders exit the institution.

Despite the many sanctions that WASC placed on The College over the years, the accreditation board was always complementary in its reports when referring to the passion, rigor, and commitment of faculty members. As part of budgetary restructuring designed to curb expenses, the full-time faculty were reduced by 15 from 2008-2012, but optimism about the future of The College remained high among those faculty who remained (Office of the Chief Academic Officer, personal communication, January 2012). The faculty displayed a level of readiness for cultural change at The College due to its positive attitude and response to tough circumstances throughout the life of the institution. The faculty members' commitment to student learning above all else

produced an environment that was open to consider changes that enhanced the learning process and advanced the institution.

Stakeholder commitment to change and the institution was critical to establishing saga. In their study of academic staff motivation and satisfaction, Coates, Dobson, Goedegeburre, and Meek (2013) noted that the level of staff happiness was directly linked to job satisfaction. In light of this fact, institutions of higher education require leadership styles that align with the nature of the university. It is through these leadership efforts that institutions build organizational sagas that are not merely nostalgic emanations but include sophisticated changes set to stimulate the organizational environment so that academic staff can thrive and identify with the institution.

Institutional identification by stakeholders was also imperative to solidifying change efforts. In their study on organizational identification attitudes towards proposed change, Hameed, Roques, and Arain (2013) discussed the notion that identification developed with the tenure of an individual and became interwoven with the goals and objectives of the organization. Individuals who identified with the saga of the organization were more willing to support and engage in the activities of the organization. Identification can also foster readiness for change; therefore, organizations should focus on developing an attachment between employees, key stakeholders, and the organizational identification.

*Program.* Once the institution assessed key stakeholders commitment to change, leaders then measured the changes ability to align with institutional values. The program component of saga creation involved the visibility of the change implemented (Clark,

1972). The key was to understand that more than merely being visible, the change being considered aligned with the unique attributes of the institution. Visibility helped to define the unique practices, requirements, methods, or actions that created the change and often became community symbols or rituals that evoked institutional meaning for the stakeholders. Depending on the strength of the symbols, external stakeholders were also afforded visibility. These practices led to a belief that the institution was operating in direct contrast to previous norms that indicated a new saga or element within the saga was generated.

An institution's distinctiveness was important to the identification process but was often overshadowed by other elements. In their study of the associations between prestige, distinctiveness and organizational identification, Jones and Hamilton-Volpe (2010) noted that institutions tended to focus on the prestige of the institution when they should have focused on its distinctiveness. In the study, prestige only increased organizational identification among those individuals that already maintained strong relational ties with the organization. Distinctiveness, however, related positively to the organizational identification of all stakeholders.

Defining the program elements and visibility of the change process was an important factor addressed in this study. Continued visibility during the change process slowly created the buy-in that institutional leaders needed from key stakeholders such as faculty/staff, students, alumni and donors. This was included in the durability that Clark (1972) referred to when stating that sagas are "built slowly in structured social contexts"

(p. 179). Being able to decipher the process through which the saga was created at The College was one goal of the study.

*Social base.* The social base component consisted of external stakeholders that had ties to the institution, namely alumni and donors. Alumni formed a strong base of support for the enduring legacy of saga because of the nostalgic memories they created once they left the institution and entered the external world. Alumni tended to connect strongly with the history of the institution as they understood it, and were key contributors to the sustainability of the saga without having to face the challenges and problems that personnel currently employed in the organization or students encountered (Clark, 1972). Their loyalties often stay rooted in the past where their beliefs were uniquely identified with the endearing characteristics of the institution and the saga.

At The College, alumni relations played an important role in establishing saga creation. Securing a supportive alumni base was another recommendation offered to the institution by the WASC accrediting body (WASC, personal communication, December 2005; WASC, personal communication, September 2006). Due to an inability to secure and maintain executive leaders coupled with the fact that executive leaders at The Church did not always relate well to external entities, The College lost connection with key founders and much of its alumni base for a number of years. Since 2008, the newly established executive leadership team was able to reconnect with these founders and increased support from its alumni and donor base. Attendance at major institutional activities such as donor events, graduation and homecoming doubled. Private giving also

increased from approximately \$500,000 in 2008 to approximately \$2,500,000 in 2011 (Office of the Chief Academic Officer, personal communication, January 2012).

Because organizational identification positively affected individual behavior, institutional leaders were strongly encouraged to maintain relationships with alumni. When alumni embraced the institutional saga, loyalty was created (Beonigk & Helmig, 2013). When loyalty formed, alumni tended to give more and recommended others to the institution. The link between alumni satisfaction, identification, and loyalty was strong and should not be underestimated by organizations.

Alumni also had an effect on other factors besides financial giving. Jones and Hamilton-Volpe (2010) agreed with Beonigk and Helmig's (2013) assessment that organizational identification with alumni generated financial contributions and increased the chances of new potential enrollments. They added that identification also affected organizational commitment, job satisfaction, involvement, and loyalty. When an organization aligned its values and created its own saga, its distinctiveness generated loyalties where individuals aligned their own personal goals and objectives with those of the organization. When leaders reinforced individual membership to the unique group they sparked organizational identification.

*Student subculture.* The student body was another key component in creating and establishing a new organizational saga. Not only did students have to support the change process, but the basic ideology that formed the student culture had to align with the beliefs of administration and faculty. In using the word belief, Clark (1972) referred to the shared emotions, commitments, and sentiments that institutional groups shared in

order to create and sustain a saga. Like the alumni, students also carried the saga from one generation to another by upholding the image and reputation of The College in the larger community and as emerging alumni who are either inclined to support The College financially or not.

*Imagery.* The final stage of saga creation, imagery, was more ambiguous to define and occurred after the acceptance of all necessary institutional group members. Once the saga was accepted by faculty/staff, alumni, and students and visibly accentuated through the development of symbols and rituals, it formed a historical tie to the institution and could, at times, be felt among the various constituencies (Clark, 1972). Clark referred to this feeling as the “air about the place” (p. 182). The more intense the saga’s effect on the history of the institution, the deeper the memory, and the more intense the commitment of stakeholders to shared symbols. A constituent’s belief exhibited when he or she was first introduced to the saga intensified the commitment to the same belief in later periods after extended exposure to the saga and its community.

A final point in understanding the imagery of the saga was embracing the historical perspectives of the institution and heritage. Thelin (2009) created an argument for the importance of archiving the historical elements of an institution to help create saga. The argument juxtaposed the elements of a distinctive college that used unique elements to connect its past, present and future to the invisible college that was nondescript with no discernable sense of heritage or mission. This heritage, or saga, was recognized in different ways. “Sacred ground” (Thelin, 2009, p. 9) referred to physical locations on a campus that communicated meaning and painted a picture of the culture



for constituents. Campus pride also attached constituencies to institutional heritage along with accounts and memoirs from the experience of faculty, staff and students.

Since the creation of the saga at The College was fairly recent given that the executive leaders have only held their current positions for seven years or less, elements of the imagery of the saga may not yet be measurable. According to what Clark (1972) described, imagery was the sustainable element of the change process and reached beyond all stakeholders, cementing itself as a historical component of the institution. Because, at some level, The College will continue to be caught between a completely unique identity and collaboration with The Church until it completes the campus transition, the saga of the institution cannot yet fully develop and solidify. This area of saga development would be worth further study once The College completes its relocation and can fully develop a unique identity over the next decade. This would best be assessed as a form of summative evaluation because the change process would be fully implemented. In the study, I identified the elements within the change process being implemented to see if the administration took advantage of the opportunity to impact the saga, as defined by Clark (1970) that developed during the time of transition.

### **Current Literature**

In researching for the literature review, I used two main avenues to collect sources: the Walden library and Google Scholar. In searching the Walden library, I referenced four main databases: ERIC, Educational Research Complete, Business Source Complete, and Academic Search Complete to find articles written within the last 5 years. I used the following key phrases: *change management, change leadership, organizational*

*change, culture change, organizational identification*. In searching Google Scholar, I used the following phrases: *culture change, organization identification, and organizational identification and culture change*. While exploring Google Scholar, I also executed a citation search for articles citing Burton R. Clark who is the author of the theoretical foundation for the study.

Producing organizational change involves a series of events that occur over an extended period of time. Because culture change requires the redefining of belief systems and ways of interpreting the environment, institutions implement transformational change. Current literature and research revealed major themes in producing and sustaining transformational change. Often change is championed by the leaders of the organization who created a sense of urgency, established a common set of values to be shared by stakeholders of the institution, understood and managed resistance to change, and communicated a vision for the change (Erwin, 2009; Karp & Tveteraas-Helgo, 2009; McRoy & Gibbs, 2009; Morin, 2010; Niemann, 2010; Paulsen et al, 2009).

While most organization- spanning change, including cultural change, are top-down initiatives, grass-roots efforts also play an important role in sustaining change, facilitating innovative thinking and assuring that change (or at least the capacity to change) penetrates all aspects of the institution (Kezar, 2012). The term grass-roots denote efforts involving stakeholders outside the normal hierarchical lines of authority. The joining of authoritative channels and grass-roots efforts, known as convergence, can produce a strong avenue for generating sustainable change. These collaborative efforts

ensure that stakeholders embrace the changes within the environment and encourage them to take part in effecting change.

The external environment also frequently affects the change processes in institutions. Many institutions first realize that change is necessary when external shifts impact the organization (McRoy & Gibbs, 2009). While some individuals might interpret this to mean that external factors produce negative effects on institutions that must be balanced out by adjusting program and policies, Rebora and Turri (2010) argued that leaders benefited from external factors that helped to create a sense of urgency and even produced resources to assist the change process. At the same time, both external and internal factors created resistance to the change process. Rebora and Turri also noted that behavioral inertia, a characteristic of resistance, produced a tendency for individuals to protect the existing institutional structure even if they recognized that the structure was visibly ineffective and fell short of institutional objectives.

**Transformational change.** Many of the elements scholars suggest are part of the process for producing cultural change are also part of transformational change. To get a better picture of transformational change in an organization, authors often compare it to transactional change. Transactional change, or what is sometimes referred to as first-order change, represents the continuous improvement efforts of the institution that are developmental in nature where the process of introducing change is normally evolutionary or incremental. These day-to-day processes represent the repetitive actions of the organization and its members including structures, systems, motivation, task completion, etc. (Wolf, 2011). In other words, transactional change involves the

interaction that takes place between leaders and followers while achieving institutional goals with the leader establishing and prioritizing what needs to be accomplished and offering incentives toward attaining those goals (Hechanova & Cementina-Olpoc, 2012; Warrick, 2011).

Transactional change is often minimalistic and basic to problems within the organization. In his study using Barker and Toberts' (2011) Leadership Development Profile (LDP), Taborga (2012) referred to this type of leadership as conventional, and stated that those who exercise it "are focused on objective reality and their leadership actions are aimed at execution with minimal reflection, and modification of only behaviors" (p. 6). Transactional shifts in processes and procedures do not directly correlate to changes in culture. Simply put, transactional changes include practices, structures and systems (Foster, 2010). Transactional practices affect only the basic day-to-day components of the organization.

This concept of transactional change is often linked to Argyris and Schon's (1978) concept of single loop learning. This kind of learning adjusts basic action strategies through the adoption of new routines but leaves the underlying organizational systems untouched (Clark, Gioia, Ketchen, & Thomas, 2010; Kerman, Freundlich, Lee, & Brenner, 2012; Tagg, 2010). While these changes may produce innovative behaviors they do not alter the foundational structures of the institution.

Conversely, transformational change involves factors including the overarching environment, mission, strategy and culture. Warrick (2011) noted that changes to these areas of the institution created broad and systematic impact that created revolutionary and

dynamic change. Implementing transformational change allowed institutions to become more adaptive that enabled the formation of new realities and meanings (i.e., cultural elements). Unlike transactional change that addressed and adjusts systematic structures, transformational change is concerned with how change is created at the individual level. Leaders used tactics including creating a sense of urgency, casting a vision, aligning values, establishing a strong mission, collaborating, establishing a common language, etc. to motivate individuals to move past their individual interests and towards a collective purpose (Wolf, 2011). The employees' beliefs, attitudes and values, otherwise defined as culture, are transformed in the process (Hechanova & Cementina-Olpoc, 2012). Transformational change affects all levels of the institution from broad strategic plans to individual level application.

This concept of transformational leadership is often linked with Argyris and Schon's (1978) concept of double-loop learning. This learning changes the governing values that define the institution. Also known as second order change, double-loop learning is revolutionary in nature and can produce or at least contribute to systemic transformation (Tagg, 2010). Institutions use transformation, double loop learning strategies, to produce cultural change. Taborga (2012) noted that leaders who engaged in transformation change, also known as post-conventional, "aim to create shared visions founded in diversity. Collaborative inquiry is a hallmark . . . which is used to develop solutions . . . [that] reflect on goals, strategies and structures" (p. 6). Through these types of activities, changing organizations experienced a radical paradigm shift that altered their identity (Clark et al., 2010; Kerman et al., 2012). This type of transformational

change recreated the fabric of the institution and redefined how its members make meaning and come to understand the organization. In essence, transformational change includes culture, mission and strategy (Foster, 2010). These kinds of double-loop implementation efforts do not develop on their own but result from deliberate and intentional strategies implemented by transformational leaders.

**Transformational leaders.** Institutional leaders are an integral part in effecting organizational change. Many change experts believe that major organizational change efforts, including those relating to organizational culture, must be initiated and driven by institutional leaders (Atkins, 2010; Cloud, 2010; DeVore & Hyatt, 2010; Niemann, 2010; Paulsen et al., 2009; Reborá & Turri, 2010). While leaders cannot be the only organizational members involved if the organization is to successfully make the desired change, their support for the effort is critical. Leaders must be the architects of culture change because this type of transformational effort requires enormous energy and commitment if it is to be sustained (Sarros, Cooper, & Santora, 2011). They are responsible for ensuring that the organization focuses on the vision, goals, and values that emerge while developing objectives during the change process. Harding (2010) noted that transformational leaders ignited change and propelled goals and actions to realization. In their study, Zhu, Sosik, Riggio, and Yang (2012) found that transformational leadership techniques had a more positive effect on the organizational identification of followers than only transactional techniques. Leaders who fostered transformational leadership in others in the institution assured that these practices continued in the event the leader left that organization.

Before change can be proposed, leaders must take the time to understand the current culture in which they are intending to make the change. During this time of evaluation, leaders also assess the institution's level of readiness to determine its adaptability and how constituents might receive the impending change. Once leaders move from evaluation to action, they identify a shared vision and set of values within the organization to guide the change process. To encourage success and engagement around the vision, leaders create a strong communication plan, invite collaboration around change issues from all stakeholders, position the institution to obtain the necessary resources for implementing the change, and address any instances of resistance that might arise (Atkins, 2010; Agboola & Salawu, 2011; Cloud, 2010; Drew, 2010; Erwin, 2009; Karp & Tvetaraas-Helgo, 2009; Morin, 2010; Niemann, 2010; Stempfle, 2011; Waldman, 2010). In creating a plan for change, leaders need to understand the institutional identity and how it affects the change process.

***Link, listen and lead.*** Researchers studying leaders in the change process noted the importance of taking the time to listen to constituencies before acting. Scott, Bell, Coates, and Grebennikov (2010) and Cloud (2010) argued that, in the early stages of the change process, leaders should listen more than they talk or act. Listening to the views of those who are concerned with an issue, especially the detractors and resisters assisted leaders in avoiding roadblocks to change and helped to produce buy-in to the change initiatives. Listening and analyzing also allowed the leader time to understand the current culture, assess and influence the institution's level of readiness for change, gauge the

institution's flexibility and adaptability, and make data driven decisions about the upcoming change.

*Understanding the culture.* Often cultural change begins in an organization when new leaders enter the institution. Warrick (2011) stated that leaders must be well aware of the present realities of the institution before relaying future ideals for the organization. Leaders who were out of touch with important aspects of the institution made cosmetic change instead of the systematic change that the organization needed. These leaders should have resisted the urge to spark change efforts early in their tenure because they may have violated current cultural norms previously established by members of the organization. If leaders seek change early in their tenure and make a mistake, stakeholders are more likely to forgive the errors if they admit the mistake, seek forgiveness and backtrack to where their efforts deviated from the culture. During this period, admitting error can introduce the idea that the leader is open to admitting that he or she is fallible that can positively affect the develop of continuity to increase flexibility in the culture. Clark (1972) referred to this concept as understanding the history of the organization. Nastase, Giuclea, and Bold (2012) affirmed Clark's thoughts and determined that sustainable change is rooted in understanding the culture that is being transformed. If the change is contradictory to the history and traditions, leaders will encounter resistance in the implementation process.

Instead, it is imperative that these leaders spend time learning the organizational culture. Leaders lay a foundation for engagement by taking the time to understand constituencies' current beliefs (Atkins, 2010). Early in their tenure, leaders benefit from



engaging in the many subcultures of the organization. Eddy (2011) noted the importance of interacting with campus community groups including students, faculty, staff, alumni, etc. In learning the institutional context, leaders gained the ability to uniquely influence each group when communicating needed changes in the future. Leaders who understand the culture can reinforce it where necessary and use it to share information with important institutional groups as the change process evolves. Cloud (2010) noted that change leaders were more successful over time when they listened more than they spoke and were slow to act and react when first engaging the institution. The early stages of the change process require patience by institutional leaders to increase the chances of success.

Leaders who act before learning organizational norms for operating often find that their change efforts fail. In her study on integrating change into culture at The College of William and Mary, Morin (2010) described the short lived tenure of President Gene R. Nichol from 2005-2008. Being the first admittedly liberal president at the institution, Nichol made decisions related to collegial symbols and beliefs that demonstrated to The College that he did not understand the culture he had stepped into, and that he did not understand William and Mary's history or traditions. After his dismissal from the institution in 2008, Nichol later admitted that he failed to acknowledge the cultural and political dimensions to the presidency, leading ultimately to his departure.

Leaders must understand the history, context and culture of an organization before they can accurately determine the best path for creating change. Taking the time to learn about the institution shows constituents that the leaders appreciate what the organization

has accomplished and validates the efforts that faculty, staff, student and alumni have engaged in to produce results. Many times these efforts create a strong sense of internal purpose that affirms the cultural structure.

*Assessing institutional readiness- flexibility and adaptability.* The importance of the leader's ability to assess the institution's ability to handle the change process cannot be overstated. Proponents, such as Morin (2010) and Cloud (2010), argued that presidents should delay making major changes until they have the opportunity to assess the current cultural state and believed that the delayed actions allowed leaders to gauge an institution's level of readiness for change. For leaders, a benefit of delaying major change efforts was that it provided time to scan the internal environment while assessing both the psychological and behavioral attitudes of the members of the institution. When leaders made full environmental assessments they were influential in moving the institution into a ready state (Foster, 2010). In their study, Decker et al. (2012) noted that readiness was the extent to which individuals were mentally and physically prepared to implement change. The importance of assessing readiness by measuring individuals' perceptions of certain change risk factors predicted the failure potential of the proposed change. Through the implementation of a risk marker analysis that measured the opinions of individuals involved in or affected by a given change process, leaders identified and understood the impact of factors that caused change to fail. This institutional assessment measure allowed leaders to plan for and limited the effects of these factors. If too many risk factors were present or if leaders did not make strategic

interventions to counteract the effects of the failure factors, the institution was not ready to accept change.

Closely linked to an institution's readiness for change is its level of flexibility and adaptability. Flexibility is an institution's ability to respond to external environmental shifts and adapt accordingly thus producing change (Finch et al., 2010). If an institution exhibits flexibility when responding to the external environment, it is more likely to be ready to make the appropriate change. Levels of adaptability can also be used to assess the rate that an institution embraces change. Institutions that are quick to accept and implement change initiatives are adaptive in structure while institutions that present high levels of resistance with slow implementation processes are considered less adaptive. Nili, Shekarchizadeh, Baharlouei, and Gorji (2012) claimed that leaders could measure readiness for change by comparing resistance to change against attitudes described as beliefs of the institutional members. The adaptive behaviors of individuals inside the organization created avenues through which the change occurred.

If individuals are not adaptive, flexible, motivated, and ready, the change process will not be effective or sustained. Leaders help to assure readiness by creating discomfort or increasing levels of anxiety, thereby creating a sense of urgency. In their study on identifying predictors of employee readiness for change, Soumyaja, Kamalanabhan, and Bhattacharyya (2011) found that the quality of communication was the strongest predictor of readiness. Readiness for change included the beliefs, attitudes, and individual intentions towards the change itself. When employees fully embraced the idea of being adaptable, they realized that the key to transformational change is an open

attitude (Nastase et al., 2012). The ultimate goal of a transformational change process is revitalization. Through revitalization, cultures and institutions are continuously renewed that increases the organization's capacity to adapt to the internal and external environments. As revitalization efforts take hold, the capacity to handle change becomes a part of everyday practice (Jamaludin & Ahmad, 2012). Not only do leaders have to nurture readiness for change by understanding the existing culture and encouraging adaptive behaviors and practices, they must also drive transformational change based on data-driven decisions.

*Data driven.* In preparing for change, transformational leaders seek to be fully informed on all aspects and possible avenues that are a part of the change process. Before displaying a need for a change or casting a vision around attaining and achieving the change, leaders' elicit information from many data streams and move from planning to action based on data (Cloud, 2010). Leaders will find it hard to persuade institutional members who are deeply entrenched in the current practices and culture without strong evidence of the necessity for change. When using a data-driven process, leaders develop a culture where employees make decisions based on evidence rather than mere consensus within a group (Scott et al., 2010). When managers pursue and point to data when making decisions, they challenge old ways of making meaning and begin to establish new operating streams for drawing conclusions. Leaders scan the institution for readiness by assessing the adaptability and flexibility of employees. They begin to understand the current state of the culture and base the creation of a new vision on data that can persuade others of its effectiveness. Leaders begin the initial processes of

creating a need for a change by analyzing both the internal and external environments to gather reliable data upon which to base decisions (Wallin, 2010). Then leaders work to persuade others of the need for the change.

*A need for change.* After leaders understand the culture and assess for readiness the next step in the change process is creating recognition for the change. Tiplic (2011) noted that powerful individuals, namely the institutional leaders, set the tone and direction for the change process. In creating the need for change, leaders understood that shifts in the external environment had significant impacts on producing change in the organization. Institutions experience overlap between external pressures and organizational change. Leaders find that managing this critical role in producing a need for the change is imperative to the success of a change transition (McRoy & Gibbs, 2009). This change process starts with creating a sense of urgency.

*Sense of urgency.* Creating a sense of urgency requires leaders to challenge the status quo and present arguments that move stakeholders away from old habits that created the institutional identity. Issues characterized as divergent organizational change challenge the status quo, emanate from culture change, and may require a transitional identity to help bridge the gap from old ways of knowing and behaving to newly created identities (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012; Clark et al., 2010). Leaders create both the temporary and permanent identities by moving institutional members out of their comfort zones within the organization. Leaders must distance the organization from old habits and convince employees to adopt new operating habits that reestablish norms of the environment.

Tailoring is a strategy that leaders often use to persuade diverse members to support the change process. Tailoring provides leaders the opportunity to control how to use the available information around a change process to elicit support and mobilize resources in favor of the change (Battilana & Casciaro, 2012). Leaders often find that these processes are most successful when joined informally to create structural holes inside institutional, social networks. Structural holes increase the likelihood that divergent change will find success because loosely joined networks are less likely to create coalitions that converge and create resistance to the proposed changes.

Not only do leaders have to use information to steer the change message to produce the need for change, but leaders must free constituents to “unlearn” (Thompson, 2010, p. 277) old ways of operating. Along with acquiring new knowledge and skills, leaders must ensure that institutional members remove old ways of knowing and doing from the institutional memory. The old identity no longer serves the organization after the transition to the new. The unlearning process includes introducing discomfort and anxiety, and this, in turn, produces the need for change.

Leaders must create a feeling of unease, anxiety, and discomfort that they introduce using new knowledge. These feelings of discomfort lead to varying levels of resistance. Addressing resistance is a key component in producing culture change. During this stage of the change process, leaders fight organizational fixation (Stempfle, 2011). This tendency asserts that organizational members default to following established paradigms and practices even when these processes are no longer effective or enhance the workings of the institution. To fight organizational fixation, leaders must

find ways to motivate members to embrace the change process. Daif and Yusof (2011) noted that motivation for organizational change was a force, both internal and external to the individual that created enthusiasm and encouraged persistence to pursue an action to completion. The role of the transformational leader included motivating organizational members to embrace change. This motivational role began with establishing a sense of discomfort that removed the stability of old ways of knowing and evolved into persuading and encouraging team members to embrace the change efforts.

*Scanning the environment- internal and external.* Leaders can use environmental factors to increase the need for change and motivate others to establish the proposed change. Leaders identify roadblocks that prevent the implementation of change within the organization (Nastase et al., 2012). Environmental pressures can influence the ability to produce change in an organization. Institutions may find their identity and existence threatened when the rate of change outside the organization is greater than the rate of change inside the organization (Thompson, 2010). Accrediting bodies and government agencies continuously create new rules and legislative laws that impose pressure to change operational processes and even institutional identity. The fast pace of external change and the institution's inability to keep pace with this change is a key reason organizations cannot sustain successful change endeavors (Stempfle, 2011). While environmental changes can cause discomfort and anxiety when cultural change occurs, leaders can use environmental turbulence to push the organization toward the intended change (Smollan, Sayers, & Matheny, 2010). Leaders can use instability in the institutional environment to enhance the need for change.

While scanning the internal environment to assess the institution for readiness, leaders create an understanding for the limits of the structure. They work to determine what environmental conditions can produce the most favorable change (Rebora & Turri, 2010). Environmental factors themselves cannot produce the change necessary to create a new identity or culture, but a skilled and innovative leader can find ways to use these environmental conditions to further the change process. Transformational leaders benefit from external events and use these events to drive the change process while linking internal factors as a stimulus and energy source for the change. Linking internal and external factors also requires leaders to gauge the capacity of the organization to make appropriate changes.

The capacity for change is the organization's ability to respond with solutions to environmental (external) and institutional (internal) evolution. The capacity also includes the successful implementation of change processes throughout the organization (Soparnot, 2011). In conjunction with the capacity for change is the complexity of change. Complex change occurs rapidly, is unpredictable and nonlinear. Wallin (2010) wrote that organizations often changed in response to their environments; however, they rarely changed exactly according to the intended plan. This aspect illustrates the nature of nonlinear change. Leaders address the capacity and complexity of implementing change through the creation of external flexibility (Finch et al., 2010). When organizations are flexible and can aptly respond to environmental pressures, members find new ways to respond to the change. According to Soparnot (2011), external flexibility changed the nature of the relationship between the institution and the



environment to facilitate action and redefined the reality of the transformational change process. The need for change should include environmental concerns that help to persuade stakeholders of its importance.

*The plan for identity.* Once leaders establish a need for the change that addresses environmental concerns, they have to create a plan for implementing the change. This plan often referred to as the vision for the organization, sets the path the institution should take to accomplish the needed change. Values are the most visible elements of the culture and must coincide with the initiatives proposed in the vision if the organization is to sustain the change (Ramachandran, Chong, & Ismail, 2010). Leaders implement their vision, align vision, and shape institutional values through a process often referred to as sense making or sense giving.

*Establishing a vision.* A well-executed vision is central to the success of the change process. A good vision illustrates the future of the organization by presenting a clear picture or map of the institutional mission and clarifies what the organization must do to produce change (Atkins, 2010). The vision gives guidance, directs employees, and clarifies the direction for the change (Atkins, 2010; Sarros, Cooper, & Santora, 2011; Stempfle, 2011). Differing stakeholder perspectives and ideologies can prevent the attainment of a shared vision. These discrepancies occur early in the visioning process when leaders prepare the organization for change. Leaders must embrace a “multiplicity of meaning” (Barnett, 2011, p. 136) and plan ways to reconcile divergent perspectives while seeking a united vision. The vision is not only a map to the change, but directs

employees to make and accomplish the proposed change. Employees use the vision to guide their thought and action processes when functioning inside the organization.

While early vision casting addresses divergent stakeholder perspectives it is also adaptive to the environment and requires institutional commitment. Clark et al. (2010) noted that vision was important for adapting to changing environmental demands while Thompson (2010) proposed that sustaining change was critical and required a commitment to a common vision. A vision that effectively addressed and adapted to changes in the external environment, to include accreditation agencies and government regulations was vital to producing change. While the vision must be adapted to address the external environment, it must be central to the foundation of the institution and accepted by all members in sustaining the changes needed to support the vision.

The vision must focus on values that are widely accepted by institutional stakeholders. These values, that speak to the basic foundational elements of the organization while also producing excitement and the hope of new possibilities, must align both individually and collectively (Hechanova & Cementina-Olpoc, 2012; Jaskyte, 2010). The vision needs to relate to individual employees at the fundamental level where they construct meaning and the institution. One way for leaders to encourage foundational change is through the creation of a vision that provokes emotions of enthusiasm for the impending changes. Emotions forge a link between the vision and the changing cultures. The vision begins to bring a collective identity into focus for the institution by fostering a set of shared values (Paulsen et al., 2009). While the vision

becomes the hub of the change process, leaders provide the impetus to accomplish the vision.

The leader's role in the vision casting process cannot be overstated and are foundational to the success of its implementation. Leaders facilitate the creation of a unique vision and are responsible for transmitting that vision across the institution (Hechanova & Cementina-Olpoc, 2012; Spicer, 2011). The vision starts with leaders who create the distinctiveness of the change that sparks an emotional response and develops into a lasting change. Once leaders craft the vision they send a consistent message through the organization. Leaders shape the picture of the future for the organization by clearly communicating the image of what the changes will look like and what they will accomplish while providing the rationale for the creation of the new culture (Thompson, 2010). Consistent communication from leaders ensures the successful implementation of the change.

Leaders use the vision to drive much of the change in organizational culture. Leaders connect the current or old culture with the new or ideal culture the vision creates (Main, 2009; Sarros et al., 2011). The creation of the culture's changing vision is accomplished by engaging employees in the change process. Leaders enter into a dialogue with employees and solicit their ideas and plans related to the vision for implementing change (Stempfle, 2011). Individuals engage emotionally with the change as they believe their ideas and thoughts are taken into consideration in affecting organizational change. Through dialogue the uncertainty associated with change is reduced, leaving less room for individuals to interpret the vision out of context (Oreg &

Berson, 2011). Leaders that include others through dialogue in visioning create emotional ties to the changes being proposed and increase the likelihood that change will be accepted.

The alignment of vision and values is an important aspect to change implementation. The leaders' action in the visioning process helps to align people with change efforts (Drew, 2010). Alignment of both organizational vision and values create the foundation for the change implementation process and require employees to work towards the vision. A good vision allows individuals to determine how their skills, talents, abilities, and role can contribute to the change process. Stoffle and Cuillier (2011) noted that employees thrive in an environment where they shared the same vision that empowered them to make decisions, provided the resources to complete visionary tasks, and embraced growth and learning.

*Sen making, sense giving, sense breaking.* Sense making involves having individuals assess their interpretation of reality both retrospectively and prospectively. At the organizational level, researchers have focused on how managers influence an individual's ability to redefine the organizational reality (Eddy, 2010; Sonenshein, 2010). A stirring vision helps to create an environment where a change in sense making can occur. The vision influences the sense making process and begins to reshape the organizational identity. Sense making begins with leaders who often draw on their own personal interpretations of reality, past experiences, and current interactions within the organization when casting a vision and creating knowledge.

In the sense giving process, leaders seek to influence the sense making process of individuals within the organization using the vision to spark the identity change process. This is the communication process by which leaders share new beliefs and meaning with employees in order to create a shared scheme for interpreting reality (Mantere, Schildt, & Sillince, 2012). During this sense giving process, leaders use different avenues through which to shape new thought processes. The course for guiding strategic issues, steering organizational routines in tactical directions, appealing to stakeholder values, and providing information helps gain acceptance of the new vision by employees (Clark et al., 2010). This visioning process includes framing information into reasonable, realistic, and attainable outcomes. In her study on how president's communicate to influence the creation of institutional meaning, Eddy (2010) noted that presidents were successful in framing their vision if they solicited input and listened to the thoughts of others. Leaders worked closely with campus constituents to create and communicate the vision for the organization.

Organizational sense breaking requires the leader to first break old sense making processes that may prevent new sense making from occurring. The roots of the sense breaking process link to Lewin's (1947) concept of unfreezing and Schein's (1992) concept of unlearning. Sense breaking requires leaders to affect the sense giving residuals, the positive sense giving efforts of past leaders, to produce "organizational forgetting" (Mantere et al., 2012, p. 189) that frees organizational memory to accept the new vision and create change.

*Aligning the values.* Values are the foundational elements of any culture and affect institutional identity. From an institutional perspective, values are often the most prominent representation of its culture (Ramachandran et al., 2010). Constructed both consciously and subconsciously by internal stakeholders, institutional culture is a set of values and ways of making meaning that direct behavior. Values are a set of beliefs that become part of institutional identity (Fitzgerald-Henck, 2011). These shared values, when linked together, form the culture of the organization that directs the daily functions of members and guides thinking and behavior. In essence, values bind members and create a distinct identity (Jaskyte, 2010). These values, when linked together, form value systems that enable institutional understanding.

Value systems that are no longer able to cope with changes within the external environment often spur changes to the organizational culture. New value systems drive the need to solve problems that the existing system cannot address. Through the change process instituted by leaders and aligned by the stakeholders, a new value system emerges that can better adjust to environmental fluctuations (Burnes & Jackson, 2011). Also referred to as “sustainability-oriented learning” (Arnold, 2010, p. 63), culture change involves changing organizational behaviors based on a shift in knowledge and values.

For leaders, the first step in creating culture change is establishing a strong vision that directs employees toward the desired change. Leaders who demonstrate participative, inclusive, and empowering practices during the change process are more likely to create a strong consensus around organizational values (Jaskyte, 2010). The

alignment of values must take place at the organizational level, at the objective or change initiative level, and the individual level. The values associated with the change itself must coincide with the belief systems of the organization as well as with those of the individual stakeholders. To foster the alignment of values, leaders create an environment of openness, trust and participation. In their study on the success of values alignment, Burnes and Jackson (2011) found support for their hypothesis that values alignment played a significant role in the acceptance and implementation of change initiatives by members of the institution.

Values alignment, also known as values congruence, has been shown to be an indicator of support for institutional change efforts because alignment affects the attitudes and beliefs of employees. Lamm et al. (2010), noted that congruence positively impacts employees' attitudes toward change because people are more trusting of others and ideas that are similar to them; people embrace improved communication in a predictable environment, and people experience reduced uncertainty and improved relationships due to the similar aspects of cognitive processing structures. Values alignment fortifies the shared meanings that culture protects and ensures that stakeholders embrace the shared vision and protect the shared values associated with it (Lamm et al., 2010). Stakeholders often construct values from artifacts and symbols that they interpret to make meaning for the organization.

***Artifacts and symbols.*** While artifacts and symbols may be easy to identify when investigating a culture, they are often difficult to decipher or interpret because group membership is often required to understand their importance fully. Artifacts are the

visible representations of a group and can include the physical environment, language, myths and stories (Fitzgerald-Henck, 2011). Symbols are ambiguous representations of the artifacts that only find meaning to those involved in the group who share the artifacts.

*The role of artifacts.* Artifacts are a solid and visible representation of the culture of an institution. From the way people dress to the structural layout, language, jargon, rituals and ceremonies, artifacts include all the experiences that someone observes, hears, feels and encounters in an organization (Ramachandran et al., 2010). Artifacts are such a powerful force in the cultural change process that changes that fail to address artifacts can be unsustainable over time. Decker et al. (2012) noted that the failure rates from change stemmed from the absence of common language or way of knowing that affected the decision making process. Common language is an important artifact that must be embraced by all members of the organization to establish a strong culture that embraces communication and encourages collaboration. Leaders seeking to affect the common language and change organizational cultures continuously tell stories.

Institutional stories are an important artifact that can reinforce the change process and establish identity. Iselin (2011) noted in the study of school culture that leaders enhanced the sustainability and shared ways of making meaning within the school community when they intentionally found creative ways of re-telling cultural stories. Successful leaders are intentional in reinforcing culture by repeating their organizational sagas or narratives that help members understand the common language. An organization's culture reflects its cultural artifacts that include stories and styles of communication. Because organizational culture always includes the need for



transformation, leaders must use cultural artifacts when producing change. In the study of executive leaders' efforts to incorporate storytelling in decision making, Soonsawad (2010) reported that leaders increased the awareness of the need to change and encouraged stakeholders to come together around a common goal by using stories to create a sense of urgency. These stories describe the sequence of events or history of an organization and facilitate the understanding of experiences, morals, and beliefs among organizational members.

Besides stories and actions that represent artifacts, place can also be a strong connecting factor in creating an identity. A person's level of attachment to a place can have a strong influence on how he or she responds to organizational change (Rooney et al., 2011). The stronger a person is attached to the place, the more likely that person it to resist any changes to the environment because place often provides an emotional anchor that fosters a sense of belonging. In their study, Rooney et al. (2011) noted different positions in an organizational hierarchy that fulfilled institutional roles while evaluating change differently. People in authority tended to be less attached to place while lower level employees found higher value in place identification. It is, therefore, imperative that leaders carefully and thoroughly address place identification if the proposed change could threaten the status quo related to the place and location of the institution. Leaders must assess the current state of organizational identification at all levels of the institution and create a plan to address the attachment to place.

*Interpreting symbols.* Individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other. When people interact, they interpret the experience, and events begin to take

on meaning for those involved (Barnett, 2011). Sometimes referred to as symbolic interactionism, the interpretation of meaning then guides the actions of those involved and it, in turn, helps them put the actions of others in context. In a cultural context meaning and action are irrevocably linked (i.e., meaning creates action and action creates meaning). In expressing culture, people do not rely on simple cause and effect relationships to explain their experiences (Ray & Goppelt, 2011). Instead, people often use personal narratives or stories to describe what is occurring around them. These stories create a reality for the individual involved and can be rewritten daily as others interact and co-create a new organizational reality. As people change the way they interact and tell stories, they change the culture of the organization.

Culture change is also about interpretation (Connolly et al., 2011). Beliefs, symbols and values influence daily practices, and stakeholder actions can interpret and result from these institutional entities. In turn, these actions can then influence the beliefs, symbols and values that produce culture change. Cultural symbols and norms pass knowledge and the institutional saga between generations through collective learning that, in turn, shapes the culture (Dull, 2010). This cultural evolution continuum exists between identifying problems and finding the proper avenues for creating solutions.

Artifacts, such as institutional documents, can be interpreted as symbolic elements of a change process. Tiplic (2011) studied post-secondary institutional restructuring in post-war Sarajevo. For the University of Sarajevo, operating in a country rebuilding its educational system, institutional documents became symbols. The strong mission and

vision established in these documents made the university comparable to institutions that it had been compared to unfavorably in the pre-war period. The symbolic value of these documents was significant because they modeled the future the university would take in terms of teaching, learning and research.

Institutions need to balance creating collective meaning with forgetting old ways of understanding. As much as creating collective meaning and interpretation is important to establishing a culture, forgetfulness may also be necessary because institutional memory can also be a barrier to culture change (McCabe, 2010). As individuals remember and hold onto the past, they may be less likely to embrace change and the future. For instance, the decision to change a name, as in the case of The College, sent a signal to constituents that something more than a name was changing. Along with discarding the old name, the institution was signifying that it was putting aside or at least altering old associations (Finney & Scherrebeck-Hansen, 2010). The new brand, if it is to be successful, must address the heritage of the organization while setting a new vision for the future.

***Embracing collaboration.*** For institutional change to be successful, leaders must embrace an attitude of collaboration through the organization. Jaskyte (2010) suggested that transformational leaders fostered values that were collaborative, team oriented, innovative, flexible, respectful, tolerant, supportive, and open. For leaders, collaboration is an essential component of creating buy-in to the change process. Encouraging others to share in creating the change will engender support for decisions as they come to fruition. Within collaborative efforts, the development of an organizational saga is

powerful in that it unifies constituents and creates links across disparate groups and subcultures within the organization (Goodwill, 2012). These links, established through collaborative efforts in conjunction with the saga, result in unique organizational bonds.

Change strategies that are collaborative in nature start by addressing the human dimension that encourages stakeholders to become engaged in problem solving. Soparnot (2011) noted that the capacity for change was the institution's ability to address changes and solve problems presented from the external environment. External factors introduce many large institutional change initiatives. Transformational leaders can use these external factors to create a sense of urgency for the change process and to encourage collaborative efforts to solve these external challenges. Drew (2010) noted that change was produced through a balance between accomplishing tasks and having relational skills. Leaders who effectively use collaboration to create sustainable change understand that the people are just as important as the process.

Committing to collaboration is an essential component to producing sustainable change. In the study on school district leadership, Iselin (2011) found that cultivating sustainable culture change was achieved through collaborative and intentional commitment by the entire school community and could not be effectively accomplished using a single, authoritarian approach to change. Niemann (2010) found that stakeholders highly valued situations where they were required to work collaboratively. These opportunities challenge employees and make them feel empowered to face issues while requiring them to build relationships throughout the process. Conversely, Stensaker and Langely (2010) found that emotional balance was imperative to the change process.

They argued that leaders must balance their commitment to the change with taking care of those recipients who will be affected by the change. Results showed that change processes where leaders overemphasized commitment to the change effort while only minimally addressing employee concerns and feedback became chaotic and succeeded less often. Leaders must understand that producing change is a collaborative process that starts with addressing the human element to produce buy-in across stakeholder groups, reducing resistance, and creating the change itself.

Relational practice and collaboration are closed linked in leading the change process. By its very nature, leadership is a discursive set of lived and experienced social activities that involve personal conversations that dynamically link actions, meaning and context (Ray & Goppelt, 2011). Because leadership requires relational practices, collaboration is an important element for understanding and securing change. People are the primary inhibitors of a change process. Leaders must listen to hear what stakeholders say and observe what they are not saying (Agboola & Salawu, 2011). Employees who feel heard are more likely to participate in change opportunities and embrace the opportunity to express their apprehensions or concerns about how the change will affect them personally. Addressing problems up front and in the open will allow leaders to resolve conflict as it develops.

In particular, institutional leaders should listen to resisters as they can provide insight into possible roadblocks that may occur during the change process that could inhibit successful implementation. Leaders seek the views of those concerned with particular elements of the change to avoid roadblocks while making decisions (Lumadi &

Mampuru, 2010; Scott et al., 2010). Likewise, input from all areas of the organization is crucial to defining, implementing, and communicating change. Leaders should solicit stakeholder feedback systematically throughout the change process while identifying and engaging eager adopters of the change early in the process to encourage its adoption at all levels of the organization (Kerman et al., 2012). Leaders balance the voices of both the resisters and the champions of the change process.

Research shows that the leaders' ability to listen to both resisters and supporters of change led to successful implementation. In the study on community college presidents' ability to frame meaning in terms of institutional change, Eddy (2010) noted that the most successful presidents asked for input and listened to the advice of others. The results included a shared vision that was framed by the leader and embraced by the constituency. In the study on embracing divergent perspectives of meaning to create change in higher education institutions, Barnett (2011) found that external consultants recognized the importance of authentic inclusion on the part of administration. The most successful administrators in creating sustainable change understood that effective change agents listen to ideas of all parties and paid special attention to those resisters that were hesitant to change.

Not only do leaders listen to the ideas of others, but they include them in the decision making process. Cloud (2010) noted "effective change leaders understand that they lead with the consent of the led" (p.75). Successful change agents emphasize inclusion in the decision making process by encouraging cooperation. They communicate that they are accountable for their actions to the stakeholders that they

serve, and, therefore, want the involvement of everyone in the change process. People tend to resist when they believe change is forced upon them. voiding resistance is an important reason to involve stakeholders in planning and implementing the change (Agboola & Salawu, 2011). In the study on brand change of an international chain of department stores, Sonenshein (2010) reinforced the idea of stakeholder inclusion when reporting that the increase in subversive behavior in employees at the unchanged branches correlated directly with employees' feelings of exclusion from and disconnection with the change process itself. Inclusion in decision making is more likely to lead to acceptance of the change itself.

Leaders encourage collaboration to persuade others to believe that the outcome of change will be better than the present reality. Main (2009) cited the revitalization principle by arguing that leaders who made followers believe that cultural change was rooted in the premise that end results were better for everyone in the long run experienced higher rates of success. Leaders must understand that stakeholder buy-in is essential in revitalization efforts if the organization is fully to implement its program. All stakeholders should be considered either resistors of change, drivers of change, or people who will be affected by that change. Their attitudinal and behavioral reactions to change will play a major role in its success (Petschnig, 2011; Shin, Taylor, & Seo, 2012). Because of this emphasis on collaboration the change process must be driven by both those in positions of leadership and other stakeholders.

Collaboration enables stakeholders to drive the change while leaders anchor the process. Members of the organization must be the primary source of energy behind the

change process while the leaders steer it in a strategic direction (Soumyaja et al., 2010). In using the energy of stakeholders, leaders create a natural flow for the change process and form coalitions and collaborations that build momentum throughout the life of the change. The energy created through collaboration is important to the change itself. In their study on time and emotions during organizational change, Smollan et al. (2010) reported that employees considered change that moved too quickly when it did not provide respondents the opportunity to contribute to decision making. Conversely, when people felt they had control over the change, they had fewer negative emotional reactions to the change than when they had less control.

Leaders choose to produce change in different avenues. Changes can be management driven or participatory in nature (Pihlak & Alas, 2012). In participatory change, the power and responsibility to create change can be shared between all stakeholders involved regardless of level. Employee involvement in this kind of participatory change process means that leaders relinquish some level of control while remaining responsible for the outcomes. With participative change, the major benefit results in wide acceptance of the change initiative that maintains lasting effects.

Leaders also use distributive leadership strategies to encourage buy-in for change. This often involves developing closer collaborative relationships with academic, executive, and professional staff in an institution of higher education (Jones, Lefoe, Harvey, & Ryland, 2012). Distributive leadership encourages respect, trust, commitment to practice, consideration of self and others, and learning dialogues to create a base of understanding that promotes collaboration and build the change. When leaders distribute



the power to make or influence decisions to a wide audience of participants, collaboration increases and the focus shifts towards employee relations. In their study on participation and collaboration strategies in the workplace, Stensaker and Langley (2010) provided examples of how managers succeeded or failed when attempting to make changes. In one scenario, a manager was able to create work groups that were used to delegate responsibilities regarding different change elements. In another scenario the lack of attention to employee concerns produced negative consequences to the change that also triggered conflict between management and employees.

Information sharing is an essential element when employees effectively enter into dialogues regarding institutional change. Leaders must create the proper structures in order to enhance employees' ability to engage in this dialogue (Nili et al., 2012). The first condition that leaders must address is the environment. Leaders create and promote acceptable political, social, and cultural structures to support collaboration. The second condition suggests that leaders continuously and deliberately point employees toward decision making and planning by assigning a high priority to their participation in the process. Informative participation involves the giving and receiving of information. At this level, stakeholders are asked to provide their views and perspectives on an issue with the goal of developing mutual understanding (Arnold, 2010). Decisional participation is a step above information participation and involves stakeholders being a part of the actual decision making process. Good decision making often arises from a synthesis of perspectives from all areas of the organization. Stoffle and Cuillier (2011) explained that "when employees share the same vision, are empowered to make decisions, have the

resources to do their work, and are able to continually learn and grow professionally, that is an environment in which they can thrive” (p.135). As participation increases, stakeholders become more involved in decision making and are more likely to commit to the proposed change.

Increasing collaboration leads to the creation of coalitions to spread change initiatives. Once the institution establishes a common context, leaders should enlist members of the organization who share a common understanding and action plan to help interpret the context for change (Ray & Goppelt, 2011). This coalition of likeminded individuals is essential in spreading the change initiative throughout the institution especially when the change requires cultural transformation. If lines of communication are open and leaders frame the change message appropriately, anyone on the campus could serve as a messenger. Leaders rely on these messengers to carry the change ideas throughout the institution. While in an ideal situation any person could be a part of a coalition, most change efforts create resistance and unforeseen challenges that require leaders to identify relevant stakeholders to be a part of the change process (Eddy, 2010; Petschnig, 2011). This group should include individuals with vested interests that may be positively or negatively affected by the change itself, who can exert influence over the change and implementation, and who can initiate and sponsor the change.

Coalition members exhibit certain characteristics in the change process. Effective coalition members are well versed in issues, opportunities and the details of how to accomplish the change (Spicer, 2011; Warrick, 2011). They create a mindset for change by constantly researching new ways to accomplish the task at hand. Coalitions include

skilled change facilitators who can identify the right people and spur them to action. Effective coalitions support the intended culture change by guiding related meetings and outcomes while paving the way to accomplish the needed change.

The effectiveness of coalitions is demonstrated in research studies. In a study on rebuilding post-war universities in Sarajevo, Tiplic (2010) noted how rectors used coalitions to accomplish culture change. In one institution, a rector's council was created that consisted of well-respected academics. They were charged with developing ideas and making suggestions concerning research, teaching, and learning based on the contemporary developments in other countries. Similarly, the rector's closest associates acted as a coalition and helped to restructure the organization that encouraged the creation of political alliances. These alliances helped institutional stakeholders understand the steps needed to build commitment to reform and promote a new image of a modern university in Sarajevo.

***Encouraging communication.*** Leaders cannot accomplish collaborative efforts without effective communication, and culture change is not possible unless leaders establish strong channels of communication. Communication in the form of conversation, the back and forth between leaders and their constituencies is what shifts identities, forms new relationships, and ultimately produces change (Karp & Tveteraas-Helgo, 2009). When employees change the way they talk and communicate, they construct new forms of relationship and create new ways of knowing and operating.

All change must start with a conversation. When conversation occurs, the status quo begins to shift, and the forces affecting change begin to act as agents attempting to

steer the outcome of the conversation (Thompson, 2010). Leaders must clearly communicate a picture of what the outcomes of the change will look like and present a rationale for why the institution needs the change. This communication results mainly when dialogue is present and includes members from all levels of the institution that commit to engaging in systematic change. Dialogue helps to hone communication and builds trust in the midst of the change process.

Continuous dialogue refers to two-way communication from supervisor to subordinate and subordinate to supervisor explaining and clarifying change. When all parties share information and have the ability to ask questions and present ideas, the level of resistance tends to decrease while dialogue increases understanding and loyalty towards the change (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2012). While many forms of dialogue can occur during the change process, face-to-face communication has had the most impact when directly communicating strong change messages

Effective institutional leaders use clear communication to engage in open and honest dialogue at all levels of the organization. Stakeholders link commitment to change to truthful communication that outlines the details of the change in a personal manner while explaining the change process. The degree that leaders maintain an atmosphere to encourage openness to conversation about change initiatives has implications for employees' reaction to the change (Cloud, 2010; Foster, 2010; Oreg & Berson, 2011). Communication can affect the attitude of individual stakeholders and the degree that trust and open dialogue exist in the organization.

Chih, Yang, and Chang (2012), noted that managers who engaged in frequent communication with employees improved their attitude toward the change initiative by developing a broad understanding of the benefits the change will bring to both the organization and to individual employees. Communication can also reveal resistance as it begins to emerge. Often leaders confine information to a few select individuals who are expected to make the change happen while the opposite behavior is more effective when trying to produce change (Chih et al., 2012). Open communication at all levels provides the opportunity to share a mutual understanding about how the proposed change will positively impact the individual. When leaders properly explain the intentions for the change stakeholders become more understanding and receptive to change even if some negative impacts are unavoidable (Agboola & Salawu, 2011). Leaders can mitigate losses in productivity and decreased performance resulting from the change process through communication.

Embedding communication and participation in every step of the change process motivates employees by specifying what is expected of them, clarifying what they are supposed to accomplish, and identifying the steps needed to improve output. Effective communication avoids the need for an employee to wonder what he or she will gain and benefit from because of the change initiative (Jamalundin & Ahmad, 2012; Lumadi & Mampuru, 2010). Communication helps to mold and shape expectations and set the role and responsibility that each institutional members take on to accomplish the goal. Building strong relationships based on communication is an essential component of administering systematic change.

Communication involves sharing ideas between the appropriate parties to foster change. The communication process used during the change process is essential because various groups have different knowledge about certain domains of the institution that are relevant to performance or organizational tasks (Lines, Saenz, & Aramburu, 2011). The sharing of knowledge leads to higher levels of consensus regarding issues related to both internal and external changes related to the organization. A conversation about the role of communication in the change process is as much about allowing all parties to express their opinions as it is about sharing information and forming support for the change process. Effective communication is not something that happens by accident, but rather a deliberate and strategic tactic for fostering change.

For communication to be successful, leaders implement strategic communication plans. Stensaker and Langley (2010) proposed that there were three main layers to any change initiative: content of change, control or planning of change, and communication of the change. Leaders must plan for communication and create a framework through which to converse about change. These plans often address certain criteria: discrepancy, appropriateness, efficacy, principal support, and valence (Torppa & Smith, 2011). In incorporating these criteria into the communication plan, leaders demonstrate the current state of the organization by juxtaposing where it needs to be with how the change will accomplish moving the organization toward that goal. The plan must also show that the organization has the bandwidth to accomplish the change desired while maintaining full supervisory support, and it must demonstrate how the change will positively impact personnel within the organization.

Effective communication plans also contain redundant messaging using multiple avenues including media, face-to-face, and written communication and address how leaders convey a consistent message operating as opinion leaders or in coalitions to spread and support the message. In a study addressing how a university in Sarajevo attempted to establish itself as a regional leader for change, Tiplic (2012) explained that institutional leaders communicated internally while sending the message externally through local speeches and the media. Repetition as a communication device is an important element in ensuring that the right message is first conveyed to and then reinforced within the institution.

A leader's ability to encourage the development of a transformational vision within the organization is at the heart of the communication process. Supporting change management teams, engaging employees and communicating change are imperative when executing institutional change (Conceicao & Altman, 2011; Hechanova & Cementina-Olpoc, 2012). When transformational vision drives the communication process, stakeholder relationships produce the sharing of knowledge, create interdepartmental collaboration and alignment of training, develop inside the organization, and show improvement. Producing transformation and implementing a strong communication strategy are closely linked in successful change initiatives. In a study of leadership stages on transformational change initiatives, Taborga (2012) noted the success of projects where the subject matter was widely understood among all participants. Senior leadership staff openly communicated the vision and strategy. Those

interviewed in the study reported that everyone involved in the project committed to change, and there were no doubts about how to succeed and what was at stake.

*Addressing resistance.* Resistance to change is linked to the status quo. A desire to maintain the status quo drives resistance and acts as a restraining force to preserve the current equilibrium (Foster, 2010). Because change threatens the status quo, it often takes on political implications by encouraging defensive routines, feelings of uncertainty and a sense of losing control. As such, it can be a threat to the skills, status and position of individuals. To protect the known, individuals rely on conforming to the status quo. To produce change individuals move from what is known either to what is unknown or to that which is yet to be known.

Resistance is often displayed in the form of deviant behavior. Rehora and Turri (2010) noted that behavioral inertia was the propensity to conserve the existing organizational structure even at the expense of efficiency and obtaining official goals. Behavioral inertia produced deviant behavior that manifested as either aggressive or hostile behavior in opposition to common cultural or organizational norms. A person could be considered deviant if he or she violates these norms and can display deviance in multiple forms: production, property, political and personal (Agboola & Salawu, 2011). Production deviance involves leaving work early or purposefully working at a slower pace while property deviance involves sabotaging equipment or lying about hours worked. Political deviance appears when individuals show favoritism or spread rumors and gossip, harass or abuse those who advocate change and coworkers in ways that can be considered personal aggression.



Besides recognizing the different types of deviant behaviors that can arise during the change process, authors have identified different resistance models that can also appear (Agboola & Sawalu, 2011). The psychological model of resistance is one in that individuals challenge all types of change as a matter of course. Resistance embeds itself into the fabric of the psyche of the individual and emerges when change occurs. The systems model of resistance identifies organizational members' discomfort with the change itself in ways that are likely to disadvantage the whole unit (Agboola & Sawalu, 2011). This model focuses less on the change itself and more on what will be lost due to the change, i.e. status, power, and comfort. Institutionalized resisters to change focus on embedded and pre-established behaviors in an organization's structure and decision making processes (Agboola & Sawalu, 2011). In this scenario, change is resisted when it is deemed to be unnecessary. Cultural resistance focuses on the shared patterns of beliefs and expectations within and organization. Because culture is inflexible by nature, those who seek to change its core assumptions often meet with some level of resistance.

Resistance tends to occur at two levels: system and individual. Early authors first believed that resistance was mainly confined to the system, manifesting itself in roles, behaviors, norms, and attitudes (Sonenshein, 2010). More recently Pandey (2012) suggested that resistance truly began at the psychological level that addressed how an individual constructed ideas about change. Similar to organizational levels of resistance, people tended to resist at two levels. The first level, comparative to systematic resistance, opposed the change at face value and in the most general sense. People resisted at this level simply because change required them to think and act differently

(Pandey, 2012). The second level, in comparison to individual resistance, opposed change due to deeper issues concerning the individual and included personal fear or threat of loss. This is the kind of resistance affected the individual at the psychological level.

Because of the complex multi-layered composition of resistance, it is essential that leaders identify factors relating to resistance throughout the organizational change process. Individual resistance factors include perception, self-interest, low motivation, fear of the unknown and failure, conservation, and loss of control (Raza & Standing, 2011). Organizational resistance factors include compliance to norms and values related to culture, threats to power or influence, and past experiences linked to institutional memory. Besides the two basic levels where resistance appears, organizational or individual, resistance can manifest itself in different forms and for different reasons.

As previously noted, the causes for resistance are divided into either systemic or individual factors. Recent authors have closely studied the causes and variables that produce resistance in an organization (e.g., Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011; Lawler & Sillitoe, 2010; McCabe, 2010; Nili et al., 2012; Smollan et al., 2010). When leaders try to execute change, conflicts with the existing power structures within the culture, and resistance across the system are likely to develop. Poor or vague communication and an insufficient understanding of the role of the current organizational structure while the change is being executed leads to systemic resistance. Resistance at the system level also occurs if sufficient resources are not made available to produce the desired change, and

there can be unintended, negative consequences if upper-management does not fully support the change.

Individual resistance can take many forms. Poor or inadequate information between groups linked with unclear communication of personal responsibility indecision making and implementation results in resistance (Kuyvenhoven & Buss, 2011). Organizational silence, the widespread withholding of important information by employees, occurs when individuals experience a lack of ownership. It also includes the inability of stakeholders to buy in to the change due to a perceived lack of control, feelings of not being valued, and the experience of cognitive dissonance (Lawler & Sillitoe, 2010). Employees encounter cognitive dissonance when caught between more than one set of ideas, beliefs, and norms that creates unbalance. Timing and memory are also components of an individual's ability to resist change (McCabe, 2010; Smollan et al., 2010). If a change occurs too fast, people tend to resist due to a lack of sufficient input into the change process. If the change occurs too slowly, individuals lose interest in the process, become frustrated by the details, or revert to relying on institutional memory. When employees revert to previously learned experiences and memories to maintain boundaries obstacles and resistance occurs. A higher level of control during the change process leads to less resistance.

Leaders should not underestimate the power of human resistance. Instead, they should seek to investigate and understand the reasons behind the different levels of resistance to change and address these factors in order to support the change initiative (Atkins, 2010; Pandey, 2012). Every change creates some level of resistance at each

stage of the change process. Resistance, instead of being viewed negatively, can contribute to organizational learning. If handled properly, leaders can use resistance as a valuable source of information to tailor change to more effectively address local needs (Raza & Standing, 2011). Discovering who is resisting and why they are resisting is important to the change process. Leaders should enter into an unemotional conversation with resisters to reveal new ways to improve desired innovations and assist others in reframing their ideas relative to the change process.

Factors exist that can diminish the reaction and resistance to change. Leaders can avoid unnecessary or excessive changes during times of uncertainty. They should change only what needs to be changed to become sustainable while introducing change gradually instead of all at one time to ensure that proper preparation is made to limit resistance (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2012). Resistance diminishes when the nature and benefits of change are well defined. Broader communication can increase support for the change. By promoting the sharing of ideas and encouraging people to ask questions freely, leaders diminish the tendency toward resistance while increasing support for and understanding of the change taking place.

Leaders use additional factors for addressing resistance based on certain institutional scenarios. The tactics for overcoming resistance include education and communication, fostering open communication, and promoting participation and involvement (Agboola & Salawu, 2011). Leaders use education and communication strategies when resistance arises from a lack of information sharing and analysis. Fostering open communication can go a long way toward reducing resistance and

minimizing speculation as employees seek to clarify the situation by asking questions. People who participate in fostering change will more likely be invested in its implementation and committed to its goals.

The stakeholders' perception of the change process will affect their ability to buy in or express deviant behavior. Extreme deviance from pre-established beliefs, organizational identity, and implicit knowledge can explain failed change; therefore, the extent of resistance can be positively related to the extent that individuals need to revise their organizational meaning (Mantere et al., 2012). Perception then becomes vital to the success of the change process and the ability to manage resistance. A perceived positive effect of change promotes acceptance and commitment to change efforts while negative perceptions increase resistance.

A leader's direction action and beliefs also affect the level of resistance displayed during the change process. Oreg and Berson (2011) noted that an individual's likelihood to resist was heavily influenced by the leaders' traits, values and behaviors. The actions of leaders during the change process whether deliberate or unintentional were often reflected in employees' reactions in the organization. In their study, Oreg and Berson (2011) found that a leader's ability to personally emphasize values of openness was related inversely to the employees' intentions to resist the change being proposed. Conversely, the leader's level of dispositional resistance positively related to the employees' intentions to resist the change.

***Securing commitment.*** Shared organizational commitments create a distinctive culture. This culture forms the basis for autonomy within the different segments of the

institution (Dull, 2010). Because commitments are so deeply rooted inside the organization's culture, shaping them can be difficult and costly. Leaders often feel limited in their ability to deploy resources as previous commitments bind the organization to address specific aims, reducing the capacity for the organization to survive under new conditions (Dull, 2010). To find success in the change process, leaders must find new ways to secure commitment.

For an organization that is on the verge of introducing change, commitment building is essential, but making a commitment to change is different than being committed to a specific change being considered. Commitment to change refers to an element that ties an individual or set of individuals to a specific course of action considered necessary for the successful execution of the change initiative (Foster, 2010). In a dual sense, this represents both a commitment away from old cultural norms and to initiatives shaping the innovation. Leaders build commitment to the idea that it is desirable to move away from a situation that is not optimal and to the specific solution proposed to create a firm commitment to the emerging organizational culture (Tiplic, 2011). These actions form a new commitment to the proposed change.

Building and sustaining commitment appears in three forms during the change process and has different implications for behavior. Commitment can be affective, continuance, or normative (Yuh-Shy, 2011). While all three bind employees to the organization, the effect of each behavior can be quite different within the institution. Affective commitment refers to an individual's desire to support a change based on the belief in its benefits (Daif & Yusof, 2011; Foster, 2010; Pandey, 2012). It is based on the

employee's emotional connection, identification with, and involvement in the organization. In an affective frame, employees stay with the institution because they want to. Continuance commitment refers to an individual's understanding of the costs associated with any change and the possible failure of that change (Daif & Yusof, 2011). Resistance to change is also linked to specific costs to both the company and the individual. Employees stay with the organization because they need to and because of the high cost of leaving. Normative commitment refers to an individual's sense of obligation or support for the change and the institution (Daif & Yusof, 2011; Foster, 2010). In this form of commitment, employees have internalized the goals and values of the institution and believe that the planned change is the right thing to do.

The employees' ability to commit to the organization is vital to the success or failure of change initiatives. Employees who hold high levels of organizational commitment tend to accept organizational change because their allegiance to the group directly influences their attitude to organizational change (Chih et al., 2012). Study results showed that job satisfaction positively affected organizational commitment and organizational commitment positively affected attitudes toward change. Aspects of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and change are all linked in the process.

Individuals can display all forms of commitment when leaders nurture the right environment. While individuals displaying strong continuance commitment are unlikely to leave the organization, Foster's (2010) study results showed that employees who believed the institution displayed high levels of fairness in the organizational change process were more likely to want to commit to change (affective), more likely to believe

they should commit to change (normative), and less likely to commit to change based solely on what they could lose if they do not commit (continuance). While continuance commitment tends to keep people employed at the institution, affective and normative forms of commitment tend to keep people more engaged in institutional change initiatives (Foster, 2010). Affective commitment produces support in understanding the benefits of the change, and normative commitment ensures that employees internalize the goals, in a way, that obligates individuals to produce results.

Regardless of the variables measured in studies pertaining to commitment, the outcomes most often showed that commitment was necessary in order to accomplish and sustain the change being presented. In their study of organizational commitment, Shin et al. (2012) noted that employees who received monetary inducements tended to be strongly committed to organizational change. The resources provided helped them experience a strong social relationship with the organization. This led to strong psychological resilience due to the positive emotions experienced within the organization and to the change process. Employees stated that resource support led to increased normative and affective commitment with normative commitment consistently emerging as a stronger predictor of employee behavior during change. Other research showed that affective commitment was a stronger predictor of job performance, job motivation, attendance and decision making (Daif & Yusof, 2011; Yuh-Shy, 2011). Producing some forms of commitment rather than others may be more beneficial to institutional buy-in over the lifetime of the change, but commitment at all levels is crucial if the change is going to survive.



### **Implications**

The study that I conducted at The College assessed the current success of the institution in changing its culture as it prepared to relocate the campus and the resistance surfaced during the process. It also identified challenges that may remain at The College in constructing a workable organizational culture after the completion of the move. I also identified other less prominent issues that surprised institutional leaders and members during the change process. After disassociating data from participants to protect the anonymity, I shared the results with key decision makers at The College including the president, the executive cabinet and others they designated. The leaders may choose to disseminate the information further as they deem appropriate. I also incorporated elements college leaders identified as areas of concern to help the institution assess its effectiveness in producing cultural change while providing support for planning efforts designed to sustain and enhance the operation of the institution. The participants who participated in the study also received copies of the results.

### **Summary**

Fundamental change elements such as understanding the culture, assessing for readiness to change and making data-driven decisions are often initiated by institutional leaders, but many of the remaining elements are cyclical in implementation. The change process is continuously evolving and not linear in operation. After leaders prepare for change they begin to communicate the need for change by creating a sense of urgency and assessing the internal and external environment for both strengths and weakness of the change initiative. These elements represent the early implementation phases of the

change process where leaders capture the initial buy-in and gain support and resources to support the change.

As the cultural transformation begins to take shape, leaders establish a strong sense of vision that aligns with institutional and individual values, create sense making opportunities for the constituencies, and interpret institutional symbols and artifacts to help assess the status of the change. The remaining elements display the cyclical nature of the change process: embracing collaboration, encouraging communication, addressing resistance, and securing commitment. Throughout the course of the change process, leaders ensure that all constituencies are prepared to act collaboratively in their efforts to produce and embrace the new cultural elements. They produce buy in and bolster collaborative efforts through clear and consistent communication during the change process. As resistance surfaces throughout the course of the change, leaders openly address and defuse obstacles while ensuring the acknowledgement of opponents to the change. The goal of the cultural transformation is commitment to new ways of operating. Key ideas from the literature review helped to inform the research questions and assess the cultural change efforts that developed at The College in preparation for campus relocation. As I sought to answer these questions, the ideas identified in the literature review were applied to The College. In the remainder of the study, I discuss the elements of the formative evaluation that were used to collect and analyze data while also touching on protection of participants and establishing credibility and dependability of results.

## Section 2: The Methodology

## **Introduction**

In this study, I used a formative, qualitative, process-oriented evaluation to collect data about stakeholder perceptions of the change process to assess the effectiveness of the process being used to ensure organizational success during the transition and to gauge the sustainability of the change. In the section, I illustrate the steps The College has taken to create a unique identity because the relationship between The College and its founding institution, The Church, was no longer sustainable in its previous form. I evaluate how well The College is making the transition to a new campus.

The essential question addressed in the study is what strategies are leaders using to create cultural change and prepare for the campus transition? Additional essential questions include

2. What challenges did leaders anticipate in preparing for the change process?
3. What plans did leaders create in anticipation of the challenges they expected?
4. What role do key stakeholders play in the continuing operations of The College, and how are they involved in the decision making process in the course of the move?
5. What changes do internal institutional stakeholders perceive to be necessary to successfully change the culture?
6. How do the changes permeate the institution across stakeholder groups?
7. What kind of resistance to the anticipated changes developed, and how did leaders address this kind of resistance?

8. How is information about the status of the organization and progress made toward resolving changes communicated to staff, students and other stakeholders, and what was the effect of the communication effort?
9. What changes occurred (are occurring) in the transition from what existed to what is being created?
10. What challenges remain after the change process is complete that may affect new change initiatives in the future?

Evaluation is a form of applied research that is used to study how a particular program, practice, or process operates (Tavakol, Gruppen, & Torabi, 2010). To collect reliable and valid data about outcomes or efforts, researchers use systemic evaluation approaches to study the application of existing knowledge. Evaluation is opposed to theoretical research that is used to add new knowledge. In general, researchers use evaluations to make a judgment and to develop a better understanding of operations so that stakeholders can learn lessons and make improvements (Hassan, 2013). In this study, I used a knowledge-oriented context to frame the evaluation to assess how the process of culture change is affecting the attitudes and behaviors of institutional stakeholders. In process-oriented studies, scholars focus on pertinent, applicable, and adaptable content along with implementation practices in order to identify program success and possible avenues for improvement, whereas outcomes evaluations focus on measuring program results and the total impact on the stakeholders involved. Evaluation contributes to the development of the program or process, influences decisions about the program, and provides a picture of present structures in the process.

## Qualitative Evaluations

Traditionally, qualitative forms of research take a social constructivist approach. Constructivism is developed out of scientific approaches to research and challenges the assumption that reality can define itself (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). A social constructivist approach to research offers an alternative view, suggesting that reality exists in the cultural and historical context in which it takes place. As such, it is subject to the changes and patterns that emerge from the people who define the culture and create the history. Because culture and people influence reality, researchers will find multiple meanings to reality. People hold different perspectives in any given situation; their experiences shape how they perceive a situation and derive meaning from life circumstances. Therefore, according to Glesne (2011), the researcher must obtain accurate representations of the problem, while fully understanding the context in which the study is being conducted. In this study, I chose to use a qualitative emphasis because the reality of the culture change process at The College can only be defined both those immersed and living in the present reality. In order to understand the problems facing The College, I had to understand the context in which The College operates.

Qualitative methodologies are often defined using certain characteristics. Most researchers perform studies and collect data in the participants' natural environment (Lodicio et al., 2010). Unlike quantitative studies where researchers control or manipulate environments to test a theory, qualitative researchers immerse themselves in the participants' environment and explore the context in which decisions are made to better establish the meanings behind the data. Historically, quantitative methods have

been employed more often in the evaluation process because they provide an opportunity. Quantitative methods can be generalized to a larger population due to random sampling across the population and are theory-based and exploratory in nature. However, quantitative methods may not be the best approach when analyzing individual situations, like that of The College, as a researcher seeks to evaluate perceptions and beliefs with a specific context (Yuksel, 2010). Conversely, qualitative approaches can be used to highlight the importance of understanding the perceptions and beliefs of individuals within their environment. The qualitative evaluator uses interviews, observations, and documents to understand individual experiences and to identify and assess the impact of themes within the organization, as suggested by Weiss (1998). The goal of qualitative evaluation is to reveal the entire process under study and tell in rich detail the whole story of the program using information collected from participants. Only qualitative approaches provide the kind of in-depth descriptions and details about the program that apply to this study.

### **Formative and Process-Oriented**

Evaluators report on the findings of the evaluations using two basic timetables. In the formative mode, evaluators assess the program or process while it is occurring. In contrast, summative evaluations produce data at the conclusion of the program or process and focus on the results (Weiss, 1998). Formative approaches help develop and assess current practices in order to make recommendations for adjustments designed to make improvements, while summative approaches pass judgment and measure results. If data collection occurs during the implementation phase, evaluators often use a formative

approach to guide further development. Data collected at the conclusion of the study more often relates to summative evaluation. Because I collected data during the process of campus relocation with the intent of facilitating change during implementation and after the process is complete, it was appropriate to consider the evaluation formative in nature.

Researchers use evaluation to assess the quality of the program or process under study to evaluate process efficiencies and/or to evaluate program outcomes (McNeil, 2011). Because process evaluations are used to examine the elements of what is transpiring inside the program while it is developing, they are often linked with the formative evaluation approach. Conversely, outcome evaluations are used to examine the results of the program or its effects and their impact on the environment; therefore, summative evaluation is most often associated with outcomes-based evaluations. However, applications of formative and summative evaluation are rarely mutually exclusive, existing instead on a continuum with formative evaluation often leading to summative results. Formative evaluations should include the creation of judgments about how well a program or process is progressing along with where improvements should occur in order to produce summative results. Because I looked to gauge the strategies that were being used by institutional leaders to shape culture during the process of campus relocation, I used a formative-process evaluation.

### **Selection of Participants**

Qualitative researchers often use nonrandom sampling techniques because the goal of these studies is not generalizability, but rather to develop a complete

understanding of the phenomenon under study. However, for the purpose of this study, trying to formulate a random sample would not be appropriate because that could not be expected to provide the appropriate data required to identify the strategies used to create culture change during the campus transition.

Key participants at the institution who held unique information that may not be available to the general population were identified for interview. This purposeful selection of participants included administrative leaders from the institution (the president, executive cabinet, members from the board), members of the strategic planning committee, faculty chairs, leaders from The Church, students, and external stakeholders. All individual interview participants were initially contacted via e-mail to invite them to participate. I also worked with the director of student life to secure a list of student leaders to take part in interviews. I then contacted each of the students via e-mail to solicit their participation in the study. All e-mails provided a short description of the study and included a copy of the consent form for review. A generic list of participants is located in Appendix B.

Initial documents used in the study were provided by institutional leaders, though public in nature, to help establish a basis for the problem and was presented to the IRB at The College. After this body agreed to grant access and final approval to begin conducting interviews with the selected participants, I began the data collection process. I identified specific stakeholder perspectives, and a form of snowball sampling was used to identify additional people for interview that based on the recommendations of leaders or other constituents. The participants were identified based on their access to institutional



knowledge, key information about cultural elements of the institution and their position at the institution, all of which makes them assets to the study. The series of interviews took place shortly after the official move occurred in early 2014. Each interview occurred in person in a one-on-one format and was audio recorded for transcription and coding afterward. Interviews occurred either at a local coffee shop or on campus, depending on the preference of the participant. Signed forms were collected indicating that each interviewee understood the purpose of the study and agreed to participate, and were kept locked and not shared with anyone inside or outside institution.

### **Data Collection Methods**

In qualitative studies, researchers choose from among multiple methods to collect data in the form of observations, interviews, documents and/or audio visual materials (Lodicio et al., 2010). In evaluation research specifically more than one method is used because the goal is to create a description of the strategies used during the change process that helped to shape culture and assess their effectiveness in producing sustainability. Using multiple data collection methods can also increase the credibility and dependability of the results of the study. I received official approval from Walden University's IRB to collect data on March 19, 2014 (Reference #:03-20-14-0256221).

### **Interviews**

Researchers use interviews when time constraints exist that will not allow for the use of observations or when the study measures past events that are impossible to replicate in the present time (Merriam, 2009). This is the case in this evaluation. Because I am not physically close to the location of The College, I had a limited amount

of time on site to collect data for the study. Also, as I studied the institutional documents, I noted that the foundational elements of the cultural change process began to occur in 2006. Observations cannot presently measure these elements, but they can be captured through interviews that ask participants to recall and reflect on the events that laid the foundation for the change process.

Once I received official IRB approval from The College, I used semi-structured one-on-one interviews to collect first-hand participant perspectives. Researchers use semi-structured interviews because they provide both a basic framework and structure for the interview and allow the researcher the flexibility to guide or change the interview flow based on participant responses (Merriam, 2009). I used interview protocols that included specific interview questions developed out of the research questions and guided by the principles established in the literature review (See Appendix C). Each interview lasted approximately one hour.

When choosing students to interview, I gave preference to those in leadership positions in student government and other organizations associated with The College, who were most likely to be aware of details relating to the change initiatives because of the working relationships they have developed with institutional leaders. I worked with the director of student life to secure a list of these students. I then contacted the students directly via e-mail to ask them to participate. Through this process, I gauged the strength of an individual's commitment to the change, elements participants liked or disliked about the change, any anxieties that might have developed in the course of the move,

lessons learned as a result of the activity, and areas of discomfort that may create resistance to future change effort.

Each interview discussion was audio recorded. I stored data on a personal, password protected computer, and a copy of all data was maintained on a personal backup drive that was protected by an internal system that only I have access. I transcribed all interviews in preparation for the coding process. As transcription of the interviews began, I kept drafts in a secure briefcase while traveling and a locked filing cabinet at my home. During the coding process, I identified codes consisting of words drawn directly from the transcripts and kept them in a code book to assist in collapsing into themes. Logs also accompanied the codes that began to link literature review concepts to data results.

### **Documents**

I also sought to develop a historical perspective of the context that the change occurred and an understanding of the issues that have led to the change being realized. Using archived institutional documents and other records generated by The College, I established the foundation for the change. Researchers use institutional documents to access preexisting data about processes used in the organization (Lodico et al., 2010). I obtained access to institutional documents from the president of The College, though these documents would also be available publically.. Initially, I also studied documents relating to The College's efforts to obtain and maintain their regional accreditation by the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC). These documents demonstrated

the school's volatility and helped define problems at The College that led to the change of location and the need for cultural change.

### **Role of the Researcher**

I am not professionally associated with The College, although I am familiar with the institution having made multiple visits to the campus over the last six years; however, the president of the institution is a family member. This information was already widely known across the campus. My initial conversations with members of the IRB at The College led me to believe that this relationship would not be an issue when collecting data from various stakeholders. The letter of cooperation provided by The College clearly stated that the IRB did not believe my relationship with the president hindered the data collection and research process. Nevertheless, to counteract any apprehension on the part of participants, I asked all interviewees to acknowledge at the beginning of each interview that I had disclosed this relationship and reassured them that their responses were kept completely confidential and were not shared with anyone on or off campus except in aggregate. The process of analyzing the data controlled any bias that might be generated by this relationship.

### **Data Analysis**

All interviews were audio recorded, and transcription of the interviews began at the conclusion of each interview. Once I transcribed all interviews, I began the coding process. The coding process involved reading and rereading the interview transcripts while searching for key words or phrases to display patterns that helped define the characteristics of the study and answer the research questions. Merriam (2009) explained

data analysis as a complex process that involved moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation. These meanings, understandings or insights constituted the findings of a study. Findings included the forms of organized descriptive accounts, themes, or categories that cut across all data, or in the form of models and theories that explained the data.

The first stage in the coding process is referred to as “open coding” (Merriam, 2009, p. 179) since the researcher is open to any piece of relevant information that might present itself in the initial evaluation. Open coding usually involves large numbers of randomly assigned codes that have not been analyzed or organized. Analytical or “axial coding” (Merriam, 2009, p. 180) moves beyond merely recording descriptive codes, incorporating interpretation and grouping codes based on related meaning.

These axial codes then collapse into categories or themes that can span over and summarize multiple codes (Merriam, 2009). These themes directly address the research questions proposed in the study. I linked the themes as closely to the data as possible that meant that the phrasing used to describe the themes came directly from the transcripts. The themes are considered exhaustive when they cover enough of the data and codes to encompass all relevant information along with being mutually exclusive from one another. During the coding organization and collapsing process, I interpreted the data in a way that ensured that each theme was a unique addition to the study. All codes were kept in a code book to track the refining process.

## **Findings**

The campus transition officially occurred in January of 2014, and I conducted all 22 interviews the first week of April 2014. Stakeholders expressed a general sense of excitement about the new campus location and approved of the major steps The College was taking toward independence. However, there was still a strong sense that the organization needed to define its identity further. Faculty, staff, students, and institutional leaders were challenged to define the current culture and offer a description of the emerging structure with which they could identify.

**Theme one- identity in reset.** When questioned about defining the current culture of the institution or explaining its identity, stakeholders used words such as *transition, excited yet hesitant, building year, and in reset*. There was a strong sense on campus that all stakeholders were excited about what the future held without being sure about what that meant. There was also a sense of anxiety or hesitation about the next steps. One staff member provided her thoughts on the state of institutional identity by stating the College has

a renewed sense of energy and passion, excitement yet a fear of the unknown . . .

. Now that we are here people see what we are doing and what we are about, but

in that there is hesitancy because this is the first The College has been on its own.

Another staff member made similar comments regarding the balance between excitement and apprehension with an emphasis on changes affecting the work environment. Using the words of the staff member, “I think there is a sense of excitement, but there is this something new. For some people that excitement is tinged with trepidation because they

don't know what the future holds . . . excitement and nervousness is probably the best way to describe it.”

Along with sentiments from staff members, faculty also expressed the notion that the campus was still in a state of transition with an emphasis on moving away from identity with The Church and moving toward an independent identity. Leaders must further explore this critical process.

Now The Church part is gone, and so now we are reexamining what does that mean for us as a standalone college, and maybe someday a small university . . . . I don't expect The College mission to change. If anything, I expect it to be tightened because we are taking on a corporate model, but also we are dealing with WASC and other groups that are calling for increased accountability.

Another faculty member echoed sentiments regarding the transition while taking the time to explore new opportunities and reassess where The College wants its structure to develop the future. The faculty member discussed the notion of reassessing the new independence and finding a balance between the institutional heritage and making necessary changes toward growth.

There is a certain understanding of where we have come from as an institution. I think that is a key part of our identity . . . . Do we need to make any adjustments or changes in some of those religious tenants as we move forward? Because we have been under the umbrella of a church, but now we are not even on the same location as a church. Does that give us freedom to explore other . . . I don't want

to say theological areas because that makes it sound like we are going off the deep end.

One student equated the identity of the institution to creating athletic programs in terms of building or rebuilding The College to create what it wants and needs to become. The student noted the lack of identity over the years but discussed excitement for the future.

The one thing that I have always heard was ‘it’s a building year.’ I feel like that is kind of how our college is. We are always in a building year . . . . We have never been established . . . I know I have talked about things being a building year, but this year actually feels like a building year.

Yet another student discussed culture and identity in relation to the heritage of The College as a mission of The Church and gaining new opportunities for advancement and freedom under the umbrella. The student noted that the basic foundation of the institution remains the same but the campus transition allows for new opportunities.

I think that our culture is actually changing . . . . We have our own campus which allows us to gain freedom in a lot of areas, but it also forces us to cut ties with a lot of other places. I do think it allows us to learn to transition. When I keep thinking about our culture right now, I keep thinking about two words: transition and flexibility.

While there was a sense on campus that new ways exist to express the institutional identity, institutional stakeholders still had a sense that the foundation of the institution was still stable, and continued culture and identity creation will emerge from the foundation. Institutional stakeholders often referred to the culture, in the words of the



president, as being in “reset.” One institutional leader addressed the purpose of the institution and removing the nonessential elements from the core of the mission while bringing the core into the culture moving forward by stating

we are in the process of a reset. We are changing the dynamic of who we are. I believe most people believe that we are working hard to maintain our heritage, the proper parts of our heritage and moving that into 2014 and beyond.

Another institutional leader also addressed identifying the heritage, linking it to the mission and identity of The College and finding ways to express this identity in daily practices. The leader called this flux in institutional distinctiveness the “identity pendulum.” In this view, the institution was trying to find itself on the pendulum of identity. For many years, its identity was entwined with The Church, and now stakeholders find themselves trying to determine what elements of its current identity are unique to The College as a higher education institution and what elements are remnants of its previous relationship and connection with The Church. For the institution to fully develop identity on the pendulum, it has continually to define itself as it carries out its daily operations and makes every decision. New norms and culture creation come from continuously linking routine actions to the mission and vision.

Identity and culture are made up of the thousands if not millions of miniscule decisions that are made day in and day out that either reinforces what those words say on the piece of paper or are against them. In that, we have to be razor sharp in the decisions even if it makes everyone mad, [to ensure] that it reinforces the new norm.

Identity is created by linking daily decisions and actions to the mission and vision of the institution through strategies that reinforce the new norms and remove the remnants of the old culture to establish a unique institutional identity.

One of the members of the board of trustees discussed the notion of constantly requiring the evaluation of the mission and vision of the institution around the idea of a clearly articulated identity and distinctiveness. The board member stressed the importance of understanding the link between mission, vision, values and the identity of the institution.

We will begin this next Board meeting by discussing the articulation or the re-articulation of the vision, mission and values of the institution . . . just writing really nice statements is not going to change the culture. It's also having to wrestle with the question of who are we and what do we want to become.

Though the theme of identity did not derive directly from one of the research questions, it appeared as an indirect result of asking questions regarding culture and creating a new way of understanding how the institution will operate moving forward. It is important to highlight this idea of identity shift because it often appeared during the course of the interviews. The creation and definition of a new institutional identity were recognized by stakeholders as The College moved into the future. It is obvious to all stakeholders that the institutional culture has changed drastically over the last few years and as a direct result of preparing to change campuses and to establish a unique identity.

**Theme two- creating change- stabilizing empowered leadership.** The stabilizing of institutional leaders, including legitimizing the power of the board of

trustees along with hiring a qualified and experienced president, were the foundational elements of creating institutional change. Without these basic building blocks, the rest of the strategies used would not have developed at The College. All strategies derive from this basic principle of change. Many of the institutional stakeholders specifically noted the hiring and work of the president in starting the change. One staff member commented “I didn’t know the president before him, and the president that was there my first year was very hands off and just holding the reigns hoping somebody else was there. So there wasn’t a plan. We were kind of in a holding pattern.” Yet another staff member noted

the first thing was we had to branch off from our previous governing structure from The Church. That was first and foremost. I think the stabilization of [having] the new president that understood what we needed to do and steps we had to take was the point in which we pivoted as a catalyst to change.

The faculty also feels strongly that the president played a big role in establishing a strong foundation for creating change. One faculty member, while discussing what affected culture change, noted “the issue with WASC and the right person at the right time to take the leadership that we needed. A person that was placed in a position that could really make decisions. Where they weren’t just kind of on a short leash.” Yet another faculty member believed that “[the president] had a lot to do with that as far as his leadership which has always been very positive and upbeat and optimistic.”

One member of the board of trustees made strong statements regarding the legitimization and development of the Board over the last few years. The study

participant equated the early structure of the board to a puppet required to bend to the wishes of a leader and evolved to a board that provided strategic input to the president. The board member stated that “the board almost did not have the perceived power in and of themselves to make the transition. The way the institution was being directed and manipulated, the board was not permitted [to] assume the responsibility of governance that they should have.”

The same individual also wanted to note the importance of having a stable and experienced president in making the change necessary while emphasizing that the president was the main reason the campus relocation and change in culture were possible and successful.

It cannot be understated the importance of this issue, and that is the role of the president. It is not just that we have a president. It's that we have a president that is wise in his leadership. We have a president that has vision. We have a president who has navigated the transition. I think we are here today not because WASC made us make a governance change. We are not here today, in these deciding days, because we have a great faculty which we do. We are not here today because we have a great board which we do. We are here today because we have a great president.

Clark (1970) noted the importance of establishing strong leadership for those institutions that find themselves in a chaotic stage of existence. In the mid-2000s, The College found itself in such a state. All of the stakeholders recognized the imperative role the president played at this point in developing the culture of the institution and

stabilizing the environment so The College could begin to establish a new saga. While stabilizing the governance structure and establishing a consistent presidency were important ingredients to the change process, leaders had to connect these changes with actionable items that addressed lingering institutional issues. The president, under the guidance of the board, had to assess the state of the institution and create a plan for improvement. The following three strategies house the major components included in the plan for stabilization and independence: 1) establishing institutional knowledge, 2) creating financial independence and expansion, and 3) addressing and moving past resistance.

*Subtheme 2.1- establishing institutional knowledge.* Leaders used intentional strategies to show that they had internal knowledge of The College and that their decisions were grounded in the heritage of The College and addressed the well-being of the institution. First, the new president took the time to understand the culture and the people that made up the culture in the early years of his tenure. One staff member who was a student at the time of the initial leadership change in the mid to late 2000s stated that the president took proactive steps to understand and get to know the student population. The staff member felt “that knowing that [the president] and the Cabinet and all the people who were up at that level really cared about who we were as students, and that they cared about our best interest.”

There was also a sense that institutional leaders had to communicate that they understood the culture by tying changes and initiatives back to the heritage of the institution. Leaders had to know the people that were working and living in the culture,

but they also had to understand how The College embraced the setting and climate of the institution. This knowledge base was essential for creating buy in from more seasoned stakeholder groups that had rebuffed change in the past. One faculty member and former institutional leader commented on the importance of the president's ability to tie the message back historically "because historically, if anyone tried to change things there were sectors of fear that we would lose our foundational values . . . . One of the things [that was demonstrated] was honoring our heritage and securing our future." In taking time to understand the culture, leaders also displayed patience before making large scale changes after entering the institution.

When institutional leaders take the time to understand the culture, they begin to realize what changes are essential for the institution based on the needs of the culture. Leaders who rush into change can alienate long standing employees who are strongly linked to the existing culture (Nastase et al., 2012). One staff member who was hired at The College around the same time as the president stated that the previous president didn't solicit input and insisted on rapid change. In contrast, the new president "did a nice job of building rapport and getting in with the right people. So that when we left it wasn't total anger and frustration." Waiting to make change allows institutional leaders to make sound judgments based on tested data (Foster, 2010; Warrick, 2011). Stakeholders believed that the president was patient in understanding the culture before making large scale changes.

If leaders are slow to make change, it does not mean that the leader failed to identify the needed changes early in their tenure. Often, good leaders can easily identify

the pressure points and adjustments that must occur, but wait for the right time to implement them. One staff member noted the president's patience in determining the changes before implementation.

I actually made a comment to him one time about it being remarkable that you did not do anything drastic in the first year because that is usually what a good leader does. They don't jump in and make these big changes right away, but, at the same time, it was sort of obvious what the fix should be.

Institutional leaders at The College, namely the president and the cabinet, took the time to understand the culture of the institution and define precisely the necessary changes. In waiting to make changes, they were able to strategize the best approaches to tailoring the change to the needs of The College and help create stability for the institution out of a chaotic and unstable environment. Clark (1970) and emergent change theorists including Pettigrew and Whipp (1991), noted the importance of aligning the change process with the unique attributes of the institution. Emergent change theorists refer to this as responding to the environment. For Clark (1970) it addressed the program aspect of this model. By taking time to understand the culture of the institution, leaders at the College aligned the changes made to the organization and provided a level of visibility needed to create buy in.

Multiple stakeholders including staff, faculty, and students noted the idea of transparency and approachability during the change process. One staff member commented that "first and foremost, there has been a very deliberate effort to be as transparent as possible. I see that through monthly updates [and] communication

especially now that we are in a new phase now that we are here.” Another staff member noted the degree that the president and leadership were accessible when stating “I think they [leaders] are receptive, and that is something I have always appreciated about our leadership here. I could go talk to the president if I was an admissions counselor. He came down this morning and was talking to these guys [admissions].”

One faculty member, when describing the communication to the community within The College about the change process, reported

I felt like the administrators were very transparent with as much as they could be. In certain areas, we don't need to know everything that is going on behind closed doors. I never felt like they were holding out on us or saying we couldn't ask something. I felt like, all things considered, they were very transparent.

Additionally one student leader noted the transparent communication of the president and made special note regarding addressing the student population and ensuring they were prepared for the impending changes by noting

[The president] allowed so many different questions and complaints too . . . . He answered them very transparently. That is a huge thing in an institution. That you have to be transparent especially with the students who, we tend have this attitude of self-righteousness that we deserve to know.

Most individuals in the study communicated that leaders were transparent in the early stages of the change process and were open to providing information and allowing space for questions regarding the change. Lewin (1947) discussed the importance of unfreezing the current culture to create space and mindset from which change can occur



in his planned change model. Kotter (1996) further elaborated on this concept and noted that this process starts by freely sharing information and data that can help define the problem in context and suggested how best to address it. At The College, stakeholders agreed that institutional leaders made a conscious effort to be transparent as changes were made and openly solicited input in determining how to address problems.

*Subtheme 2.2- creating financial independence and expansion.* Institutional leaders implemented certain strategies related to enhancing financial independence separate from The Church in order to create their own identity and prepare for campus relocation. These elements, identified by multiple stakeholders, included downsizing or “rightsizing” as the stakeholders referred to it, establishing a strong nontraditional presence, and moving away from shared services between The College and The Church. These basic components toward change helped the institution create a financial foundation on which to create the move.

First, institutional leaders determined that the budgetary constraints of the institution could not support the ratio of faculty/staff to the student population, and the reduction of staff was necessary. One staff member, who also happens to be an alumnus, talked indirectly about rightsizing the institution as it was viewed from a student perspective. The staff member compared the earlier experience to the present circumstances.

I think now that there are more people in the right seat on the bus. Before . . . staff and faculty members were super passionate about what they did, but they

were not necessarily a great fit academically or personality wise, or they were a great fit personality wise but not academically.

An institutional leader echoed these statements regarding the need to staff the institution with persons who fit within the faculty. This strategy was important in ensuring the creation of a more professional and streamlined higher education culture to promote sustainability.

Some of the faculty enjoyed a mom and pop kind of environment. Some of them longed for something more than mom and pop as an academic institution. I think some have made the transition to a different perspective, and some were asked to transition for other reasons . . . . It is important to make sure everyone is on the bus in the right seat on the bus.

By right-sizing and aligning staffing within the institution, leaders ensured that personnel with the skill sets needed to promote sustainability remained at The College.

One faculty member and institutional leader also noted the efforts toward rightsizing and the direct connection of that effort to the institutional budget. The faculty member noted the pay cuts stakeholders across the institution accepted to maintain the institution.

We ran lean and what we called right sized the institution . . . . It wasn't uncommon to go to a meeting and say 'you have to cut \$100,000 from your budget'. . . . There were a lot of hard conversations and a lot of hard work. We all took pay cuts at one point just to make it through.

Another institutional leader addressed the idea of downsizing the institution and emphasized the emotional hardships that leaders faced in making these decisions. The leader provided a rationale for implementing the rightsizing and noted it as a direct strategy.

We had too many employees, not enough students and some faculty members needed to be let go, and some staff members needed to be let go. That was a very difficult period for leadership because this was, if anything else, a family. It might have been a dysfunctional family, but it was a family. People knew that they were coming here, and they felt like they were called to be here . . . . To remove people intentionally from that community was a very difficult thing.

Right-sizing was an intentional strategy used by institutional leaders to better align the budgetary needs of the institution. Clark (1970), in the personnel component of the change model, discussed the idea that the level that senior faculty and even staff accept the change presented directly correlates to the success of the change initiative. Leaders used right-sizing to ensure that resource levels were appropriate, and that faculty members and staff were in place who would buy into the changes and future plans for growing and stabilizing the institution.

Another strategy used and identified in establishing financial independence was the expansion and success of the nontraditional programs. Institutional leaders spoke directly about establishing a strategic initiative designed to create a sustainable future. A large part of that was investing in programming. One leader noted “it was about what programs do we need? In our society what works outside of our mission and then how do

we do that differently in modalities. So we have worked on the nontraditional side.” Not only was there an emphasis on establishing a better adult program, but institutional leaders created an experienced leadership structure at the adult program level that would allow the programs to grow and thrive. A staff member noted the significance in the growth of the adult programs by stating “I believe the official statistics say that there were approximately 25 students in the program . . . . I always say 33 because I saw some list that had 33 names of students, but today we have almost 500 students in that program.”

Another faculty member and institutional leader noted how the growth of the online programs has played a role in shaping the identity of the institution and its capacity to sustain change.

With the growth of the online program, who we are and what is our identity as a liberal arts institution with discussion about planning to start graduate level programs which require different kinds of resource issues . . . . We have undergone a huge amount of change in the last couple of years and [have developed] the capacity to sustain that change.

Another staff member noted that growth of the nontraditional programs has created a strong enough presence on campus that it requires a new mindset separate from the traditional world in terms of student service. These two mindsets can come into conflict periodically as they learn how to operate together to best serve the needs of both the traditional and adult learners.

Lastly, in establishing financial independence institutional leaders moved away from shared services with The Church and found new ways to establish their own services. At times, this meant creating internal positions, and at times it meant outsourcing services or creating partnerships outside the organization that could produce the change needed. One staff member commented that the results came “in separating from [The Church] and from where we had to create our own systems and stand on our own two feet. I think that has been really helpful in figuring out who we are and what is important to us.” Another faculty member and former institutional leader described the details of how the shared services structure began to dissolve as the institution began to realize its own independence.

We continued to gain more independence because we had the shared services piece that we were paying them [The Church] to do from financial services to IT . . . Slowly we started taking some of those pieces back. Instead of paying all of this money for the shared service, we would take back the financial piece. etc. Another staff member provided an additional layer of detail and elaborated regarding how The College went about removing the shared services process. The staff member noted the specific order that the services were acquired by The College- dining services, student life, maintenance, personnel and staffing, accounting services, financial services, and the CFO by reporting

all of the shared services were attached to The Church. Everything had to be peeled off. It was done in a timely fashion and in a strategic fashion . . . .

Eventually, the last thing that was plugged in, and I would say it was one of the biggest challenges that we still carry with us was, the technology.

Additionally, a faculty member who used to hold institutional leadership during the time of the culture and institutional crisis echoed the sentiments regarding moving away from shared services and towards financial independence. The faculty member also noted the importance of independent financial management and personnel along with major shifts in payroll and human resource management. These strategies also led to the further realization of a unique identity. Regarding these changes, the faculty member stated “there were a number of areas in what we called shared services. A lot of those ties had to be reworked, and then there was this whole issue of not creating a new identity as reinforcing an identity. Being strategic in moving away from shared services allowed the institution to create the final building blocks needed to establish itself as a separate entity and prepare for campus relocation. This process allowed The College to fully operate independently from The Church, something that had not happened in the previous 40 years.

***Subtheme 2.3- addressing and moving past resistance.*** Resistance is a factor that can derail any change effort and one that appears in every change initiative. The College experienced different levels of resistance through the culture change and campus relocation change process. As noted by different stakeholders, resistance emerged because of unknown or uncertain circumstances that led to skepticism, a connection to past identities, strong ties to The Church, struggles to maintain power, changes in

institutional systems, and a passive-aggressive mindset based on limited expectations for The College and its programs.

There is a strong sense at the College that people fear the unknown and are hesitant to make changes because of the uncertainty they introduce. Like much of the current culture and identity discussed earlier, stakeholders discussed the idea of resistance based on trepidation, fear, hesitation, or a general skepticism for what would or would not occur. One student noted the hesitation felt by the student body in stating “we were in the midst of the old campus but excited about the new things too. The general feelings were kind of nervous because we were not sure of what was going to happen.” A staff member who was once a student and also an alumnus of The College commented on how fear of the unknown caused resistance at the alumni level.

Also, in the alumni there was some resistance just like in the name change . . . .

Most of the time when we were able to sit down with them face to face and one-on-one and ask the questions they were excited about it at the end of the day. It was just resistance to the unknown.

A faculty member touched on the idea of lingering skepticism among seasoned employees who were quick to dismiss grand ideas of change based on leaders’ past failures to do so. The faculty member noted “the initial reaction is ‘well we will wait and see.’ There was that ‘we have heard this before, I want to believe it but I will wait and see.’”

There were also those individuals who resisted because they were committed to the old identity and status of the institution. In their estimation, The College needed to

keep the same course that it had been following for the past 40 years. These individuals were often also closely linked to The Church and were committed to the pre-existing partnership in its current state. One staff member commented that some individuals both internally and externally believed the notion of separating from the Church meant that the College disowned its Christian heritage stating “it is just a different place. Whenever there is [the kind of] falsehood or misinformation that [has] happened previously, then people are always more resistant.”

A current staff member who was also a student at the time of the initial institutional changes commented on the feelings of connection with The Church and the resistance that relationship brought out in certain individuals.

There was resistance initially to becoming separate from The Church. You got resistance from internal stakeholders who believed The Church has done all of this stuff for us . . . . Resistance that came when we tried to change our name.

We got resistance from students, staff, faculty and alumni . . . . When it came time to move campuses there was resistance from those who thought we didn’t leave it in the right way.

Another staff member commented on the mindset of individuals who held an unrealistic view of the relationship with The Church and its connection to The College. The staff member believed that for those “that had been here a long time that was a huge culture shift that we are a college on our own and have really nothing to do except for historically some of the founders had a denominational leaning theology wise.”



An institutional leader further discussed the overarching mindset that individuals held regarding maintaining and protecting the integrity of The College. They wanted to preserve the current culture and save it from new institutional ideas.

This is a forty-year-old institution that was birthed by another organization that from its very beginnings the lines were blurred, and it was a family atmosphere and a family unit . . . . Individuals felt like we were crossing purposes with the institution that they knew . . . . I believe that at the core, and this is ascribing motive to it, they believed they were trying to save whatever that institution was. The College of 300 forever from whatever [we] were trying to do with it. A college of 300 forever does not survive.

Even the board of trustees struggled early on to understand the importance of change and the need to move towards a more sustainable culture. One board member commented that

the board was immune to the confusion of resistance. I think even within the board there were differing visions for the institution. I think there are some, for a while, that held on to ‘this is the old who we are, and we are going to keep this philosophy or strategy or culture.’

Resistance to the unknown could be linked to what is also known as an interest in maintaining the status quo. The allegiance to the status quo may also be connected to the idea that certain power structures were already in place and changes to culture would upset that balance and displace the balance of power as it existed.

One faculty member who used to hold an institutional leadership position discussed the idea of resistance based on the restructuring of the power dynamic as new leaders emerged and began to change the system and operational functions. The faculty member noted that The College used to be framed merely as a ministry of The Church and because of the deficit in leadership, individuals had to step into positions in power merely to fill a role. Resistance appeared as new leaders arrived and the power balance was restructured.

The institution needed to adjust and compensate for the way things were run.

When we did have good leadership come in and started to establish systems and different things, then obviously, all of those people who had influence and power no longer have that. Faculty obviously had a huge role and huge influence as they should because they are faculty. In the absence of leadership faculty probably had more say. There was a lot of resistance from faculty and a lot of resistance from staff who had a little bit more power.

Changes in power relationships also emerged from institutional systems to streamlined processes, causing a shift in operational procedures and the status quo of conducting business at The College. New areas for growth and development caused a backlash from some stakeholders. One faculty member commented on the resistance towards creating online program when stating “take any traditional faculty and we have a number of traditional faculty that have taught online who really don’t believe it is an equal experience. They don’t feel like the educational experience is the same as online.”

Another staff member addressed issues of resistance from the traditionalist side of education towards new modalities.

There are things that are happening now in the direction The College is headed that not all staff have been included on. So, as rumors come out and speculation comes out, [it] can be disconcerting to us that are traditional education people in building that relationship between student and faculty in a typical classroom setting. There are those that contend that that is not necessarily the model for the future . . . . I guess it may be the wave of the future, but I think The College's niche in the past has been nurturing and discipling. Can you do that in a totally different model where it is maybe not the personally and hands on?

A staff member further explained the resistance to the development of new systems as it related to the psyche of individuals. The staff member commented that resistance in the area of student services was due to unfamiliarity with systems and addressed stakeholder hesitation in stating "if I change now, then what I have always been doing will be seen as wrong, and why was I doing something wrong the whole time? I think that is a huge reason for resistance."

Lastly, the old culture and institutional mindset itself caused resistance to new changes and thought processes. One institutional leader commented on patterns of passive aggressive behavior and low standards that led to limited or no expectations about improving the wellbeing of the institution. Resistance appeared more in the form of maintaining the status quo based on past experiences of the institution failing to follow through on promises to take action.

The College was never allowed or able to have any expectations. We were just a small little college barely surviving on the shared campus. Zero expectation or zero picture of growth which was not based on the leadership, but was based on the cold hard fact that there is no money. It may be a horrible analogy and use it carefully about it's the rice truck in Africa where people are starving. There is a drought, and nothing is there. Any little glimpse of something that is coming down the road and people just grabbed all they could. So it became protectionist, very insular . . . passive aggressive. I love this organization, but we have, in various form and functions and styles and substances, been brought up in an environment that did not breed accountability.

These themes relating to resistance were evidenced and explained by institutional stakeholders, but these same stakeholders provided examples of how institutional leaders combated and addressed areas of resistance. The strategies included casting a vision and continuously communicating that vision to the constituencies while encouraging collaboration in the change process, establishing a relationship with institutional founders, and navigating the political landscape both internally and externally.

First, institutional stakeholders discussed the importance of continuous communication around the vision and direction of the institution. They emphasized the importance of including all the stakeholders in this communication process so that it felt collaborative in nature. One staff member echoed these sentiments in stating “when he [the president] came it was very clear that there was like a 15-year plan . . . . Not only did

he have that plan, but he shared the plan with everybody. He communicated that to the students as well as the faculty.”

Yet another staff member commented on the means that the communication took place: community updates, e-mails, and town hall meetings.

I think there was an intentional effort from part of our leadership to give, at least part of our internal staff and faculty and students a vision of where we were going and keep them updated on program and reports. That was done through our community updates. It was done through emails. It was even done through some town hall meetings to let student know.

Additionally a staff member expounded upon the information and rationale for providing these meetings to the multiple stakeholders. Leaders gave stakeholders

information that they may not have had before so they can clearly understand that it will be good for The Church. It will be good for the school to not be on the same campus because both can grow, and new systems can be created that could be stifled by either if you are on the same campus using the same systems.

These statements of communication also resonated with members of the faculty. Much of their dialogue about receiving communication pointed to the community updates previously noted. Faculty believed that they were kept abreast of most changes as they occurred.

I thought they did a good job of communicating . . . . They had what they called community every two weeks. The whole faculty got together. There would be announcements that these things take years, not months, and pretty soon years had

passed and now they were taking months not years. The faculty was kept up to speed the whole way.

Another faculty added “every big decision I have seen made has been communicated to people . . . . There has been, to me, remarkable unity because of the communication at every step and because of this moving west vision that [the president] had. People had tremendous buy in.”

Yet another faculty member emphasized the content of the meeting and structure leading up to the campus relocation itself. The faculty member noted “we have a monthly meeting for all faculty and staff called community. It is once a month and every one of those last fall all the Cabinet was there. Each one gave a report.”

Students also agreed with the assessment of faculty and staff regarding the emphasis on communication. Students were encouraged to be a part of the changes that were taking place as well. Staff spoke of town hall meetings, and students were also encouraged to enter into the communication process. One student cited the experience with the town hall meetings.

They held these meetings and called them town hall meetings which I thought was a funny name, but it was catchy. I think that provides us a way to see what was going to be happening and the vision. [The president] would come in, and he has worked with people to create this model of what it was going to look like. I think that giving us a visual of what is going to be happening was huge.

A staff member also noted the importance of streaming this communication to the student population as well when discussing the

opportunity for students to become aware at the town hall meetings. They would gather then for coffee and refreshments, and then there could be a question and answer time. Just continual opportunities to pipeline that information down to the very core of our students.

While communication, collaboration, and vision casting were large components in addressing resistance, certain constituencies still felt that the vision that was being created was in contradiction to the heritage and foundational elements of the institution itself. In light of these mindsets, institutional leaders deemed it appropriate to reconnect with some of the founders of the institution and bring them on board with the direction of The College.

One faculty member, who was an institutional leader of The College for a number of years, commented on the strategic opportunity to reconnect with the heritage of The College and establish an enduring relationship with the initial founders. The faculty member noted that some alumni felt alienated by the name change years earlier and the work the president did to reestablish the alumni base.

[The president] and his wife establishing a strong relationship with [the Founders] was instrumental in enforcing not only the community on campus, but alumni, that we are still committed to both the institution that alumni have cherished . . . .

[The president] was able to take those key foundation pieces, reinforce those in all literature in public venues and in terms of communicating a consistent message to faculty, staff and students in various areas.

Another institutional leader who was an active part of reestablishing a relationship with the founder acknowledged the importance of the relationship in being able to move culture change and the campus relocation forward. The leader emphasized the significance of having the founder in agreement with the direction of The College.

One of the biggest things [the president] did was making sure [he and] the founder of the institution, who is still alive, were locked at the hip, and he understood everything we were doing. [The president] explained everything to him at every juncture. He was 100% behind it, and [the president] felt like those were kind of marching orders to move forward.

Lastly, stakeholders commented on the importance of navigating the political landscape as part of the resistance process. This included both internal positioning with stakeholders and The Church itself as well as external stakeholders in the greater community. Seasoned staff members who saw the transition from the early stages commented on the changing landscape and the leaders' ability to navigate the terrain. A director specifically commented that the president relieved the early tensions that existed between The College and The Church. The staff member noted that "it starts from the top down. Just the fact that he [the president] knows higher education. He set it up to run like a college, and everything is different now as far as actual administration." Another staff member noted the stabilization of leadership as the foundation for navigating the turmoil.

The stabilization of our own leadership. The structure of our own identity. That took a lot of time, and a lot of energy and a lot of patience because everyone was



operating off of a different mindset of what a higher ed institution was supposed to be and was supposed to look like . . . . I think over the last three to four years there have been much calmer waters. I think there is a shift in professionalism, in understanding our identity as a higher ed institution.

Some of the faculty also discussed how leaders understood the dynamics of the culture that was present and had the knowledge and ability to work within the context to create change. One faculty member discussed how the president was a good fit for making the changes and touched on why the changes needed to occur.

The need of The Church was to expand, and they are one of the few large churches that are growing and expanding almost exponentially. The College had been in decline, but now it too was rising. So somewhere along the way the capacity for both had been met . . . . [The president] came along at the right time to put all of that together.

Another faculty member strongly emphasized the role of the president in understanding people and having the skills to work both internally and externally on the landscape of where the institution needed to grow to.

Then [the president] came, and his approach to The Church and the way he dealt with The Church was the key thing. He knows how to deal with people. He understands people . . . . He knows how to work with a larger community, work with planning commissions, work with architects and people like that, work with political folks, work with The Church, and that was so important.

Even other institutional leaders agreed that the president's efforts in directing the institution through an unstable climate were an essential element to addressing resistance and moving the institution in the direction of growth and independence. One of the members of the board of trustees commented on the president's leadership in the midst of a complicated environment.

He [the president] came in giving tremendous leadership to the complicated environment in which the school was when renting from The Church. They have distanced themselves from the pastor of The Church and lots of complications there and navigated, for the past six or seven year, that tension well to this point where they are on their own campus and completely independent from The Church and its facilities.

Another institutional leader added sentiments regarding the president's knowledge of higher education, accreditation and the economics of running a college. The leader emphasized the importance of communicating a vision as part of navigating the climate.

That is when The College hired our current president. In that, for the first time ever, there was really a higher ed professional who understood accreditation, who understood higher ed and who understood the business economics of what it means to run an institution such as this . . . . Through his vision he really pushed the online education, pushed looking for a spot to move away from that campus so we could start to be a true higher ed institution.

By re-establishing strong lines of communication with the founders of The College, the president provided stakeholders with another opportunity to buy into the

emerging vision. The heritage of the institution remained in focus as a cornerstone as changes were made to insure a sustainable future. According to Lewin (1947), the refreezing process involves solidifying the changes and moving past resistance so stakeholders do not revert to old culture and practices. The president also addressed what Clark (1970) referred to as the social base that consists mostly of alumni, addressing the long-standing need to have a community of committed alumni. The president used this alliance with the founder of the institution to create a link between The College and alumni base, something that had not previously been a priority.

While much of the data gathered from participants reflected the success of institutional leaders in creating cultural change in preparation for campus relocation, stakeholders also communicated areas of concern or improvement that leaders need to address in order to create sustainability in the future. They openly discussed challenges to current efforts and noted areas that could hinder The College from reaching its full potential. A number of stakeholders asked specifically whether the outcomes of this study would be communicated to leaders in the institution because they wanted their voices to be heard by the proper authorities who would listen and consider making changes.

The overarching theme of creating change- stabilizing empowered leadership addressed many of the research questions posed earlier in the study.

1. What strategies are leaders using to create cultural change and prepare for the campus transition? The three subthemes answer this question: establishing

institution knowledge, creating financial independence and expansion and addressing and removing past resistance.

2. What challenges did leaders anticipate in preparing for the change process?
3. What plans did leaders create in anticipation of the challenges they expected?

The discussion on anticipated resistance factors answers this question.

Leaders anticipated challenges related to resistance from internal stakeholders linked to The College and The Church as well as external resistance from alumni and the external community. Leaders addressed these challenges through open and strategic communication around changes and right sized the institution where necessary.

4. What role do key stakeholders play in the continuing operations of The College, and how are they involved in the decision making process in the course of the move? The answer to this question was identified in the leaders' reaction to resistance subtheme as well as the subtheme of institutional dialogue in decision making under the challenges to change. Stakeholders communicated that early efforts to include others in the change process were successful, but exclusion seemed to creep in the closer The College came to the campus relocation process. More work is needed to reestablish collaborative efforts in the decision making process.
6. How do the changes permeate the institution across stakeholder groups?
7. What kind of resistance to the anticipated changes developed, and how did leaders address this kind of resistance? The answer to this question was

addressed in the subtheme addressing and moving past resistance.

Stakeholders identified resistance as fear of the unknown, adherence to the heritage, ties to The Church, struggle for power, changes to systems and cultural norms of no expectations linked with passive aggressive behavior.

Leaders addressed these factors by creating and communicating a clear vision through collaborative efforts, establishing a relationship with the founders of the institution and effectively navigating the internal and external landscape of The College.

8. How is information about the status of the organization and progress made toward resolving changes communicated to the staff, students and other stakeholders, and what was the effect of the communication effort? The answer to this question was displayed in the subtheme addressing and moving past resistance in reference to leaders' reaction to resistance. Stakeholders acknowledged that changes were communicated electronically via email and College website, in person via town hall meetings for students, community meetings for faculty and staff and dinners for the alumni. Most stakeholders welcomed the changes once they were appropriately framed and explained by leaders.
9. What changes occurred (are occurring) in the transition from what existed to what is being created? The answer to this question occurred intermittently throughout the subthemes of establishing institutional knowledge, creating financial independence and expansion and addressing and moving past

resistance. It is clear from stakeholder assessment that the institution has transitioned over the past 15 years through periods starting with stability defined as a “churchy” feel, destabilization with mandates from WASC, and survival encompassing power struggles with The Church and budgetary shortfalls. Now it’s thriving as a unique and independent institution. Leaders’ strategies for change indicate what changes took place and where implementation occurred as The College moved through stages of cultural development.

**Theme three- challenges to change- roadblocks to sustainability.** All stakeholders agreed that culture shifts and campus relocation were positive efforts to improve the reach and reputation of The College and to increase sustainability efforts; however, study participants also had strong feelings about areas that still need improvement or details that were missed or overlooked in the campus transition process. They also noted important future opportunities that might contribute to further success. Feedback around future challenges included these five themes: maintaining the institutional community, receiving consistent communication, engaging in institutional dialogue in decision making, continuing positive momentum while maintaining balance, and creating processes for engaging the new external community.

***Subtheme 3.1- maintaining community.*** When discussing culture and the identity of the institution, all stakeholder groups noted the importance of community and the ethos to the life of The College. This sentiment was expressed across all stakeholder groups regardless of status in the hierarchy. One staff member commented

community is at the core of our culture—that we respect and care for each other.

We care for our students. Ultimately we want to impact wherever we go. The phrase that we hear a lot that identifies us is that ‘we are a community of communities that desires to impact the greater community.’

Another staff member who is also an alumnus shared the experience relating to community, stating that “what has stayed true at [The College] has always been a community centered, very loving from the professors and the educational system—a cool connection between the professors and the students. That is what I experienced when I was here as a student.” Embracing community is an important part of the culture of the institution.

There was a sense that the idea of community, as stakeholders are well aware, was threatened by the campus relocation due to limitations of the physical structures that were not as conducive to supporting the community ethos as those on the previous campus. Having stakeholders who were excited about the potential offered while lamenting the loss of a community feel they once had at the old location offered an interesting juxtaposition of feelings that must be understood by those in authority. Stakeholders reported that to regain the community ethos they once had and further develop community, the institution needs to complete residential buildings, athletics facilities and community spaces, engage in alumni relations, establish unique traditions to foster college pride, and expand and refine the scope of the student body.

Staff members expressed their concerns regarding the feeling of community and their interest in reestablishing that sense on the new campus. One staff member spoke

about how the feeling of community has shifted on the new campus and how the concept of community is harder to pinpoint. The staff noted that the lack of residency apartments changes the dynamic of how they define community when stating “we always talk about how we are such a community. In moving, it has been interesting to see the shift in how that looks. I know it is still there, but I don’t see it the same way that I did on the other campus.” Another staff member questioned the institution’s ability to maintain a community feel since there is no one place big enough on campus that can house the entire institutional population. The staff member noted the different components that were missing and that leaders need to address.

One example might be with the chapel situation. I think it is really tight and almost uncomfortable because there are too many bodies close together. It makes sense that if you are going to develop this culture; you have to be in one place at the same time.

One staff member noted the importance of community to the student life experience and how community has been a strong suit of the institution in the past. The current space challenges can threaten that fragile community concept.

I would say one of our greatest challenges coming from the existing campus is striving to keep the community intact. A lot of what we have here is a beautiful facility, but we are a little more displaced than on the old campus which for resident life could mean lounge space and athletics . . . [Community] has been one of the big attractions of why a student would come to a smaller institution, and our community has been a big strong suit.



Faculty members also feel strongly about the development of community at the new campus, noting the importance of faculty and student interaction. They thought that all students, having become commuters, deters from the community ethos. In one faculty member's words, "the heart of the campus [is] the student housing which is miles away. You lost some of the heart of The College. My students all lament [lack of a] central meeting place."

Another faculty member spoke more about the new commuter ethos and how cultivating community is harder on the new campus. The faculty member pointed to specific aspects of the old campus that were not present on the new campus.

In essence, [The College] has become a commuter campus. Yes, we have residents, and we have residence halls but moving to this campus makes everyone a commuter student. At the last place, there was a commuter lounge where they could get plates, and there was a fridge for their lunch and stuff. There is not space like that now for them . . . . People miss the main hallways because people would hang out there. There isn't as much student space to hang out in as there was at the last campus.

Students also feel strongly about how the campus relocation has affected community. Of all of the stakeholder groups, students believe the shift in community has affected them the most because many of them live in the new campus environment all the time. One student stressed the importance of community in drawing students to The College and how campus housing affects the development of this community.

It is kind of like a family for everyone . . . . The College is very heavily centered on community. I think the biggest challenge has been on campus housing. So before, where the residents lived right next to the classrooms and there was a lounge and central hallways where everyone could hang out. Now it is just like different buildings.

Another student echoed statements regarding the challenge of creating a community feel as opposed to a commuter feel in stating “for commuters, they love it, and they have a new community since we are all commuters now, but, for the residents, that close-knit community and the personal side of it has been lost in the move.” Yet another student believed that the institution has lost the community ethos altogether.

It doesn't really feel like a community. It feels like class and then that is it, because we don't have anything else to do here. I am a commuter, so I don't eat in the caf. I hardly go in the Library, and that is one of the only few places you can go besides classes. I'd say the culture is definitely lacking the community vibe that we used to have.

Institutional leaders are also aware of the community crisis issue. They understand the importance of maintaining a communal feel throughout the institution, and are trying to create ways to encourage the maintenance of community while the institution completes the remaining stages of the relocation process. One institutional leader discussed the challenges of the current community and the effort to reproduce the community feel.

We moved to futuristically what is a phenomenally better campus, but there are certain areas where we knew we were stepping backwards . . . . There will be a continual process change like that, but that is one of those things right up front that we listened to the students . . . . As we build new residence halls, we build that community piece into it.

The development of an appropriate student subculture is one of the biggest challenges The College faces when viewing its development through Clark's (1970) change model. All stakeholders believe that the student culture could be at risk with the threats to the community structure because build outs are not complete, and the general layout of the campus as it now exists is not conducive to community activity. For change to be sustainable, both students and faculty/staff have to absorb the changes into their subcultures and daily operations. To ensure this assimilation, leaders must make conscious efforts to accomplish this goal proactively by investing resources and encouraging this absorption into the community. In this way, leaders ensure that stakeholder concerns are both considered in the short term as well as priorities developed in the build outs.

Besides building an internal community ethos, institutional stakeholders noted the importance of engaging with alumni to extend the community of The College and add to the dynamic. In the past, alumni engagement has not been successful in folding previous students into the practices and community of The College. Building community in the future must include the alumni stakeholders. One staff member discussed connecting with alumni individually.

When I was in the alumni position we were much more successful in [having] people catching the vision and being excited about what was going on when we were sitting with them or when we had a specific letter written for them from people that they had a connection with.

Another staff member talked about using athletics to engage alumni. The staff member believed athletics plays a key role both developing internal community and serving as a crucial step in reengaging the alumni population.

I feel like our alumni have been sort of slighted from the athletic standpoint. I think it was before [the president] came . . . . When we get facilities we want to have alumni weekends where we do a hall of fame ceremony where we do this type of stuff to reengage our athletic alumni . . . . If I can get some key athletes to engage, hopefully, I can get their friends to also kind of reengage and develop that athletic alumni community.

Alumni are important to the community of the institution as they extend the community beyond the borders of the actual college and into the surrounding communities or even the world. They provide a base on which the culture and the history of the institution continue throughout time. Clark (1970) referred to this element as the social base in the change model. Alumni can make a significant contribution to the sustainability of change efforts, ensuring that they are not derailed by the political landscape of the current culture since alumni loyalties are often rooted in past student experiences. At The College, leaders are using new strategies to engage these

stakeholders in the change process and include them in the process. Community involves internal structures, alumni relations, and establishing unique traditions and pride.

The students feel strongly about creating traditions that produce pride and create a legacy and sustainable culture for The College. While these traditions are not yet formed, they are the building blocks to a strong and stable community. They provide visual representations of the culture and heritage of the institution. One student commented “the biggest challenge is just creating a legacy or a tradition that keeps us together. At the old campus, we used to have a pancake breakfast during finals week and having things that are traditions and really mattered to us as a whole school.”

Another student believed that the institution and its constituencies will not have a sense of school pride until it is able to complete the institutional build outs and establish unique traditions.

I don't think we will have school pride until we have this campus done. Until we get the dorms and get the athletic facilities because that will bring in new and fresh students . . . . Until we actually have that identity, this campus has to be done: the facilities, the dorms and the lounge. I think that is when you will start to see a better vibe on campus.

Members of the staff also believe that establishing traditions will enable the community ethos to grow stronger. One specifically noted the importance that athletics can play in fortifying community.

I think athletics are absolutely crucial in developing a campus culture and traditions . . . . It is a big part of community. For me, one thing is creating

something that people want to be at-traditions. The homecoming traditions that you do. The big bonfire and all this type of stuff. Where it helps bring a sense of community and helps bring everyone together and is passed on from generation to generation to each college student.

Traditions play an important role in enhancing community, engaging current students in the culture, and creating an institutional memory and a legacy that those students carry with them once they become alumni. Building community ethos is essential to culture, and connecting that to the alumni is dually important. Traditions draw students into that ethos, but community starts with the type of students that are drawn to an institution. Stakeholders also noted the recruitment and selection of students as an important part in community building. In the eyes of staff and institutional leaders, the institution needs to continue to refine its recruiting and find the right balance of students. One staff member commented that The College continues “to find the right students, but finding those students who have high academics who want a spiritual setting where they can grow academically and spiritually.” Another staff member noted the importance of attracting students who understand the purpose of the institution and want to be a part of the efforts to advance the purpose. The staff member wanted students who “understand who we are as an institution and what our values are . . . . I think that will be a big part of that and also having conversations with students, faculty and cabinet about how our students can impact the world.”

An institutional leader also discussed the importance of evaluating the type of student that is admitted to The College. The leader believed that the time of transition

provides an opportunity to reassess and set new goals for the student base and noted the reasons for the current student demographic.

Today we are reaching a student that, for a lot of reasons, are by in large students that do not go to other institutions . . . . We are not quite getting the academic quality of students that the other institutions are getting. Probably, in large part, because of the breath of programming these other institutions have or the breath of what is anticipated in college/university such as athletics.

In reassessing the scope of the student body, institutional leaders look to influence the student subculture in keeping with Clark's (1970) change model. One way to create buy in from this group is to recruit students who fit within the envisioned model. In keeping with this objective, leaders are wrestling with what the student body should look like as the new institutional culture emerges.

Stakeholders have strongly emphasized community and maintaining a strong community as an important part of stabilizing the institution's culture and moving toward sustainability in the future. While community is an important element to the culture change process, stakeholders also believed that receiving clear and consistent communication about the culture and change process was vital. All stakeholder groups described the need for better communication.

***Subtheme 3.2- communication difficulties.*** Institutional stakeholders were clear that communication was an important element in the success of any change process. They also noted that communication has changed over the course of the years leading up to the move. While using a different frame of reference, each stakeholder discussed how

the institution was affected by communication and how to use it in the future. One staff member discussed the importance of communication in the cultural change process.

This is where we are going. This is where we would like to go. This is how you can be a part of it. I think that is huge and communication is huge, to be able to produce and maintain that culture. So that people know clearly what the vision and mission and values are of the school . . . . I think communication of it and sharing with one another and reminding each other of what we are going for is going to be huge.

Another staff member noted the importance of continuously hearing from leaders and how repetition in the message was vital in the communication process. The staff member commented

individuals in the administration have talked about something for so long that they think we all know it. When they tell you something, they think they have said it ten times, but it might actually be the first time you have heard it.

An alumni staff member also discussed the sense that communication had changed and slowed since the arrival on the new campus. The staff member was not sure how to pinpoint why the change took place.

In the beginning of our transition process, there was so much information that was communicated to us . . . . I don't know if it was because I moved from student to staff or what happened in that transition, but I feel like the communication has slowed down. As we continue to solidify who we are, I think it would be really helpful to have more consistent communication.



Another staff member provided a rich description and explanation regarding how and why communication changed as the institution neared the campus transition. The staff member also discussed why communication has yet to improve since the campus relocation and noted that one main reason for the change in communication was the fact that in the middle of the planning stages institutional leaders decided to move up the date of the relocation by six months that caused gaps in the communication change process. The staff member discussed the fact that communication channels have not been established at the new location.

I would say that there was lack of communication the closer we got to it. It just got rapid fire, and there were pieces that were probably missed. There were systems that were being annihilated . . . . In one meeting somebody said ‘so how are we going to do campus mail?’ Nobody had thought about it, and, because no one had thought about it, there was a curt answer given back. There were people that took offense to that. It was a legitimate question, and nobody had thought about it because it was down at such a lower level. I felt like at that time it was an indicator that the vice presidents needed to bring in a stronger voice from the user end of services . . . . The second thing is designing information flow, and, again, that is tied to communications. If the information doesn’t flow, from my perspective, every single meeting that takes place from now on, there should be some kind of action report . . . . There is going to be a need to figure out how we start disseminating information. Those one hour blocks of time a month for the faculty and community are not getting it done. The directors are not getting it

from the vice presidents, and therefore, they cannot push it down into the workforce.

One student also talked about how communication seemed to change from the old campus to the new campus. The student was not able to pinpoint what exactly had changed but noted that people seemed less aware of what was occurring on campus. There appeared to be a disconnect between the students and faculty.

At the old campus everyone kind of knew what was going on, and we just did a way better job of communicating . . . . Then, as we moved here, I started to realize, ‘wow faculty have no idea what students want’ or students don’t know what is going on with this . . . . Something as simple as the student body was having an event and some faculty and staff said ‘oh usually we get emails what we are doing this week and we are not getting those.’

A faculty member believed that improving effective communication was the biggest challenge that the institution faced to create a sense of connection between the constituencies. Leaders must communicate with other stakeholders to ensure everyone is aware of what is transpiring in the institution.

I think that challenge as we grow is to become more effective in our communication: organizationally, internally and externally. That has historically been a theme that occurs, but as we launch toward more growth that becomes more important that everyone has a sense of connection about how we are moving forward.

To stakeholders, communication was stronger at the old campus than at the new campus. Part of the reason for this change in communication was the stress that was placed on leaders to make quick decisions as the campus relocation approached. The institution needs to establish a set of communication standards now that it is on its own to create a sustainable future. Communication is directly linked to decision making. Many stakeholders also believed that more inclusive decision making and improved channels for dialogue are needed to solidify and stabilize the institution.

***Subtheme 3.3- need for more institutional dialogue in decision making.***

Wanting a voice in the decision making process of institutional success is not new to the landscape of organizations. People want to feel heard and confident of the incorporation of their ideas into the work they complete on a daily basis. Stakeholders at The College expressed these sentiments when addressing how leaders incorporated their voices into the decisions in the culture change and campus relocation efforts. Baldrige (1971) noted the importance of dialogue in the decision making process, giving it the character of a negotiation among constituents. All parties exert pressure on the decision making process, help leaders identify and sort through options, and hone policies to meet the local situation through conflict and compromise. As a result, stakeholders are more likely to buy into the changes. This situation appears to be an area of opportunity and growth as assessed by many of the stakeholders at The College. One staff member discussed employee involvement in making decisions and implementing those decisions as opposed to mandating information.

Everybody understands and knows which way the train is going, and that they value feedback from those people. They are not just mandating it, but we would love your help in this area and in this area because of your expertise, and then solicit expertise, as opposed to being only a mandated monarchy.

Another staff member discussed the fact that people felt like leaders did not hear their voices in the change process. The staff member noted that initial communication was adequate but there was no feedback loop.

While there were a couple of sessions for people to talk about needs and stuff, I think there are a number of people who feel like their voices were not a part of the process or they were not an important part of the process . . . some peoples' ideas were not respected.

Faculty also felt strongly about being a part of the decision making process. One faculty member expressed concerns that the future path to success must include a concerted effort to hear and respond to peoples' concerns about change. Future endeavors must include dialogue and group effort regarding the decision making process. People need to know how and why decisions are being made and how it will impact their work.

Communicating what we need and making sure that it is heard and not lip service but actually genuinely listens to what the needs are. There is not the confidence that the voice is heard and that people don't say what they really feel because they don't want to be perceived as a whiner, or they don't want to be rocking the boat. They don't want to lose their jobs . . . . Just a mild criticism that if you are going

to punt this campus to a new level, don't lose sight of the fact that it still has to deal with people, and it has to empower them, but more taken into consideration their needs, and create community.

Another staff member echoed sentiments about the inclusion of the stakeholder voice in the decision making process as it related to the campus relocation and the frustrations that occurred in the breakdown of communication channels. The staff member stressed the importance of being a participant in the process.

As much as there was an effort to bring people in, I don't feel like people were really brought in to be a participant in the relocation . . . . I think in the process, people felt like it was great and exciting and good, and I catch the vision, but I was never really a participant in the process. I think that created some tension and some frustrations. The other side of it in the relocation process is that people wanted to know what they didn't need to know.

The staff member also related to the struggle that institutional leaders had to grapple with in relinquishing ownership of the change process due to the unstable history of past cultures. The study participant took the opportunity to view the situation from a different stakeholder lens.

It has to be incredibly difficult when you have taken over an organization that was in such dire straits and was really on the brink of collapsing. To begin to relinquish ownership has got to be a really difficult thing to do because we are there, but we are not there. So how do you relinquish control and find the right balance between?

A staff member also discussed decision making rights in the institution. The staff member felt strongly that the decision making process needs revision now that The College is realizing its own identity and learning how to function completely on its own. The study participant noted the previous problems that may have caused a breakdown in including stakeholder voices in the decision making process.

While there has been a lot of change in our organization from moving a campus, there have also been lines of the organizational chart that have been changed and moved around and created that never really got to develop on the old campus . . . . They were so fast and furious about how we were going to do the physical move they have not created the decision rights of who gets to make decisions and how are those decisions made. That's a communication component for me. [In the example], the architectural build outs were created and a time table was created that allowed ample planning time of one year to finalize the plans and evaluate any changes. In the middle of the process the timetable for the relocation was moved up by six months which caused confusion about decision making rights.

There also appears to be an element on campus that has concerns that link back to the mindset of right-sizing. There are still notions that people who do not agree with the leadership or who disagree with the direction or plan are either disregarded or moved out of the institution. One staff member expressed his concerns regarding issues that leaders did not address in the move that may have hindered the success of future endeavors. The staff member felt that these issues were avoidable if better dialogue in the decision

making process existed. The study participant used the word synergy to explain the ideal way to make decisions in the future and what is lacking now in the process.

A lot of the change that is happening is top down [rather] than it is bottom up.

For a lot of staff that is hard to deal with—a lack of synergy from decisions being made and the institution finding out after; whereas early on there was a clear directive and everyone kind of understood where we were headed in a lot of areas.

. . . Pretty much people that are seen as an obstacle are pushed aside, and decisions are made that impact their areas without their involvement at all . . . . I will say that, from an administrative standpoint, there were decisions made outside of that group that later on impacted what they could or could not do with the tools, and had that group known ahead of time that we were moving in a certain direction some of the recommendations would never have been made . . . . In the very initial stage, they were looking at collaborative efforts to bring individuals in and talk with faculty and staff, but that ended with the first meeting. There was not a lot of review with plans and that type of thing until later as the move became more urgent. I think there were also some very good concepts that, because of the time crunch, were just kind of pushed to the side.

To the stakeholders of the institution, The College missed opportunities in the process of the move that could have improved the institution's transition. As the move approached, leaders lost control of the lines of communication that were so crucial in earlier culture changes years before. As communication broke down, stakeholders perceived the loss of their voice in the transition process. This outcome could lead to a

lack of ownership of the changes taking place and may cause new areas of resistance in the future if not addressed by leaders. While institutional stakeholders learn how to balance communication and improve dialogue, leaders also look to continue the momentum towards sustainability but have to gauge the balance change efforts against the stakeholders' ability to embrace the changes and implement new strategies for success.

*Subtheme 3.4- continuing momentum while maintaining balance.* For The College, this element will be an interesting area for future investigation and development. Now that the institution is completely separate from The Church and reaches new levels of success with each school year, stakeholders have lots of ideas for improvement and advancement. However, there was a sense that everyone is exhausted from the campus transition and needs balance in managing workflow to prepare for future change. Stakeholders believe there are too few faculty and staff to produce the changes necessary to insure the future. They also believe there are now new opportunities to expand academic offerings, and with this change, new opportunities to reach untested or untouched markets.

With the stabilization of the institutional ethos, The College can now begin to plan for the future and move from survival to expansion. Part of this expansion process includes branching out into new academic offerings. Stakeholders at the institution believe the institution must look to offer new majors. One student shared her experience when feeling limited in her choice of major and how it related to her connection to The College.



We don't have enough majors . . . . Personally, if I had to do it over again and if I was able to choose where I wanted to go I wouldn't comeback. It's not because of the atmosphere or the culture or the people. It's the fact that I am not studying what I love.

A faculty member talked about expanding programming to include a master's degree program and to add a graduate component to the institution. The faculty also noted the importance of expanding the undergraduate portfolio as well and expanding course offerings by stating "I think we have to have other majors too. I feel like we should have a major in Spanish. We should have a language department. I think we need to have some ESL for those second-language students." With expanding academic offerings comes the opportunity to branch into new markets.

The institution must now learn new ways to market itself and present its brand as a separate entity. Some stakeholders expressed their concerns regarding continuing momentum through the use of marketing techniques whining refining the scope of students the institution wants to recruit. One faculty member stated "there is a market out there, and we need to capture that market. A little bit more conservative theologically. This is a rare breed of school, and what is really interesting about that identity question is that I think it is founded on the heritage." Another faculty member also discussed marketing opportunities.

Marketing this college on the internet, in local advertising, in every venue that is reasonable to market and having experts do it. We don't have that. We took a

step back. People that were really good at that were either let go or decided to leave.

There is a natural connection when an institution expands its offerings and branches into new markets there will be a need for increased staffing to cover these increases. Many stakeholders feel the need to hire qualified personnel at this stage to make the next steps toward efficiency due to a level of fatigue being felt as they prepare for and implement the campus transition.

It is interesting to note that students see and feel this fatigue even though they are not directly affected by the workflow associated with the move. One student specifically addressed the feelings of fatigue and trying to balance excitement with weariness.

We are all tired from this transition and might get weary . . . We are here which is exciting but with coming to a new campus there is a lot of mishaps, and things going not the way that we had planned. I think that might bring fatigue too.

Another student who recently started working part time for The College mentioned the importance of hiring more staff as well, noting “I think we need to get more people working. One person is doing a three-person job. That is a huge gap for us.”

Stakeholders understand the need to balance workload against institutional weariness resulting from lots of major changes.

Faculty members felt strongly about augmenting staffing to address new organizational goals. One faculty member discussed the importance of hiring more staff to relieve stress on departments and show that administration supports departmental efforts. The faculty member noted that some faculty and staff have left because they feel

that their resource needs are not being met and added “the other thing is allowing more departments to hire qualified personnel and pay them accordingly. Many of the departments are squeezed by the budget because they are hoarding money to pay for unknown costs that are guaranteed to come around.” Another faculty member addressed the balance between implementing additional changes and workflow to avoid stakeholder burnout. The faculty member noted the importance of hiring support staff with the appropriate skills to take the institution to the next level.

Right now I think you have a faculty and staff that are exhausted. Needless to say moving in the middle of the year that in and of itself is enough . . . .There also is a feeling that we are still staffing shy of what it is going to take to move forward in terms of the tendency to add job onto people. My observation at this point is that people are here, and it is going to be critical to navigate the right balance in workload so that we don't burn people out.

As the institution grows, stakeholders begin to identify new areas that can be improved and expanded. As this expansion occurs, stakeholders can get locked into advancing certain agendas. Other stakeholders, feeling exhausted from the campus transition, may believe that the institution has either fully arrived at its destination of complete independence. Weariness with change can slow change momentum in favor of the status quo.

Institutional leaders felt strongly that the campus transition was only phase one in addressing the goals that The College seeks to accomplish in the coming years. With any change, leaders must strive to maintain a balance and help convince stakeholders to buy

in to new concepts. With a major change behind them, institutional leaders have new challenges in balancing momentum with maintaining stakeholder satisfaction. One institutional leader discussed being out in front of change and finding ways to bring stakeholders into the future as well.

I think the biggest challenge is taking the institution into a new phase after just having done more in seven years than they did in forty years; moving to a new location and acquiring assets. So people may believe that is the end of the road yet there is a lot to do at this point in time. Getting everyone to understand that we didn't get this far to come this far . . . . If you are the leader, you have to be way down the road. Sometimes that doesn't get understood. Sometimes you get too far out there, and you have to back up a little bit a gather everyone and bring them with you. As the leader, I am actually living 10 years out that sometimes creates a disconnect, but you want to show them whatever light they can see from their vantage point.

Another institutional leader addressed momentum and balancing stakeholder perspective and the ability to balance expectations. The leader discussed some of the changes that are on the horizon and how the institution will again look drastically different in the near future.

The vision was not to get over here. The vision is to amplify our mission. In that, you have never reached the end line. You never say 'now we rest. We've made it.' I think that is a daunting aspect for some people in terms of can we not take our foot off the gas pedal for a little bit. Maybe that's a fair comment, and

organizationally we need to make sure that we are not pushing everyone to the limit and causing people to burn out or to lose their enthusiasm. That is something we will have to be very discerning on . . . . A year from now, this will be a drastically different organization.

The challenge faced by The College is what Lewin (1947) referred to as the balance between institutional fluctuation and stability. The College has been in a state of fluctuation for so long that constituents are suffering from fatigue, something that it must overcome if institutional leaders want to maintain momentum in the change process and maintain growth. Leaders want to avoid losing prospective students to competing organizations while avoiding over-stimulation that can cause fragmentation to occur inside the organization.

As the institution moves forward, it will need to scan the external environment to identify threats and opportunities that might impact the institution's future. While most institutions work toward stability, desired change can only be created in a state of fluctuation. This stability occurs through new collaborative efforts as well as addressing any risks that the new community can pose to The College in its new location.

***Subtheme 3.5- engaging the external community.*** As the institution looks to its new community for areas of support and expansion, it is also taking the opportunity to scan for possible threats. Stakeholders have acknowledged that the new and more urban location poses increased security risks from the local community as well as the greater city. Currently, The College is located in a western suburb of a major metropolis that is easily accessible using public transportation. A staff member discussed these new

security threats and linked them to opportunities to make a good impression in the new community.

The relocation provides new threats, community threats as we are in a new dynamic. We are displaced now [with] the new campus and the residential being a mile down the road and our athletic offices across the way . . . . How do we educate and make aware the dangers of living in a new community for our students and faculty? We want to make a good first impression. We want to start building relationships and consistency in engaging with new stakeholders, in a way, the builds credibility.

A faculty member also expressed concerns regarding the security risks that an open campus poses and offered suggestions to offset these risks. The faculty member noted the importance of protecting faculty teaching courses at night and suggested adding a fence to the property.

This is an open campus. Anybody can walk on here, and that concerns me that someday there is going to be a door open, and all of these windows are going to be broken and all of these computers are going to be stolen because it is pretty easy to do if you don't have an armed guard protecting your people

Also, a student commented on how the change in location requires The College to recreate an appropriate emergency plan in noting "we have a brand new campus. It brings a challenge of actually implementing these preventative measures. So how do we prevent new emergencies that could happen here being on this campus?"

While institutional leaders plan for and work closely with student services to address these security risks, they are also scanning the external environment for new community partnerships. These partnerships create opportunities to establish themselves in the local community and enhance the reach and reputation of The College.

Staff members have already expressed their excitement regarding partnering with the new community and finding new ways to engage these external stakeholders positively to make them part of The College community. One staff member discussed the connection between the campus community and the new external community when stating “we are looking forward to building new partnerships. We had that at the existing location, but I think we can actually heighten that. Moving from the campus of a mega-church to our own property gives us new strategic opportunities.” Another staff member talked about how new resources can play a part in engaging the community. The staff member discussed the importance of creating an events center and the president’s vision that “can foster community involvement, and if we build a nice baseball field we can host city championships and different things like that. It gets the community involved. We are here for the community.” While staff is looking for new opportunities in the greater community, faculty is also looking for new avenues to create engagement.

One faculty member discussed the passion for creating new internal processes and opportunities to reach out to the greater community and have it interact with The College. The faculty member noted the importance of creating new events as part of establishing an institutional identity.

I feel like there has already been a lot of conversation about wanting to engage with our surrounding community. I would like to see us get to a point where we have conferences, and we bring in outside speakers and we market it to [the surrounding cities] and put it in the newspaper.

As stakeholders see the importance of community engagement, leaders also cast this vision and set the tone for creating external partnerships. They act as the gatekeepers to the institution and create opportunities for these partnerships to occur. One institutional leader discussed some of the new partnerships that are currently being created.

I think we have aligned ourselves with some good partners in the nontraditional world, but to grow like we want to in there we have to align ourselves with educational partners. I think we just, within the last week, finalized an agreement with an educational partner that will then take that to the next level.

Another institutional leader discussed efforts in determining what community involvement looks like from an institutional perspective. The leader mentioned a new community engagement group that has formed on campus to determine and define how The College will work with the community moving forward.

I have had probably 20 meetings since we have been here with business leaders. With the president of the chamber of commerce, with the mayor, with different businesses around here. We have developed an institute of community engagement where we start looking at how we can enrich, empower and engage the community around us through the in-house expertise that we have.



Stakeholders understand the importance of external engagement in establishing a working relationship with their new community. They want to embrace cooperation while addressing the risks that being a member of this community may entail.

To create a sustainable existence as a unique entity while growing the efforts of the institution, stakeholders feel it is important to protect and reestablish the internal community and ethos The College has always portrayed. They also want clear and consistent channels of communication among leaders throughout the organization. The constituencies believe that new forms of dialogue and inclusion in future decision making processes must be established and nurtured. Leaders want to use the momentum developed during the move to create new changes, but they must be aware of how this could affect stakeholders because of fatigue that developed during the move. The organization must be smart in how it approaches external partnerships while weighing the risks to the institution that might result from over extended efforts in the new community environment.

Two of the research questions presented earlier in the study are addressed in the challenges to change- roadblocks to sustainability theme.

5. What changes do internal stakeholders perceive to be necessary to successfully change the culture?
10. What challenges remain after the change process is complete that may affect new change initiatives in the future? This theme displayed both of these questions. Stakeholders communicated five areas of challenges and needed change in order successfully to transition the institution: maintaining the internal

ethos/community, reestablishing consistent lines of communication, embracing institutional dialogue in the decision making process, continuing momentum while maintaining stakeholder balance, and engaging the external community.

### **Credibility and Dependability**

In quantitative research, individuals look to establish reliability—or consistency of scores or instruments, as well as validity. They focus on—the truthfulness and accuracy of what is being measured (Lodicio et al., 2010). Individual researchers look to create credibility, in parallel with validity, and dependability that parallels reliability (Merriam, 2009). In this study, I purposefully analyzed internal documents and interviewed participants so that comparisons between what participants communicated and what institutional documents reported align and are credible. Also, though I have chosen Clark's (1972) model connecting cultural change to an organizational saga as the main framework for the study, I have also assessed and included other models in the conceptual framework in order to draw comparisons.

Dependability in a qualitative study refers to the consistency of the findings. Researchers look at whether the results are consistent with the data collected (Merriam, 2009). The dependability of documents and personal accounts can be tested using different interventions including peer review, member checks, external audits and triangulation. Triangulation can serve the purpose of producing both credibility and dependability because it helps to produce consistent data as well as data that are rooted in reality as defined by participants (Merriam, 2009). For the purpose of this study, I used member checks and triangulation to establish the dependability of results. In

implementing member checks, I provided interview participants with copies of transcribed interview text and asked them to review these for accuracy. I also provided participants with copies of the proposed findings, via e-mail, and gave them an opportunity to provide feedback on results as well. In triangulating the results of the study, I compared the themes ascertained from the interview transcripts, information gained from institutional documents and themes discovered from the literature review to establish the outcomes of the study and prepare the project.

Triangulating themes are imperative to the analysis process. Triangulation is also important to identify any discrepant data results that may appear (Iribarnegaray, 2010). Discrepant data are those concepts or ideas that emerge in the course of the study that disagree with the themes that emerge or that conflict with concepts presented in the literature. In an effort to avoid bias and produce accurate and exhaustive evaluation data, I recorded, analyzed, and included any discrepant data alongside the themes as they appeared. This organizational scheme helped me to align the data for presentation in the evaluation.

Some variance appeared regarding the extent to which stakeholders believed their thoughts and ideas were incorporated in the campus relocation process. Most stakeholders communicated that leaders were open with communication and promoted dialogue around sharing ideas. Others believed that leaders only promoted their own agendas and moved people out of the organization who did not agree with their ideas as illustrated in the following quote.

People that are seen as an obstacle are pushed aside and decisions are made that impact their areas without their involvement at all . . . . I will say that, from an administrative standpoint, there were decisions made outside of that group that later on impacted what they could or could not do with the tools, and had that group known ahead of time that we were moving in a certain direction some of the recommendations would never have been made.

From a research perspective these opinions appeared to be the minority of stakeholders who chose to participate in the study. While most people agreed that clarity in communication was needed, very few individuals communicated that leaders were actively seeking to remove employees from the organization. One institutional leader discussed addressing resistance at an individual level.

The resistance is becoming less and less and less. What we are finding is it becomes very evident who is resisting at this particular point in time. I would say there are still a few individuals on campus that do that. We try to bring them along as hard as we can and as tactfully as we can and as kindly as we can, but I believe that, all along the way, people have self-selected out by saying this isn't for them.

It appears that leaders were aware of discrepant ideas and have been taking actions to openly encourage dialogue with these individuals to encourage their participation in understanding the vision and direction of The College; however, differing opinions still exist on the success of leaders' ability to accomplish this task.

### **Evidence of Quality**

The major themes of the study as well as subthemes and the expression of these themes often pointed specifically to the literature and current trends involved in producing institutional change as outlined in the literature. The College illustrated Clark's (1972) organizational saga model within the confines of the cultural change process. Institutional accreditation reports set the stage for the changes that occurred over the last 10 years and created the backdrop that Clark's (1972) model illustrated.

**Burton R. Clark- organizational saga creation.** The fulfillment stage of Clark's organizational saga theory included five different components in the process of producing new culture and establishing a saga toward the stability of the institution. The combination of these elements creates the building blocks of saga. The institution has addressed or is addressing four of the five fulfillment components.

**Personnel.** Faculty shows a strong commitment to cultural changes in establishing a unique identity and moving toward independence. As described earlier, faculty at The College has been commended by WASC assessments for their commitment to the institution and to improving its programming. Those who resisted these efforts have either self-selected out of the institution or dismissed as part of the budgetary right-sizing that occurred over the years.

**Program.** Because institutional stakeholders believe that the current cultural state of the institution is still in transition, there are few symbols or rituals in place at this time. This is an element that stakeholders believe will be important to the continued success of the institution. Many stakeholders discussed the importance of creating traditions that are passed down through generations. There are, however, current symbols identified by

stakeholders that represent the transitional stage that the institution finds itself: lack of a center hallway, no water fountains, glass walls, commuter ethos, and limited parking. These symbolic elements are further explained when addressing and comparing current themes in the literature.

***Social base.*** Some alumni revolted over the name change in 2005 and in the campus relocation process because of their commitment to and connection with the history of the institution that they remembered from their days as a student. Leaders established strong relationships with the founders of the institution to help spread the vision and gain buy in for the changes to come. The institution is always engaging alumni through special dinner events to engender support for recent changes and reengage the alumni base. These strategies are slowly beginning to produce an increase in alumni engagement, donor support, and excitement for what The College can become.

***Student subculture.*** Students, in general, were in favor of the change in venue and were excited about new and better facilities and more freedom to create new boundaries for operation. After the initial transition, students felt they lost their sense of community because campus housing is located nearly two miles off the actual campus. The space on campus is very purpose specific and does not provide many communal areas where student can congregate between or after classes. After 3:00 pm, once most classes have ended, the campus is devoid of students who disperse to dorms or other off-campus locations due to a lack of communal space.

***Imagery.*** This milestone in the process of saga creation is not yet determined. It is apparent to all of the stakeholders that The College will remain in a transitional state

until campus housing is built; athletic facilities exist on campus, and through the addition of more communal space. With the completion of these projects, traditions can be expected to form that are unique to the institution and a sense of settlement and longevity will set into the institution. As the temporary nature of the transition fades away, new foundational symbols that represent sustainability will replace old symbols.

**Comparing current literature to study themes.** Significant overlap appeared between the themes that emerged from the study and the themes that emerged from the literature. While the overlap may not be overtly apparent in the name given to study themes, the comparison I provide in the following section presents the themes of the study and then shows how they incorporate into the findings.

I was able to find comparisons between all literature themes and study themes except for the literature theme- data-driven decisions. It is again important to note here that the process for change will look different at every organization, and not all leaders will use the same methods to create change. The themes that appeared in the current literature are not a recipe for change that must be strictly adhered to, but provide a set of guidelines that can lead to success in sustaining change

***Theme one- institution in reset.*** Incorporated in this study theme are the literature themes of role of artifacts, interpreting symbols, and securing commitment (Barnett, 2011; Connolly et al., 2011; Chih et al., 2012; Finney & Scherrebeck-Hansen, 2010; Iselin, 2011; Ramachandran et al., 2010; Yuh-Shy, 2011). As I collected data, it was clear that many of the stakeholders used certain physical characteristics or similar

examples to describe the transitional state of The College. The elements could be considered the artifacts of the current culture.

Multiple stakeholders, including faculty, staff, and students referred to the “central hallway” when lamenting the loss of a central communal area where students, faculty, and staff could congregate to share college life experiences. The central hallway is a symbolic element to stakeholders signifying less what they have, but of what they lost and are again trying to attain. Early in the campus relocation process it was brought to the attention of leaders that there were no water fountains on campus. Leaders missed this component in the planning stages. This symbolic element has come to represent a lack of stakeholder involvement in the decision making process. It is an element that illustrates the need for improved collaboration and dialogue as the institution looks to make additional changes and improvements in the future.

Faculty and staff first realized that they would have glass office walls when they arrived on campus for the move. Many had concerns about privacy and confidentiality while others began to embrace the idea of increased approachability and accountability. Glass walls are a symbol of a renewed sense of transparency throughout the institution. Transparency starts at the top with institutional leaders and is filtered down through faculty/staff to the student level. While symbols relating to a renewed sense of approachability and transparency might enhance community building, more than one stakeholder group expressed the notion that all students have now taken on a commuter mindset that also jeopardizes the community ethos. This commuter rationale creates challenges for developing a feeling of community and symbolizes the transitional state



that the community structure has had to embrace and how the student culture has had to adapt during this time. Initially, the campus on which The College currently resides was built as a multiple business complex. Because of its initial design, parking space is limited. Parking often poses a challenge to any college campus much less a campus that currently educates a 100% commuter population. The symbolic element of parking reaffirms The College is currently in a state of transition.

Members of the institution also communicated perceptions of institutional commitment. The largest step for most was making it past the right sizing stage that occurred early in the tenure of the current president. One faculty member discussed thoughts on how unity formed among the stakeholders and how they felt like they were the group to move the institution into the future.

There has been, to me, remarkable unity because of the communication at every step and because of this moving west vision that [the president] had. People had tremendous buy in . . . . You had this sense of the Oregon Trail. We are getting in our wagons and going to be the group that travels together. It builds that group feel and team spirit.

A staff member commented on the level of commitment expressed by those who made it through right-sizing to the new campus. The staff member stated “everybody was on the bus. There is a real excitement. If a person is weathered through some of those transitions within our leadership structure from the top level down they are pretty much all committed to where The College is going.” Stakeholders believe The College is headed in a positive direction.

A decline in resistance also indicates an increase in organizational commitment. One institutional leader highlighted the minimization of resistance over the last few years.

The resistance is becoming less and less and less. What we are finding is it becomes very evident who is resisting at this particular point in time. I would say there are still a few individuals on campus that do that. We try to bring them along as hard as we can and as tactfully as we can and as kindly as we can, but I believe that, all along the way, people have self-selected out by saying this isn't for them.

Institutional change initiatives are facing less resistance because stakeholders buy in has increased along with a commitment to the vision for the future.

***Theme two- creating change- stabilizing empowered leadership.*** Incorporated in this study theme are the literature themes of understanding the culture, assessing institutional readiness, developing a sense of urgency, establishing a vision, sense making/sense giving/sense breaking, aligning values, embracing collaboration, encouraging communication, and addressing resistance (Agboola & Salawu, 2011; Daif & Yusof, 2011; Eddy, 2011; Fitzgerald-Henck, 2011; Foster, 2010; Halkos & Bousinakis, 2012; Hechanova & Cementin-Olpoc, 2012; Jaskyte, 2010; Lamm et al., 2010; Mantere et al., 2012; Nastase et al., 2012; Nili et al, 2012; Paulsen et al., 2009; Stempfle, 2011; Thompson, 2010; Warrick, 2011). Institutional leaders used many of the strategies presented by the current research literature when seeking to create culture change toward

sustainability at The College. The expressions of the study theme illustrate how the actions taken by institutional leaders align with research on change.

As demonstrated by subtheme 2.1- establishing institutional knowledge, stakeholders communicated that leaders at The College, notably the president, first sought to understand the culture and assess the environment for readiness to create and accept change. One staff member discussed how leaders made time to understand the people in the institution in stating “that knowing that [the president] and the cabinet and all the people who were up at that level really cared about who we were as students, and that they cared about our best interest.”

A faculty member highlighted the president’s ability to understand the heritage of The College and the importance of honoring that history before and while making changes. In stating that “historically, if anyone tried to change things there were sectors of fear that we would lose our foundational values . . . . One of the things [that was demonstrated] was honoring our heritage and securing our future.”

In being slow to make changes, leaders at The College assessed the environment for readiness and put together an appropriate plan to engender support and move toward sustainability. One staff member pointed out that the president waited to make sweeping changes even though the needed changes were fairly obvious to most stakeholders.

I actually made a comment to him one time about it being remarkable that you did not do any drastic in the first year because that is actually is usually what a good leader does. They don’t jump in and make these big changes right away, but at the same time it was sort of obvious what the fix should be.

Another staff member made comparative remarks regarding the current and previous president's approach to change. The staff member noted "my understanding was the previous president came in and didn't slowly make changes—he just came in and said 'this is what we are doing.' [The new president] did a nice job of building rapport and getting in with the right people."

Leaders also sought to create a sense of urgency in making the change while scanning the environment to create these opportunities. One institutional leader noted that opportunities naturally emerged because the state of The College required urgent attention if it was to survive. The leader proposed that "on the edge of survival everyone kind of clings on to the same thing. You can actually gather the troops pretty easily because it's survival. It is like throwing in a life raft out in the middle of the ocean. People are going to jump on that thing." The leader also discussed managing the politically charged environment and having to understand how to communicate and operate inside the environment before changes could be made.

I arrived into a politically charged environment. While I believe that most people would tell you that through this process we communicated well, the truth is for two years no one even knew what we were doing . . . First you have the political dynamics inside the organization with the parent organization but then you have politics of the city you may be moving to. All the work that I was doing with the city council and the concern that someone could come in and swoop those buildings away from you.

He needed to scan both the internal and external environments in order to pinpoint the correct time frames in which to communicate change information to the multiple constituencies. According to the literature review the themes of establishing a vision, sense making/sense giving/sense breaking, and aligning values intertwine. In establishing a vision, leaders help stakeholders to redefine how to create meaning in the institution that is part of the sense making process. When stakeholders align their values, they are embracing the vision and committing to the change.

As evidenced in subtheme 2.3- addressing and moving past resistance, leaders used their ability to develop a vision and align values so as to bond constituencies together towards the goal. One faculty member discussed how the president was able to create a sense of unity in stating that “there has been, to me, remarkable unity. Because of the communication at every step and because of this moving west vision that [the president] had people had tremendous buy in. People were excited about it.” The president was able to take his vision and unit the stakeholder groups around the vision.

Another institutional leader spoke about the endurance of the president’s vision in the early stages of the change process and how his unwavering efforts eventually spread through the organization.

The biggest lesson I have taken from [the president] is that in his vision he was the only one caring when everyone else around him was saying ‘that’s not going to happen. That’s not possible.’ To take that and to have it filter throughout the whole organization is an amazing, empowering, changing, boldness that has been instilled in the organization.

Institutional leaders understand the importance of casting a vision and being consistent in pursuing that vision even when others may doubt its relevance and achievability. In attempting to shift a culture, leaders will have to overcome roadblocks in the vision casting process.

Leaders also encouraged stakeholder groups to define their values and align themselves under those values. One faculty member discussed workshops offered for faculty to discuss key aspects of the culture and how those elements would be displayed at the new campus and in a unique environment. In this way, leaders encouraged stakeholders to share the values of the institution as they aligned with the vision.

I remember last spring or last fall some members of the administration did a workshop and handed out fliers and activities that asked us to assess the key parts of our culture that are really important to you as faculty or to you as staff. We all pretty much agree both past and present that it is our community. It was a really cool kind of assessment activity to say ‘okay these are our key things, and this is the way we have promoted those and fostered those in the past. Should all of those automatically carry over into the future or should we change those?’

In creating spaces for stakeholders to discuss institutional values, leaders were able to align the values to the vision and control the sense making process within an environment based on the vision.

Encouraging communication and embracing collaboration were also important elements according to both the literature and study findings as noted in subtheme 2.3- addressing and moving past resistance. Along with casting a strong vision, leaders used

open communication and invited stakeholders to collaborate in the change process to overcome some of the elements of resistance. Some stakeholders resisted because they had a fear of the unknown or were skeptical about making changes. All stakeholder groups reported that leaders held meetings to inform people of changes, answered questions and invited participation in the process. One staff member discussed the different levels of communication.

He [the president] would do these things called town hall meetings. He would invite the student body there. We have our monthly community gathering with staff and faculty. He would give us those updates and keep us engaged all the way along, but then there was always the opportunity for student to become aware of the town hall meetings.

Communication was an element that helped stakeholders buy into the vision and move past resisting change efforts because they understood the process and understood their role in the change process.

Stakeholders also said that early change efforts supported collaborative efforts across the institution, and the institution consistently presented itself as a collaborative unit. One staff member discussed the collaborative cultural elements.

The culture is definitely one of collaboration. You have the Minnesota campus. You have teacher credential program. We have a CEU Summit Ridge program. We are going in the right direction for collaboration, but that definitely can be improved as we move forward as we transition everyone to one learning

management system. That has helped a lot with collaboration because we are all on the same boat, and we have to learn the same tools and teach each other.

A faculty member discussed how the changing vision of the institution presents opportunities for involvement in new endeavors.

Some of that vision comes from management or leadership-people who are over there working on the other side. Then when they mention these things to us we get a chance to do something new. So as a faculty that is fun, and as faculty we love learning things cause it is kind of what we do.

An institutional leader also discussed how different stakeholders were brought together to discuss how their new campus will operate in regards to interacting with the external community. This process demonstrates collaborative efforts with respect of operational practices of the institution.

You start with cross-sectional upwards and downwards and sideways intentional meetings where you bring people from different departments together. For instance, I run a directors' meeting. So I bring directors from the organization together, and we talk about those things. We talk about operations. We talk about do we want to let people come and use our facilities? What does that mean? Do we charge? Is it free? Are we a ministry or are we a business?

College leaders have demonstrated that they understand the importance of communication and collaboration. Stakeholders have communicated that these elements have been present during the change process, but they have also noticed recent shifts in



communication and collaboration at The College that may hinder future success of sustainability if not addressed by leaders.

***Theme three- challenges to change- roadblocks to sustainability.*** Incorporated in this study theme are the literature themes of encouraging communication and embracing collaboration (Conceicao & Altman, 2011; Drew, 2010; Jones et al., 2012; Karp & Tveteraas-Helgo, 2009; Lines et al., 2011; Lumandi & Mampuru, 2010; Oreg & Berson, 2011). Stakeholders reported that communication regarding the change process were strong in the early stages of the planning phase but began to diminish as the campus entered into the actual move from one campus to the other. Stakeholders also reported that collaboration was strong during the early phases of the change, but again decreased as last minute decisions had to be made regarding the relocation.

As noted earlier in subtheme 3.2- communication difficulties, stakeholders noticed a shift in the communication they were receiving though many could not pinpoint exactly how or why the change occurred. One staff member expressed concerns regarding the communication shift.

In the beginning of our transition process, there was so much information that was communicated to us . . . . I don't know if it was because I moved from student to staff or what happened in that transition, but I feel like the communication has slowed down. As we continue to solidify who we are, I think it would be really helpful to have more consistent communication.

Another staff member spoke about the importance of more effective communication strategies as The College moves into the next phase of its development. The staff

member noted specifically that the communication should create a sense of connection between constituencies.

I think that challenge as we grow is to become more effective in our communication: organizationally, internally and externally. That has historically been a theme that occurs, but as we launch toward more growth that becomes more important that everyone has a sense of connection about how we are moving forward.

Setting standards for communication will be an important aspect to creating a sustainable identity for the institution moving forward. With communication comes the need for collaboration and part of this collaboration includes the decision making process regarding change. During a hectic change process, communication can lag as the pace of change accelerates. These shifts are unsettling to stakeholders who feel they are being lost in the chaos. When communication lags weariness can also set in, and people work to keep up with the changes. Rebuilding communication channels is imperative to maintaining momentum when the excitement of change wanes and people begin to realize that, while they are better off, not all problems were solved by the change effort.

Stakeholders believe that leaders can improve collaboration in the coming phases of institutional development. The changes made to the time schedule of the campus build out created gaps in the communication process and excluded stakeholders from the decision making process. Because of these last minute, fast-paced decisions certain elements in the build out and transition process were missed such as a lack of communal space for student and the exclusion of water fountains from the campus plan. Other

systems including the campus mail system were not immediately addressed until after the transition.

Some staff expressed their concerns about the lack of inclusion during the transitions. One in particular noted feeling that people were not truly being included in the change process, and this created a level of frustration among the stakeholders.

As much as there was an effort to bring people in, I don't feel like people were really brought in to be a participant in the relocation . . . . I think in the process, people felt like it was great and exciting and good, and I catch the vision, but I was never really a participant in the process. I think that created some tension and some frustrations. The other side of it in the relocation process is that people wanted to know what they didn't need to know.

Another staff member discussed the fact that details were missed in the planning and implementation stage because the decisions made were not followed up on by leaders, and, without the proper constituencies providing feedback, important elements were overlooked or not included.

I will say that, from an administrative standpoint, there were decisions made outside of that group that later on impacted what they could or could not do with the tools, and had that group known ahead of time that we were moving in a certain direction some of the recommendations would never have been made . . . . In the very initial stage, they were looking at collaborative efforts to bring individuals in and talk with faculty and staff, but that ended with the first meeting.

Leaders used many of the same strategies proposed by leading experts of change to create sustainable efforts to solidify the identity of The College and move it towards greater success. Clark's (1972) model of organizational saga also appears to be applicable to The College in its current state of transition though certain elements of the model have not been developed. Reporting the initial findings of the study is important in the process after data analysis and triangulation against the themes produced in the analysis process. In order to confirm the conclusions drawn from the data, I ensured that participants confirmed the accuracy of findings.

### **Disseminating Results**

Through results of the study conducted at The College, I assessed the current success of the institution in changing its culture to prepare to relocate the campus and what resistance may have surfaced during the process. I identified challenges that are likely to remain at The College in constructing a workable organizational culture after the completion of the move. During the study, I sought to detect less apparent challenges that surfaced during the relocation being overshadowed by larger challenges such as the time and space required to move the campus. I shared the results with key decision makers at The College including the president, the executive cabinet, and others they designated after carefully disassociating data from participants to protect their anonymity. Results were also disseminated to the study participants via e-mail.

### **Ethical Considerations**

To protect the anonymity of The College being studied, I removed all recognizable demographics information for all of the participants being interviewed, and

I removed all gender specific language from the study.. I was the only individual who knew the identities of the participants. In addition, all interview participants were asked to sign a consent form that explained the voluntary nature of their participation and affirmed their privacy throughout the data collection, analysis, and reporting processes. The consent form also included summary information that explained the purpose of the study, the intent for using the data as part of the study, and assured participants that they had the ability to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions (see Appendix C). As each interview started, I verbally confirmed that each participant had signed the consent form and asked the individuals to affirm verbally that they understood their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Interview transcripts and recordings were kept in a password protected file on a personal computer and any copies kept in locked filing cabinets at my home.

### **Limitations**

Though the evaluation provided leaders with important feedback from key stakeholders regarding the culture, the findings had limitations. First, only a small percentage of those employed or connected to the institution contributed to the evaluation. Because this study sought to assess the steps individuals in The College took to create a unique culture, a purposeful sample was used to collect the data. As such, the evaluation does not include all stakeholder thoughts and opinions and results may not be generalized across the institution. Second, the results of the evaluation cannot be generalized to other institutions. Institutions seeking to create culture change may use some of the strategies described in the study, but these elements may or not may produce

the same level of change due to the unique attributes of The College. Third, the participants in the study included stakeholders that either survived the previous right sizing efforts or were hired after that era in the institution's history. Results of the study, specifically as it entails institutional resistance, may have looked different if the sample had included those who were released due to right sizing.

### **Conclusion**

This evaluation assessed the strategies that the leaders of The College used to create the transition in culture as it relocated its campus while making sure that the unique community that emerged could sustain itself after the move. In the study, I not only asked about strategies used but also reported on the perceptions of key stakeholders of the appropriateness of these strategies and their success in building support for and addressing resistance to the change. I collected data using one-to-one interviews with key stakeholders selected for their distinctive knowledge of the culture and history of The College as well as student leaders to assess student stakeholder perceptions.

The outcome of the study produced an institutional evaluation for leaders at The College that outlined what the institution has done, what it has learned in the process and where it should go from here in the saga of creating culture towards sustainable campus relocation. This document included strategies the institution has already used along with strategies it can use, based on data collection and literature review, to further shape the culture and move towards sustainability. The goal was for study outcomes to become the foundation for how The College, based on an assessment of its past practices, can

strategically move toward cultural cohesion. It should assist leaders in knowing how to affect culture change to lead to sustainability.

In the remainder of the study, I discuss the results of the data and offer further details on how the institutional strategy evaluation addresses the problem of creating a unique culture to prepare for campus relocation. It outlines how the evaluation will assist institutional leaders in sustaining change and an evaluation of its effectiveness to the organization. I will also discuss limitations along with the implications social change within the local community and beyond.

## Section 3: The Project

### **Introduction**

In this section, I outline the project and outcomes of the research conducted regarding the cultural identity changes around a transitional event in the life of The College. I define and describe the project. In an additional review of the literature, I outline the project and outcomes of the data collection process in relation to the project. I create direct comparisons between the project and data collected. I also discuss the project as an evaluation, while relating it to the implementation and dissemination of results. Lastly, implications for social change are also addressed.

### **Description and Goals**

The project is a formative process evaluation report that is used to assess the changes occurring in the cultural identity of The College before, during, and after campus relocation. In the evaluation, I assessed institutional stakeholder perspectives regarding the changes that leaders made to shape the institutional culture to prepare for campus relocation since The College had outgrown the current campus space it was sharing with The Church. While I did not directly address the problems related to the relationship between The College and The Church, I did assess the processes used to create the change and how the changes are affecting the culture formation of the institution.

The purpose of the evaluation report was to provide institutional leaders with an outline of what the institution has done, what it has learned in the process, and where it should go from here in the creation of a culture towards sustainable campus relocation. The recommendations of the report are drawn directly from stakeholder feedback



regarding next steps for solidifying the institution's identity and sustainability. Another goal of the report was to identify any knowledge gaps, communicated by stakeholders, that institutional leaders may not be aware of that occurred during the change process. These gaps could affect continued change moving forward and the institution's ability to solidify its identity and become sustainable.

### **Rationale**

In consideration of the process evaluation method chosen to evaluate participant data, I chose to report the findings of the study using an evaluation report. Because I measured stakeholder perspectives regarding culture change, a rather ambiguous, intangible element in the identity of the institution, an evaluation of the changes that occurred was appropriate. Institutional change cannot be achieved through a standard set of practices or policy implementation (Burnes & Jackson, 2011). Instead, it must derive from an assessment of the unique traits presented from each institution and obtained by strategic initiative implementation by leaders (Sarros et al., 2011). Therefore, from a researcher perspective, it is more appropriate to evaluate the changes and perspectives of what culture changes have occurred then to create a process through which the change should occur.

Because the goals of the evaluation are to provide institutional leaders with information surrounding the culture changes and how stakeholders perceive those changes, the report is an appropriate way to provide this feedback. In the data collected, Participants outlined their beliefs regarding the current transitional state of the culture. The participants also outlined the strategies they believe leaders implemented to change

the culture and prepare for campus relocation. Finally, the participants provided recommendations for changes that need to be made in the future based on gaps in past practice to solidify the new identity and create institutional sustainability and growth.

The underlying problem of creating culture change to prepare for campus relocation appears in the findings of the study and is reported in the evaluation as well. In the report, I outline how the current transitional identity affects the current culture of The College. I also describe the strategies leaders employed to make the necessary changes, overcome resistance to change, and create buy-in to the campus relocation effort. Lastly, I provide leaders with five recommendations for future improvements based on stakeholder feedback and assessment. The evaluation report helps leaders to see where their plans were successful and where there is room for improvement. It also shows leaders where stakeholders believe the current gaps in practice are that could lead to cultural and institutional regression if not addressed.

### **Review of the Literature**

The purpose of this project was to disseminate the study's findings to institutional leaders in order to create an understanding of how institutional culture has changed and to provide recommendations for additionally needed changes. I conducted a review of the literature to support using an evaluation report to present the study's findings, as well as support recommendations for additional changes as requested by institutional stakeholders, to solidify the identity of the institution. In researching for the literature review, I used the Walden library. I referenced four main databases: ERIC, Educational Research Complete, Business Source Complete, and Academic Search Complete. I used

the following key phrases: *program evaluation, process evaluation, evaluation report, institutional culture, organizational culture, institutional identity development, organizational identity development, institutional decision making, organizational decision making, organizational communication, institutional communication, internal communication, organizational meaning, organizational motivation, and organizational commitment.*

### **Program Evaluation**

Evaluation is a research-based tool that focuses on logically measuring a program or process to provide feedback for improvement. According to Weiss (1998), evaluation is “the systematic assessment of the operation and/or the outcomes of a program or policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the improvement of the program or policy” (p.4). . Frye and Hemmer (2012) agreed and added “evaluation is about understanding the program through a routine, systematic, deliberate gathering of information to uncover or identify what contributes to the success of the program and what actions need to be taken in order to address findings of the evaluation process” (p.289). Evaluators look at the operational structures of the program and provide recommendations for improvement. Stakeholders discussed five recommendations that they believe needed to occur at The College in order to solidify institutional identity and become an independent, sustainable institution: maintain and protect the internal community, receive consistent communication, engage in institutional dialog in decision making, continue institutional momentum while maintaining balance, and engage the external community for advancement.

Along with assessing the program itself, evaluators often look to identify participant performance in the program and the effectiveness of implementation linked to participants (Darussalam, 2010). The program evaluation process must address the human element. Because one of the goals of program evaluation was to assess leadership strategies for effectiveness, evaluators must include the participant in determining the success of the program when measuring functionality. The data collection methods were fashioned to gauge employee, leader, and student perceptions of the culture change process, thereby, assessing for the human element in the evaluation process.

Program evaluation is also designed to measure how change has occurred (Frye & Hemmer, 2012). Change can be both intended and unintended. Program evaluation should be structured to examine both. When a program first begins, the creators establish processes for how it should function and goals to measure success. Inevitably through the implementation process unintended consequences arise (Frye & Hemmer, 2012). The program evaluation process should measure both the realized goals and unintended outcomes.

In the evaluation study at The College, one staff member alluded to an unintended consequence that may have caused a ripple effect regarding institutional communication and inclusion in the decision making process regarding planning and preparing for the campus relocation. When referencing the plans of the vice president of academics the staff member said

he actually said ‘we are going to spend 1 year reviewing and evaluating what do we need and what do we not need kind of like a packing analogy. After that, we

are going to spend 1 year getting ready for the move.’ In the middle of that everything got topsy-turvy a little bit because the whole process got moved up about 6 months.

She further explained how this action of moving up the relocation date had unintended consequences regarding including stakeholders in the decision making process in addressing the campus layout and planning. Because decisions were made by leaders without participation from those constituencies that were affected by the decisions important details were missed in the planning and implementation stage. This caused frustration and led to more work to rectify the misguided decisions.

How the program interacts within its environment is also important in the evaluation process (Arseven & Arseven, 2014). Evaluators must seek to understand this environmental relationship. If the goal of the evaluation is to examine the program’s operationalization, the best approach for data collection is qualitative inquiry that includes detailed information regarding the framework of the environment and factors affecting the program. The sample consists of people who can determine the gaps the program seeks to fill, the extent to which the program is being implemented according to the goals, and the effects or outcomes of the program (Moscoso, Chaves, Vidal, & Argilaga, 2013). The purposeful sample drawn for the study at The College included 22 individuals across all stakeholder groups, faculty, staff, students, institutional leaders, and so on, who had knowledge about to the culture of The College and how change occurred. They would also have been able to assess how the changes affected the stakeholders. In

this way, an accurate assessment is created including participant perspective, the consequences of change, and environmental interaction.

A process evaluation is a type of program evaluation that helps “the program understand what it has been doing and how, and lead[s] to reflection on how it might improve its operations” (Weiss, 1998, p.181). This type of evaluation can be conducted multiple times throughout the course of the program and provides information to guide in-process revisions. It allows for data collection with the goal of continual improvement both during and after the implementation process (Frye & Hemmer, 2012). Data collection methods often include observation, review of documents, and interviews or focus groups.

Formative assessment, as previously alluded to, is conducted during the implementation of the program (Han, Hu & Li, 2013). In creating a snapshot of the implementation process, formative evaluation can diagnose the current strengths and weaknesses of the program. It can validate the pre-established goals created during the initial development while providing feedback and recommendations for remediation. Leaders can make immediate changes to reach the intended outcomes of the program.

**Evaluation report.** At the end of the evaluation process, the evaluator should create a report that outlines the results of the study and gives a background for conducting the evaluation. Weiss (1998) noted that the report should directly address the questions essential to the evaluation. The report is not a novel building to a climax nor is it an academic paper requiring in-depth descriptions of theory, research, and methodology. The evaluator should state the findings up front because that is what the

necessary parties want to know. The remainder of the report will include the discussion of the problem, illustrations outlining what is occurring, and a description of the data along with study methods.

Evaluation reports can serve different functions to an organization. Clarke and Dawson (1999) further discussed the utilization of evaluation reports and how they can best be used by institutions. The findings of an evaluation can serve as a warning that the program is not functioning properly. They can provide areas for improving the program. Evaluation reports can offer new ways of evaluating old policies or practices, and they can create new avenues for program support by illustrating their effectiveness.

There are also factors that can affect the use of evaluation reports (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). First, the timelessness of results can be an issue. If the data in the evaluation is time sensitive to implementation, the evaluator must ensure a quick dissemination to the necessary parties. Second, the perceived quality of the findings can hinder implementation of results (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). Those individuals receiving the report will look thoroughly and critically at the results and how they might affect the organization. A high priority will be given to determining the accuracy and quality of data. Third, how evaluators report the data and how that data is subsequently reported to the constituencies can also be a factor in the implementation of results.

In order to improve the chances of successfully disseminating and communicating the results of an evaluation report, the evaluator should understand how decision makers operate (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). Evaluators must understand their audience and present results, in a way, that relates to them. The timeliness of dissemination is also

important to the effectiveness of the reporting cycle. During the dissemination process, evaluators include a possible plan for implementation of recommendations so that institutional leaders can get an idea of how change might occur. Lastly, the evaluation report should create opportunities for all parties to judge the usefulness of the data and assess the best use of its application. Along with outlining the uses of the report, Clarke and Dawson (1999) and Weiss (1998) presented a similar outline for the organization of evaluation reports.

***Executive summary.*** The executive summary should include a brief overview of the findings and possible recommendations. I will further expound upon the expression of the findings later in the evaluation. Special reference should be given to those elements of the research design that have implications to interpreting the data (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). The summary creates an overview for the report and invites the reader to explore the details further. Because portions of the audience will only read the executive summary, evaluators list the most important findings and present them succinctly by providing evidence that supports conclusions, but avoid overindulgence in the data (Weiss, 1999). The summary then transitions into the description of the problem.

***Description of the problem.*** Discussion includes the description of the problem, why the program is being studied, and early efforts to address the problem. Much of this information was probably available at the launch of the program or early in the implementation phase (Weiss, 1998). This section gives context to the program and clarifies what has occurred. It addresses the program's intended goals, plans for action, and change and the implementation of these plans. Evaluators using process evaluations



will have ample information to report in this section as it creates a rationale for the necessity of the evaluation. In the evaluation of The College, I gained this information from early accreditation reports and included an assessment from institutional stakeholders regarding their understanding of the previous culture they experienced before the recent changes and campus relocation.

*About the evaluation.* In this section, the evaluator outlines the type of evaluation that was executed to obtain the necessary data (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). A brief rationale is included that describes the choice of evaluation and how it fits the overall scope of the study. The evaluator should also include the main questions that were answered by the evaluation. It provides an introduction to the methodology and shows a distinct and natural connection to data collection methods. In the evaluation of The College, this information consisted of the research questions that I answered when collecting data along with an explanation outlining why I chose an evaluation approach as opposed to case study or other forms of qualitative research. I also provided a brief overview of why the evaluation fit the current state of The College.

*Methodologies.* While the methods section of an evaluation report should not be as extensive as one found in an academic journal, evaluators should still include enough relevant information to assure the audience of the rigor and quality of the data collected. Weiss (1998) noted that this section should describe the participants that engaged in the data collection as readers will want to understand the scope of participation across the program or institution. This section should also briefly touch on the choice of research design. The design should be further expounded upon and include a description of the

data collection process to include the collection of data and the methods used to analyze the data (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). In this section, I briefly touched on the general concepts related to the choice of participants without divulging personal identities while highlighting the methods for data collection. I also elaborated on the evaluation approach and its scholarly offerings to provide an accurate representation of the rigor and quality to the data collection process. The next section of the report addresses the findings of the research.

*Findings (including recommendations).* In describing the results and findings, the evaluator should state the conclusions first and then provide the rationale using data (Weiss, 1999). If the data is qualitative, this means providing themes that emerged from the data, bolstered by quotes from participants or keen observations that support the theme. This section also highlights the recommendations that emerged from the research and the basis for the recommendations. As I illustrated in the findings of the study, the main themes include a transitional identity, strategies for creating change, and challenges to the change process. The recommendations suggested by stakeholders included maintaining community, receiving consistent communication, engaging in institutional dialog in decision making, continuing change momentum while maintaining balance, and engaging the external community for advancement. The evaluator may also provide an outline for implementing recommendations by stakeholders and the necessary resources for success. Lastly, the report should briefly touch on any limitations or roadblocks to fully applying the recommendations.

*Appendices.* This section includes any instruments used in collecting the data along with relevant graphs, figures, or tables that further illustrate and clarify the findings. If expansion is needed to explain the methodology further, evaluators display that information in the appendices as well. If theories or literature were used to explain points in the report, the evaluator should include a reference section.

To fully understand the program evaluation reporting process and how evaluators use evaluation reports to disseminate results, I reviewed literature addressing the outline of program evaluation, but further clarity was needed regarding the content of the evaluation. In the study, I placed the greatest emphasis on examining the recommendations of the research as these concepts were not fully saturated in the previous literature review. Before I disseminated the result of the study a thorough review of the interconnected elements recommended for change by participants needed investigation. The remainder of the literature review addresses those themes.

### **The Connection- Identity, Communication, Decision Making and Commitment**

Institutional stakeholders identified themes regarding institutional change and sustainability that the literature review did not initially identify. These elements are presented in the findings as challenges The College faces in the future and appear as recommendations on the evaluation report. The recommendations include community (related to institutional identity), communication structures, stakeholder dialogue in decision making, and external community engagement. While the previous literature review touched on the importance of institutional culture and identity along with communication, it did not address how these elements interact and the importance of how

they connect in the culture change process. The following review describes the association of these themes as an outcome and how institutions must recognize and implement these elements to sustain change and further establish the culture.

**Organizational identity formation- dialogue and communication.**

Organizational identity is closely linked to culture in that culture can affect the formation of the organization's identity and how stakeholders align with and accept that identity.

While organizational identification is an essential element to the success of any organization the immediate impact of organizational change increases the level of uncertainty for many stakeholders (Kim, Song, & Lee, 2013). Uncertainty occurs when individuals do not have enough information about a change or are made to decipher sets of information that are conflicting. Uncertainty can present itself in the form of doubt regarding the future identity of the organization or an individual to the organization.

Rapid change in an organization can reestablish the structure of the institution by replacing the rules or norms. These changes cause employees to feel less confident about how their norms and job knowledge cope with the changes being made (Kim et al., 2013). In light of this stakeholder sense breaking, employees often seek out new norms and rules to adapt to the changing system. The variable of uncertainty influences how stakeholders seek out identification with the organization.

One staff member alluded to the idea that there is still some uncertainty regarding the future of The College and the next steps. The staff member noted that the culture includes

a renewed sense of energy and passion, excitement yet a fear of the unknown. I think there is a real hope for where we have been. We have a lot of people that have been here for a while that have a track record and know the history and know where we are at . . . . Now that we are here people see what we are doing and what we are about, but in that there is a hesitancy because it is the first time The College has been on its own.

In light of this statement, it appears that stakeholders are trying to understand new ways of operating and knowing based on where they have come from and where they want to go. This level of uncertainty, coupled with past experiences, forces them to seek out new avenues to engage the institution.

Research shows how uncertainty can play of role in enforcing new identity. In their study of employees experiences with culture change, uncertainty, and organizational identification in Korean firms, Kim, Song, and Lee (2013) discovered that the stronger and faster organizational change was gauged by employees, the stronger they identified with the organization. When the assessment included the variable of uncertainty, the rate of change became nonsignificant, and only uncertainty was a predictor of organizational identification. One institutional leader at The College discussed how uncertainty and survival mode affected organizational commitment and identity. The leader commented that

on the edge of survival everyone kind of clings on to the same thing. You can actually gather the troops pretty easy because it's survival. It is like throwing a life raft out in the middle of the ocean. People are going to jump on that thing.

Therefore, creating a sense of uncertainty about the future can lead to higher levels of organizational identification as stakeholders actively seek out new ways of understanding their role at the institution.

During these unsettling periods, the institution tends to experience the emergence of new meaning systems that establish new strategies for action. The image of the institution can be perceived differently by students, faculty, staff, alumni, and external stakeholders. The first step in communicating institutional values is through the articulation of the identity that derives from the historical mission of the institution (MacDonald, 2013). While identities must have a historical legacy, they are also personally constructed on an ongoing basis by stakeholders. At The College, one institutional leader discussed addressing the historical mission but keeping it relevant to the present. The leader continuously used the phrase “honoring our heritage but bringing it into the present.” The identity should be rooted in the fundamental values of the institution while expressing that identity in the present tense and keeping it relevant.

Because employees seek identification, institutions often construct statements or icons that help join groups together to address change and help the self-identification process, but leaders must ensure that the language and symbols used incorporate a wide range of audiences and can apply to all stakeholder groups (MacDonald, 2013). These icons should be central to the foundational elements of the institution while capturing the essence of the organization. They must be enduring to the timeless elements of the institution to produce continuity among all groups to connect to institutional memory.

Lastly, they must be distinguishable from the old ways of knowing or operating and show how the change produces something better.

Initially, institutional founders and leaders give shape to core organizational values along with disseminating those values and influencing identity construction. They make sense of the organization's mission and give sense to stakeholders while providing organizational distinction over a long period of time (Gioia, Price, Hamilton & Thomas, 2010). However, institutional leaders alone cannot solely influence the elements of identity and the processes associated with identity formation. All institutional stakeholders negotiate identity.

In order to realize an identity there first has to be a sense of identity ambiguity where stakeholders look to legitimize identity through both mimicking processes of other similar institutions as well as constructing distinctiveness within the organizational field (Gioia et al., 2010). Leaders accomplish this ambiguity through articulating a vision, experiencing a meanings void, converging on a consensual identity, negotiating identity claims and attaining optimal distinctiveness. The initial vision for the institution creates the contours around which the formation of the organization identity occurs (Gioia et al., 2010). In experiencing a meanings void, stakeholders are unsure of how to process or express the vision. The sense making process begins with stakeholders around the identity claim.

First, they fill the void by determining what the institution is not through assessing other similar institution and disassociating dissimilar features. At The College, institutional stakeholders were unable to communicate a fully realized identity, but many

of them provided examples or statement of what the institution is not. These statements correlate with what Gioia et al. (2010) illustrated. One staff member stated “I think that the key is developing who we are and understanding who we are and accepting who we are and wanting to be who we are. We are not [this university]. We are not [that university].” Another faculty member commented on the facilities of a different institution and how the culture of The College has to influence prospective students and persuade them to attend. The faculty member commented “you can’t compete with those types of facilities. That’s not our main issue. We have a different culture here than they do. Parents are probably going to send their kids here that they wouldn’t send there.” Disassociation from other similar institutions is the first step in filling the meanings void.

In filling the void, stakeholders began to articulate elements that could claim organizational identity but that could be tested among themselves (Gioia et al., 2010). Eventually, an identity emerged because multiple stakeholders had the opportunity to come together and express the values and assess institutional fit. The identity claims were expressed via the vision of both internal and external parties and showed a commitment to the new identity. As members fully understood who they were in light of the vision and new identity they were able to establish distinctiveness among other institutions, and they took steps to influence other external parties regarding the core values, claims, and identity. This was a deliberate step to not only solidify the identity, but create an external image.

Institutional identity is a balance between understanding the founding principles, values, and vision of the institution and continual negotiation by organization members



via their interactions with each other. These continual communications become claims that must be legitimized over time internally and externally until a deepened understanding occurs. The claims produce actions that affect understanding and stabilize the institutional identity. Thus, identity formation is a collaborative process.

In order for stakeholders to engage in the identity formation process, institutional leaders must help employees to craft their concepts of organizational identity. Often during times of planned organization change institutional activities can come in conflict with employee's understanding of the organizational identity. Bridwell-Mitchell and Mezias (2012) noted the importance of cognitive legitimacy, creating meaning in organization activities, during these times of change. Planned change often requires practices that fall outside an employee's current understanding of identity. To secure support for new organizational endeavors leaders must transform employee's existing concepts of identity to align more closely with the desired image.

Identity crafting allows employees to make sense of new activities by helping them establish a new lens that stakeholders develop where new activities become the norm. Stakeholders accomplish identity crafting through creating future claims, symbolic claims, character claims, positive-ideal claims, and social identity claims (Bridwell-Mitchell & Mezias, 2012). Future claims redirect attention away from the past identity toward potential ones by promising something better. While directing attention away from past claims, leaders can also enhance new identity by focusing the employee's attention on the enduring attributes and symbolic elements that point to the core values of the institution. As change begins to occur the current identity becomes less certain as

elements are integrated, assimilated, or discarded. One institutional leader at The College talked about discarding the concept of being a small college regarding sustainability. The leader noted that

The culture was a college of 300 forever. A college of 300 does not survive . . . we are now a college of 1,000. We are not a college of 3000 forever. We are not going to be. That is a choice we made when we decided to go to different modalities and growth.

Changing attitudes and symbolic elements can help to signify identity change.

Through character claims, leaders broadcast information about the organization that can be widely disbursed among all constituencies to create consistency (Bridwell-Mitchell & Mezias, 2012). At The College, institutional leaders widely communicated using town hall meetings for students, large, monthly faculty/staff meetings referred to as “community,” and through electronic resources such as e-mail and a strong web presence. Positive claims involve creating identities that focus on ideal and most desirable characteristics of the change and through social identity; these ideals are collectively accepted by the group through inclusive language and identification.

As Bridwell-Mitchell and Mezias (2012) and Gioia et al. (2012) all alluded to, crafting organization identity is a constant negotiation of stakeholders creating meaning. Clifton (2012) argued that stakeholders can negotiate the mere concept of leadership in identity formation. Leadership is not the property of one person, but those who are most likely to emerge as leaders have access to powerful communication resources to influence

the negotiation process. Meaning is not “out there” but must be managed to form identity.

Leadership emerges through the decision making process as stakeholders negotiate through continual communication. The process of laminating, taking selections of past practices along with organizational meanings and enacting them in the present, allows new meanings to form, so the organization emerges (Clifton, 2012). This shared understanding creates a framework on which the meanings become routine through identity formation. Leadership is a relational process on continual influence where individuals understand the importance of routine communication with stakeholders in managing meaning.

**Decision making leads to organizational commitment.** When leaders provide opportunities for stakeholders to be a part of the decision making process they are more likely to commit to the organization. Baek-Kyoo and Shim (2010) define organization commitment as “an individual’s psychological bond to an organization as a whole” (p. 425). Employees seek opportunities for empowerment in their work. Empowering conditions include decision making, new challenges, and added layers of responsibility. The more an employee feels empowered, the greater he or she is committed to the organization. Employees also seek organizations that promote social support and goal achievement (Simosi & Xenkiou, 2010). One staff member at The College commented on helping reach institutional goals and getting plugged into the plan for success. The staff member stated that

we would love your help in this area in this area because of your expertise, and then solicit expertise as opposed to being only a mandated monarchy in the sense of this is what is going to happen, but having a clear direction and plan that everyone can plug into and understand where they plug in.

Leaders can enhance organizational commitment and help employees align personal principles with the organization.

Autonomy, the degree that an individual has the freedom to perform tasks, is another important element to organizational commitment. Autonomy when linked with feedback is crucial in distinguishing motivational behavior (Sisodia & Das, 2013). In this process, employees become emotionally attached to the organization and feel led to reciprocate with commitment. The higher the perceived support, the more likely the individual is to become involved in professional behaviors and attach themselves to the organization (LaMastro, 2010). Psychological ownership, for employees, involves freedom in work activities but also includes cooperation in decision making. Workers engage in activities that offer them a sense of control. When workers experience autonomy and supervisor support they gain control over their daily tasks and express greater commitment to the organization (Brimeyer, Perrucci & MacDermid, 2010). Organizational commitment is expressed in attitudes and behaviors that led to identification and increased productivity.

Leaders often overlook employees in the decision making process. Many times they are simply sent messages or informed about the decisions in the organization. In doing so, organizations fail to connect with the employee's full potential as

communicators (Kataria, Kataria, & Garg, 2010). One staff member discussed how changes in the office floor plan occurred without stakeholder consent and then they were made to implement the less than ideal situation.

Instead of sitting down and saying ‘how is this going to work’ a plan just got dropped on my desk and said ‘this is how we think it is going to work. Are you okay with that?’ It had already been decided and at that point in time I needed to just say ‘we will make it work. We will figure it out when we get there.’ We have had to create some different work spaces. We had to create a shared office space for a while.

Communicating with individuals is a continual process of listening and integrating stakeholder ideas into the decision making process. In operating in this transparent manner, leaders provide opportunity so concerned stakeholders can understand how the organization operates. Leaders must ensure that the message sent equals the message received (Archamdeault & Rose, 2010). During times of change, leaders should verify that stakeholders fully understand the message. Eliciting feedback will give leaders the opportunity to confirm what is heard and clear up any miscommunication immediately. One staff member discussed the importance of creating channels for disseminating information and providing feedback.

There is going to be a need to figure out how we start disseminating information. Those one-hour blocks of time a month for the faculty and community are not getting it done. The directors are not getting it from the vice presidents, and therefore, they cannot push it down into the workforce. They have got to get that

communication flow rapid firing so people can get back to pushing the initiatives of the vision and the mission through there. Otherwise, all we are going to do is start to get stuck again.

Leaders should view stakeholders as individuals that can make or break an organization, not just as performance producing entities. Serban (2013) noted that stakeholders are both internal and external and the use of integrated communication strategies builds trust, support, and lasting partnerships. Open and transparent dialog is essential in the communication process to engender commitment. Allowing stakeholder participation in decision making can also improve their ownership, build consensus, mobilize resources, and build completion capacity (Chen & Reigeluth, 2010). Some institutions are implementing decision making leadership teams. In their study of the construction and communication of one leadership team, Chen and Reigeluth (2010) provided feedback on the operational perception of those on the team. Members of the team understood their role regarding bridging the communication gap between leaders and the organization, but acknowledged that early efforts failed to close the feedback loop. Additionally, there was a lack of informal communication that also affected the communication patterns at the institution. Everyone involved in the process appreciated the ability to provide feedback in the decision making process.

Additional models exist for creating collaborative practices. Ginsberg and Bernstein (2011) presented a model for collaboration in implementing a change process. This model includes the leader, change agent, and facilitator. The leader was an individual who seeking to make the change. A change agent was a partner at the

implementation level that most strongly supported the change. He or she was considered the driver in the process. The facilitator acted as a bridge between the leader and the change agent. In their study, Ginsberg and Bernstein (2011) presented an example to illustrate the change agent and facilitator roles. In an attempt to build support for a conference on embracing new aspects of teaching and learning the conference creators (change agents) reached out to the director of faculty development and the deans of the university for ideas on the structure of the conferences. They engendered support for the conference and created opportunities to dialog in the decision making process.

Communication in the decision making process is a basic element of any organization. The way employees position themselves inside the organization can determine how leaders consider them in the communication process. In the decision making process participants either receive the outcomes or are a part of expressing their perspectives on the outcomes (Baraldi, 2013). Leaders should not overlook the importance of participant's role in the decision making process. Participation in the decision making process promotes organizational commitment and positive rapport with leaders.

Decision makers are encouraged to act as transformational leaders that welcome stakeholders' viewpoint to facilitate decision making. Leaders must first delineate the relationship between manager and subordinate through channels of communication while building mutual trust and respect (Tatlah, Ali, & Saeed, 2011). The leader's behavior can have a significant effect on stakeholder commitment.

Leaders first coordinate decision making by facilitating subordinates' opportunities to participate in decision making to enhance personal development and growth along with ensuring the growth of the organization. At The College, one staff member observed that some people felt left out in the decision process regarding relocation and stated that "as much as there was an effort to bring people in, I don't feel like people were really brought in to be a participant in the relocation . . . . People just knew decisions were getting made up here, and I'm not really being brought in the conversation." Active participation increases the likelihood of better results in collaborative decision making. In his study on conversational mechanisms in the decision making process, Baraldi (2013) noted that leaders that promoted participative expression and facilitation experienced richer discussions in decision making and acceptance of proposals; whereas, leaders that did not use participative practices received passive responses, silence, or even open refusal.

**Leaders facilitate- decision making through communication.** Relational styles of leadership are important when seeking to involve others in the decision making process. Ismail, Zainunddin, and Ibrahim (2010) noted two specific relational styles: participative and consultative. Participative leadership refers to leaders who work closely with employees to involve them in the decision making process. Consultative leadership refers to leaders who always proactively request the opinions of employees to establish goals. In their study on the effects of relational leadership styles in one Malaysian local authority, Ismail et al. (2010) found that when leaders used relational styles of behavior employees were more satisfied with their work and had an increase in organizational



commitment. These relational styles are effective to the extent that employees actively involve themselves in decision making because they perceive their efforts as being appreciated in the planning and implementing of change initiatives.

Participative decision making is an influential tool for motivation. Employee participation in decision making involves “leading, motivation and interaction to provide employees with opportunities to participate in organizational decision making” (Han, Chiang, & Chang, 2010, p. 2220). It is one of the most effective tools to motivate employees toward desirable behaviors. To improve employees’ decision making, all communication channels in the organization must be effective so that managers can obtain suggestions from across the institution. When employees participate in decision making, they are more motivated and increase their commitment to the organization. They are closely connected to organizational goals and feel a sense of ownership over their daily tasks.

Psychological ownership plays a role in employee organizational commitment. In their study of employee participation in decision making by assessing technical companies in Taiwan, Han, Chiang, and Chang (2010) reported that psychological ownership positively associated with organizational commitment and organizational commitment positively associated with knowledge-sharing. Because a strong relationship exists between employee participation in decision making and psychological ownership and as organizational commitment mediates this relationship through knowledge-sharing, companies should allow employees to engage in decision making.

These practices bolster employee engagement in daily workflow and engender commitment.

Managing communication is a process whereby leaders send information to employees and employees provide meaningful feedback into organizational decisions (Mahajan, Bishop, & Scott, 2012). This type of communication encourages employee openness to assist them in better identifying with the organization. Management communication and employee involvement are related to organizational commitment through employee trust in leadership. In this environment, leaders' communication creates an atmosphere of transparency within the organization because employees are kept up to date on information and are more likely to trust decisions. At The College, one staff member commented on the shift in communication and how staff seemed to lose connection to what was occurring.

In the beginning of our transition process, there was so much information that was communicated to us. I feel like that was really helpful for me to feel like I know what is going on. I know what is happening. I know where we are in this process, and since we have moved and even before we moved there was a shift in the kind of communication that we received. I don't know if it was because I moved from student to staff or what happened in that transition, but I feel like the communication has slowed down.

When employees involve themselves in the decision making process, they have a better understanding of their perspective and the perspective of management.

Organizations demonstrate a belief in the decision making process and encourage new ideas when using collaborative practices (Lunenburg, 2013). The organization views employees almost like an extended family. Schools that manifest high levels of trust in employees use participatory practices in making decisions, and listen to stakeholder ideas are more successful in their change endeavors. These institutions exhibit characteristics of both loose and tight couplings. They are tight in maintaining culture values and loose in decentralizing autonomous practices to employees.

As such management communication and employee involvement are positively related to trust in management. In their study of trust in leadership behavior as a mediator to decision making and organizational commitment in a US based trucking company, Mahajan, Bishop, and Scott (2012) reported that management communication and employee involvement were significantly related to organizational commitment. Employees respond positively when organizations involve them in setting goals and keeping them informed. In this study, trust in leadership fully mediated the relationship between management communication and employee involvement. One staff member at The College discussed the president's leadership in creating unity.

I think probably [the president] had a lot to do with that as far as his leadership which has always been very positive and upbeat and optimistic . . . . I think he has been able to pull everyone together without alienating people. I have seen leadership both ways. I have seen people, who are strong leaders, but a lot of people get killed off, but [the president] has managed to pull us together to a great extent without causing that kind of dissention which is really a great feat.

As leaders make themselves more vulnerable to employee actions through shared decision making, employees have greater trust in the organization.

In the decision making process, employees need to trust leader to be engaged in company goals. In their study on how public relations executives engage in internal communication to enhance employee engagement, Mishra, Boynton, and Mishra (2014) reported that employees must feel like they are contributing to the company's goals in order to feel engaged. Part of this process is building trust through the promotion of dialog involving two-way communication with stakeholders. As leaders build trust through internal communication, employees feel more engaged and are more likely to build trust with other important stakeholders to the institution i.e. clients, students, customers, etc.

Trust and transparency begin inside the institution with clear channels of communication that flow from top to bottom and reciprocally (MacLean, 2011). In this process management is not protected from awkward truths but can create a real identity for the institution because of transparent communication. Organizations accomplish transparency by creating unfiltered channels of communication that create systems for gathering and reporting information. This type of information is real, honest, and based on mutual trust.

### **Implementation**

Because the project itself was a formative process-oriented evaluation of the strategies leaders used to create culture change in preparation for campus relocation, I disseminated the results of the evaluation, in an e-mail, to the leaders of The College. I

provided an opportunity to set up a follow up meeting with institutional leaders to clarify any questions they had or clarify the results as they appeared in the evaluation. The evaluation itself included the recommendations that stakeholders communicated regarding overcoming any roadblocks to continued growth and sustainability in light of the changes that have already occurred in the campus relocation process.

It is not within my purview as an external researcher to oversee the implementation of these recommendations, but I can act as a liaison to further clarify any questions leader might have regarding the results of the study and provide other expert assessments. Clarke and Dawson (1999) and Weiss (1998) noted the process of enlightenment where an evaluation may provide new information about a situation that may not have been previously apparent to those involved. Often changes of this magnitude are not supplied fully by a single evaluation study but require additional follow- up, explanation, and development before implementation can occur.

### **Potential Resources and Existing Supports**

Throughout the course of the evaluation, the president of The College has been very supportive of the research premise and how the results could help solidify the campus relocation while identifying the possible gaps or roadblocks that leaders may have missed. In order for implementation to occur regarding the results of the evaluation, the president, the cabinet and other members of the leadership team must continue to support the outcomes of the evaluation and agree to the terms of implementation. The resources needed for implementation depend on the aspects of the recommendation the institutional leaders decide to implement.

If leaders want to focus on sustaining and protecting the community, needed resources would include additional ideas and funding for communal spaces or prioritizing and accelerating the timetable for completing the housing and athletic build outs. If leaders choose to focus on establishing communication structures and inclusive decision making, needed resources will include the time and effort to create a committee dedicated to establishing these internal structures and ensuring the appropriate flow of information. This process would require the creation of a formal structure, at least for the time being so that communication flow can be measured and assessed for effectiveness.

If leaders focus on continuing the change momentum while maintaining balance, needed resources would include funding for hiring additional faculty and staff to keep up with the requested change and also funding for the success of changes themselves. For example, The College has recently restructured their student billing and aid operations. Leaders must ensure the proper funding is in place to secure the success of the system itself as well as hiring the correct staff to continue its success and implementation. Lastly, if leaders focus on building relations with the external community, needed resources would include a thorough plan and funding for additional security measures to further protect the campus constituencies. Funding may also be necessary for establishing external partnerships, but it is more likely that early partnerships would require the support and dedication of key internal and external stakeholders committed to the success of the proposed partnership.

### **Potential Barriers**

One potential barrier to implementation of the recommendations could be the perceived quality of the findings as assessed by institutional leaders. Clarke and Dawson (1999) discussed this concern as an aspect that could influence the utilization of results. Those in charge of assessing for and creating the plans for implementation will first seek a strong rationalization and validation for the results of the study. They will want to ensure that these results are shared across institutional stakeholders on a broader scale and may first ask for additional follow up from their dean of planning and assessment across the institution. If they believe I did not conduct the recommendations in scholarly manner, the implementation of the results would be threatened. I can help to alleviate some of this uncertainty in how I communicate the evaluation findings. Clarke and Dawson (1999) also noted the importance of this step in the utilization of evaluation results. Creating a clear and concise evaluation that outlines the collection procedures and provides a strong rationale for the study will help leaders to see the quality and validity of the findings.

Another potential barrier to the implementation of the recommendations could be a lack on monetary resources necessary to make the changes. Three out of the five recommendations would require the commitment of financial resources in order to implement the plans to achieve success. For a small institution that has recently pulled itself out of financial instability, the allocation of funds could be a challenge at this time. The implementation of many of these recommendations would need to occur over an

extended period and start with an extensive planning phase, implementation, and assessment.

### **Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

As both Clarke and Dawson (1999) and Weiss (1998) noted, the timeliness of results is imperative to the implementation and application process. The campus relocation officially occurred in January of 2014. I collected data in April of 2014. I hope to disseminate the results of the evaluation in fall of 2014 that should allow additional time for the institution to settle into the new space and launch the next academic year activities before engaging in the recommendations of the evaluation.

Because the recommendations produced through the evaluation involve additional change in culture and practice, the implementation phase will take a considerable amount of time to achieve. Implementation time frames will also depend on which elements of the recommendation leaders decide to pursue. In the words of the president at The College “these things take years, not months.” The implementation phase will have to start with prioritizing which recommendations to address first.

These recommendations will require extensive planning in order to assure successful implementation. For instance, if leaders choose to implement a more collaborative, formal and structured communication channel, leaders will first need to identify the necessary parties that are part of this channel, initiate a plan to ensure the flow of information, and provide areas of feedback while mitigating the channel to determine possible steps where information may become derailed. Creating a cohesive communication system takes times and many evaluations.



### **Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others**

As an external evaluator, I interacted with many institutional stakeholders, collected applicable data, and analyzed the data to assess for themes regarding institutional change. I disseminated the evaluation to institutional leaders, the president, cabinet and board of trustees that hold the authority to recognize the recommendations and plan for their implementation. Institutional leaders will then determine what additional stakeholders have the necessary expertise to take part in the implementation process. As the researcher, I acted as a consultant if the institution needed further clarification on the findings, but unless institutional leaders request my specific action during implementation, I will not be involved in operationalizing the recommendations.

### **Project Evaluation**

The project is a formative process evaluation report that assessed the changes occurring in the cultural identity of The College before, during, and after campus relocation. The evaluation assessed current institutional stakeholder perspectives regarding the changes that leaders made to shape the institutional culture to prepare for campus relocation because The College had outgrown the current campus space it was sharing with The Church. Key stakeholders involved in the process include institutional leaders, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Secondary stakeholders could also include friends of The College and external partners in the new community.

The evaluation cycle should be a reiterative process whereby stakeholders continuously evaluate program and processes for effectiveness. Weiss (1998) noted that an evaluation report should only be one data point during a review process. As The

College reviews the report and assesses the recommendations provided by the stakeholders, it will create a plan for implementation. Because the evaluation was formative, institutional leaders should also plan to re-evaluate their identity creation process in a few years from a summative perspective based on the recommendations provided and any new opportunities for sustainability that may have arisen.

### **Implications Including Social Change**

#### **Local Community**

Because the study itself was created specifically to assess the cultural changes occurring at The College, stakeholders closely associated with The College will receive the most benefit from the results. The recommendations of the study clearly outline a set of improvements that stakeholders are requesting, and institutional leaders can plan for and provide to affirm the institutional culture, encourage sustainability, and embrace growth into the future. Students and their families will benefit from an enhanced community where they feel accepted and a part of an enriching educational experience. Instructors and staff will embrace a new level of access to decision making while receiving appropriate communication on the decision making process. This formalization of communication can help create a balance in the change to maintenance ratio for faculty and staff who would more fully embrace future change as they are involved more intimately with the process. Lastly, the local external community could also benefit from the study as leaders find new ways to create partnerships that would benefit both The

College and external community to engender internal support as new stakeholders find ways to engage with the community.

### **Far-Reaching**

While I studied a more significant level of change as The College transitions to a new campus than most institutions will face in the near future, the processes used as demonstrated in the study and the findings illustrated within the institution can be instructive to other postsecondary institutions seeking to make major changes in how they do business and the image they present. Because the magnitude of change at The College is so large, the sheer enormity of the transformations taking place can actually amplify the importance of understanding change and how it affects the cultures of institutions and the sagas that change creates on other campuses. The results of the study may also reinforce or clarify the steps and actions that institutions take in producing change at all levels. As institutions of higher education change and improve their cultures they create better opportunities for student engagement. Students who are more engaged in educational endeavors retain knowledge and become productive members of society through knowledge application and also give back to the institution that creates a continuous cycle for improvement and success.

### **Conclusion**

This section included the project as an evaluation in detail. It provided an outline and scholarly rationale for the use of the evaluation method to report finding and also addressed the scholarly rationale for the content of the evaluation in term of gaps in the

previous literature that the recommendations of the evaluation provided. I also highlighted study findings the use the evaluation methods while noting recommendations. I outlined the goals of the evaluation as well as the implementation process. The section addressed the roles and responsibilities of the researcher, and implications related to social change were also addressed. Section four will provide reflections on the study process along with strengths and limitations. Special emphasis will be given to addressing the researcher as leader, scholar, and practitioner along with future areas to expand the research.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

In this section, I discuss the strengths of the evaluation, the limitations of the study, and the alternatives to address the limitations. I also address what I learned regarding scholarship, project evaluation, leadership, and change. I also emphasize understanding the individual as scholar, practitioner, and project developer. Special consideration is given to the effects of the study related to social change. Implications and opportunities to expand the research are also components in this section. Lastly, I present final conclusions that summarize the study.

### **Project Strengths**

The professional literature regarding institutional culture change, as it relates to multiple institutions, centers on mergers. In this study, I approached institutional culture change from a different viewpoint when I assessed the separation of two entities. I assessed how institutional leaders broached culture change successfully to separate The College from The Church to solidify its sustainability after the campus relocation. This study adds to the literature on culture change by providing an avenue for other institutions seeking separation and independence to plan their culture change. While each institution will have to approach culture change differently based on its ethos, this study can provide a general blueprint or example for how leaders can undertake this level of change.

The close alignment of study themes with current literature topics regarding change is another strength of the study. This alignment helps to validate the findings of

the study. I also presented additional avenues through which the institution can achieve culture change. The second literature review provided more opportunities to examine these elements of change further and how they might be applicable to The College.

Another strength of the study involves the ability to implement study recommendations. Stakeholders provided clear recommendations and ideas to further solidify institutional identity by identifying gaps in the change process. With the correct planning and stakeholder involvement, The College should be able to implement many of these changes that will benefit the institution's sustainability. While the recommendations do require an extended timetable for full implementation, the recommendations are easily within the scope of the institution. Some of the recommendations are already in the forefront of the institutional plan. The study enhances the justification for setting them as a priority over other projects. While the study has numerous strengths it also has some limitations as well.

### **Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations**

Because I conducted the study at one institution, the results cannot be generalized to other similar institutions. Also, culture change initiatives cannot be generally applied to all institutions because cultures vary per institution and are defined by the stakeholders and ethos unique to the organization. The study results only included 22 participant interviews out of the hundreds of institutional stakeholders. This measurement could also limit the results of the study. Weiss (1998) noted that process evaluations used to measure change of this magnitude should be evaluated as only one point in the evaluation process because the scope of information needed cannot come from merely one single

evaluation. Because this evaluation did not include all constituencies associated with institution, leaders of the organization should use the study as one data point on which to base decisions about the campus relocation. Further follow up is needed based on the assessment created by leaders using the results of this study.

As an external evaluator, I had limited accessibility to all stakeholders. There were a few invited participants who chose not to participate in the study. They may have declined because I was external to the institution, and because I do not live in proximity to the institution, I did not have time to establish relationships with the participants in the study before data collection began.

Another possible limitation of the study is the implementation of the recommendations due to limited resources. A few of the recommendations could require extensive resources to implement fully. For example, stakeholders discussed the importance of protecting the community ethos. They noted that the ethos will only be fully realized by the construction of the student dorms and athletic facilities on campus. A plan of this volume will require monetary resources that are currently not at the disposal of the organization.

Avenues to address these limitations could include The College engaging with the dean of planning and assessment to create follow-up assessments based on the findings of the evaluation. Leaders may seek to investigate further how the institution as a whole relates to the recommendations provided by the 22 study participants. If the results are far reaching among the campus constituencies, leaders are more likely to move towards the implementation of the recommendations. To help facilitate both engagement in the

decision making process and resource allocation, leaders also should involve stakeholders in creating new ideas for generating resources. Because stakeholders believe that a true culture will not form until the campus build out is complete, leaders can invite them into the resource creation process.

### **Scholarship**

Over the last 4 years as a doctoral student, I have come to understand the importance of scholarship in the knowledge attainment process. I have always considered myself a lifelong learner, and earning my terminal degree at such a young age will create additional opportunities for learning and growth in the future. To fully embrace doctoral learning, I needed to be self-directed in completing work and motivated to take ownership of the doctoral study process. Knowledge attainment related to culture change was only a portion of the skills I gained during the doctoral study and doctoral degree process. Taking initiative and monitoring my progress toward completion were other skills that developed over time as well. Because doctoral education combines both academic knowledge attainment as well as life skill development, it is considered the highest form of scholarship because the goal is to create well-rounded individuals with expert status in the field.

Doctoral learning also provides an emphasis on fully engaging and mastering the research process. Not only are students challenged to produce scholarly research for use in the doctoral study process, but the expectations of the student extend beyond graduation. The hope is that students will take the research skills they have learned and continue implementing scholarly practice in their daily endeavors and work environment.



Another scholarly element that doctoral learning emphasizes is the critical analysis of scholarly literature and the ability to synthesize articles into a summative evaluation. Analysis enhances the student's critical thinking skills, that are essential in any work environment.

### **Project Development and Evaluation**

Understanding how scholarship and practice interact was another important piece of knowledge that I gained during the doctoral study process. Through combining the curricular components of the literature review, research, and project development, students learn how to put academic knowledge into action in a way that will benefit the greater society. Because my project was an evaluation itself, I gained information on program/process evaluations for improving practice. Evaluation researchers often incorporate both quantitative and qualitative forms of data collection that provides a well-rounded experience for the researcher. On many occasions, evaluations are conducted by internal stakeholders to the institution. In gaining the knowledge on project development and assessment, I can become an asset to the organizations I work for by gaining the expertise to help them assess and evaluate their current practices to produce efficiencies in operations. The doctoral study process helps students understand how to apply educational knowledge in a practical setting that can lead to institutional improvements.

### **Leadership and Change**

Because this I focused on how leaders create and sustain change, I was fully engrossed in understanding how these two elements interact. To create sustainable change transformational leadership practices are necessary (Sarros, Cooper, & Santora,

2011). These practices include understanding the current culture, assessing for change readiness, making data-driven decisions, creating a sense of urgency for change, establishing a vision, aligning values around the vision, embracing collaboration, encouraging communication, involving stakeholders in decision making, addressing resistance, and securing commitment. Both seminal researchers and current literature point to these elements as important to the change leadership process.

It is also important to note that leaders' actions in the change process must be balanced with the inclusion of stakeholders in the planning and implementation process (Han et al., 2010; Lunenburg, 2013). Half of the strategies listed above involve institutional stakeholders in the change process: aligning values, embracing collaboration, encouraging communication, involving stakeholders in decision making, addressing resistance, and securing commitment. These elements display the leader's ability to include others in the change process with the goal of securing commitment to the change and creating sustainability to the change principles. It is a balance of driving change through the vision while incorporating others in producing the change to sustain it.

### **Analysis of Self as Scholar**

One of the most important skills I have developed as a scholar is the ability to critically analyze a situation by incorporating multiple data points to draw conclusions. I have learned the significance of the breath of research including assessing what current literature provides, reliably and accurately measuring data, and triangulating multiple elements to show how the outcomes align and address the issue at hand. Along with critical analysis, I more fully understand the importance of creative thinking as part of the

problem solving process. It is a balance between integrating critical analysis with creative thinking that will help to create new avenues for success in higher education. With many of the social and economic issues on the forefront of higher education, leaders will be needed who can critically analyze the problems and then produce creative solutions to those problems. My studies at the doctoral level have helped me to understand this integration.

As a scholar, I have also continued to build a knowledge base in the field of higher education that will assist me as a lifelong learner and understand more about myself and the world around me. This knowledge base creates new opportunities to interact with others. Scholars are not merely empty vessels awaiting fulfillment, but take active measures to be responsible learners in the extension of their knowledge. In this process, I have embraced research practices and have developed skills regarding assessment, project development, and evaluation.

### **Analysis of Self as Practitioner**

I have already been able to put into practice different aspects of what I have learned during the doctoral education process. As a doctoral student advisor, I have had richer conversations with my students about their doctoral journeys. Together we have been able to discuss their educational endeavors, and I have been able to provide insights into the doctoral study process while talking students through roadblocks they may be experiencing. On more than one occasion I have helped clarify the literature synthesis process or assisted a student in elaborating their methodology. My experience with the ebb and flow of the doctoral study process also provided me with unique opportunities to

help students more fully embrace the highs and lows associated with the review cycles. While I did not have the expertise to review their studies, I could offer an educational mindset for clarifying the steps in the process while giving them the tools to move past self-doubt and toward completion and success.

In my current role, I have recently taken on additional responsibilities related to operational improvements in my department. On more than one occasion I have been asked to use my research skills to create test pilots for different projects relating to creating departmental efficiencies. Also, my department is in the process of seeking to establish a new culture. I have been able to work with the management team to provide insights in what current literature and research portray as important elements in the culture change process. While culture change does not happen instantly, we have seen steps toward implementing a healthier more employee-centered culture.

### **Analysis of Self as Project Developer**

As a project developer, I understand how to more effectively assess problems and provide recommendations for solutions. Project development provides a systematic way to assess problems and evaluate how to address them. By defining the problem, seeking expert knowledge on how the problem is currently being addressed at a larger level, creating a plan to evaluate the problem, and providing solutions based on the evaluation process, I now understand the importance of project development in the sustainability and growth of organizations.

I also understand more fully the importance of details in the project development and implementation process. To set the stage for the basis of the project, I first

thoroughly explained the rationale for the project, how it addressed the problem, and why it was important. This information is often gained by examining what current experts in the literature are experiencing with the same problem. Based on this analysis, I then created the methods by which data will be collected to investigate the problem further. The method must align with the problem itself and the necessary steps to collect the data that will provide accurate and valid results. Through this process, I learned how to analyze effectively and interpret data to create a clear and concise evaluation.

### **The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change**

With the recent shifts in higher education and the economic downturn in the past decade, leaders in higher education will need to understand the importance of adaptability to these external forces. To maintain sustainable and growing organizations, leaders must be able to determine what changes need to occur to adapt, create, and implement the plans for these changes along with engaging the necessary stakeholders to carry out the change. This study provides an example of how one institution of higher education recognized the external pressures and adapted itself to become sustainable in that environment. The campus relocation was an outcome for meeting the external demands of growth and independence as a necessity for growth and sustainability. The strategies used by leaders and principles applied for creating the change can be applicable to other organizations looking to create sustainable change.

Besides having a better knowledge of the research and project development process, I also have a deeper understanding for how effective leaders create change, more specifically culture change, in an institution to lead to sustainability. I learned that

implemented sustainable change requires a delicate balance between the leader's ability to fully realize the vision for creating the change while bringing others alongside that will buy into the vision, champion the change, and see it through the implementation process. Maintaining this balance is the key to successful change sustainability.

If we understand how to interact effectively and work with others to change an organization and sustain that change, we can use similar principles to affect change across society. The strategies that leaders use to create change initiatives are applicable across all socioeconomic levels, and they can evolve and be applicable to the current cultural state to remain relevant. As leaders understand how to relate to stakeholders and incorporate their ideas in the change processes, they will realize the fulfillment of the change and find new ways to advance their institution. Leaders at all levels of society must first assess the culture in which they operate and determine what change principles can be used to create the necessary changes to address the problems they are facing.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

In the study findings, I indicated that the leader's involvement in the change process is imperative to the success of the change process. This finding is also found within the literature regarding the leader's role in institutional change (Atkins, 2010; Cloud, 2010; DeVore & Hyatt, 2010; Niemann, 2010; Paulsen et al., 2009; Rebora & Turri, 2010). However, I also indicated that stakeholders play nearly as important a role in establishing the change presented and envisioned by the leader (Baraldi, 2013; Brimeyer et al., 2010; Chen & Reigeluth, 2010; Kataria et al., 2010; LaMastro, 2010; Serban, 2013). As leaders incorporate stakeholder feedback into the change process the

likelihood of success and sustainability increases. Sustainable culture change starts with presidential vision and is realized through the implementation of the stakeholders.

Stakeholders often seek out opportunities to be involved in establishing change. Proactive searching leads to organizational commitment and the realization of institutional identity (Baek-Kyoo & Shim, 2010; Han et al., 2010; Ismail et al., 2010). As leaders provide opportunity for stakeholder involvement, individuals become more identified with the institution, buy into the presented change, and increase their level of commitment to the organization. Involvement not only creates a satisfied employee base but also establishes the identity of the institution.

Study findings can be used to show the importance of leaders taking opportunities to study the local environment to determine the best ways to create change inside the current cultural context. Leaders should couple the findings of this study with choosing the correct stakeholders through which the change will occur. In this scenario, stakeholder involvement is heightened and more successful with clear lines of communication during the change process.

In light of these implications and applications, I would recommend a few areas of future research. First, I would recommend the completion of a summative study at The College approximately 5 years after the campus relocation. During the study institutional leaders communicated that more large scale change was set to come. Long term plans include the build out of dormitories and athletics facilities. It would be interesting to measure stakeholder perspective on how the institutional identity has changed and perhaps solidified a few years down the road. In reassessing The College in a few years,

the researcher could also determine to what level the recommendations provided by stakeholders were implemented by leaders.

Also to gauge the transferability of change strategies, future researchers could identify similar businesses that are undertaking culture change initiatives. The results of these studies could help to determine to what extent change strategies used to create culture change at an institution of higher education translate into the business world. Other institutions of higher education may direct further studies to engaging in culture change though it may be hard to replicate the exact environment displayed at The College.

### **Conclusion**

In this section, I reflected on both the doctoral education and doctoral study process. I addressed the strengths of the evaluation as well as limitations of the study itself. I made recommendations for additional avenues for addressing the problem of institutional culture change and discussed how the study addresses scholarship, project development, and leadership/change. The analysis also included my assessment as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. I also provided an overall reflection on the importance of the findings as they relate to the larger educational environment while discussing implications, applications, and areas for future research to build on the research findings.



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Appendix A: The Project

# **THE COLLEGE**

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Strategies for Creating a Unique Culture in Preparation for Campus Relocation:

A Process Evaluation

Prepared by  
Dana C. Ague  
Walden University  
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## Executive Summary

This study used formative, qualitative, process-oriented evaluation for collecting data about stakeholder perceptions of the change process with the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the process being used during the transition and the sustainability of the change. The study addressed the steps The College has taken to create a unique identity because the relationship between The College and its founding institution, The Church, was no longer sustainable in its previous form. It evaluates how well The College is making the transition to a new campus.

Semi-structured interviews of 22 institutional stakeholders occurred during the first week of April 2014. Stakeholders included institutional leaders, faculty, staff, students and alumni. The audio recorded interviews were then transcribed and coded for themes related to institutional sustainability in light of the campus relocation.

The major themes of the study included *institution in reset, creating change: stabilizing empowered leadership and challenges to change: roadblocks to sustainability*. Figure 1.1, found in the Appendix, displays the themes, subthemes and expressions of the subthemes. The findings indicate that while stakeholders are excited about the recent changes and campus relocation they are apprehensive about the next steps in the life cycle of the institution and need further reassurance regarding steps for institutional success. With the new-found institutional independence, some stakeholders expressed confusion in reference to the identity of the institution moving into the future.

Stakeholders communicated that the recent success in creating culture change and preparing for campus relocation should be credited first to institutional leaders who took the time to gain *institutional knowledge, were slow to make massive change and provided transparent communication regarding imminent changes*. Institutional leaders created culture change to prepare for campus relocation through institutional *right-sizing*, bolstering *nontraditional programs* and moving away from a *shared services* model with The Church.

Stakeholders reflected on areas of resistance that occurred during the process of change. The identified six areas where resistance occurred: *fear of the unknown that led to skepticism, a connection to past identities, strong ties to The Church, struggles to maintain power, changes in institutional systems and a cultural mindset of passive aggressive actions*. Institutional leaders used intentional strategies to counteract these resistance factors: *casting a vision and continuously communicating that vision to the constituencies while encouraging collaboration in the change process, establishing a relationship with institutional founders and navigating the political landscape both internally and externally*.

Stakeholders also provided recommendations to solidify institutional identity while increasing sustainability: *maintaining community, consistent communication, institutional dialogue in decision making, continuing momentum while maintaining balance and engaging the external community*. Stakeholders believe that community has played a big role in the ethos of the culture, and this could be threatened by the campus relocation because dorms and athletic facilities are not built, and the campus itself is not as conducive to community as the old location. They also believe that communication regarding change declined during the relocation process, and this needs to increase to maintain success. Stakeholders also want to be more involved in the decision making process regarding changes to the culture and feel like they have input regarding institutional improvements. While they are excited about future change, they expressed fatigue in the moving process and the need for additional staff to take The College to the next level. They also noted the importance of engaging the new-external community.

## Description of the Problem

This process evaluation addressed the steps that [REDACTED] is making to create a unique identity to prepare for and sustain a seamless move to a new campus. It evaluates the ease with which the campus made this transition. Leaders can use study findings as an internal assessment on the process used to make this major transition in the life of The College as well as its impact on the life of The College. The evaluation explored these elements and their unique impact on how change is impacting the culture of the organization. In preparation for the study, I collected data from internal administrative documents such as college reports, timelines, and accreditation assessments and draws on interviews of key constituents who hold intimate knowledge about the history and interior life of the institution. Those interviewed include administrators, faculty, staff, students, leaders of The Church that have been instrumental in building and developing The College and others identified as the study developed.

The move is being made because the existing collaborative relationship between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] which fathered it and nurtured it from its inception has been determined to no longer be sustainable, leading to a more or less amicable separation of the two. Previously the property that The College used was owned by The Church. While this relationship has worked for nearly 40 years, The College has outgrown the current campus and needed separate facilities in order to expand and sustain itself into the future. Likewise, The Church needed the space that housed the campus to expand its ministry opportunities into the future.

At the same time, The College continues to grow, building record enrollments each year, mandating that it find additional space for dormitories, classrooms and other support facilities including an expanded library, bookstore and its own athletic venue, as its current practice of sharing a gymnasium with a private high school which is located just off the campus no longer meets its needs. In addition, sharing property with The Church

was no longer appropriate for either The College or The Church. The Church and The College also shared support services including food service and technology services, and this was also proving more difficult. The College had simply outgrown its affiliation with The Church, and it is engaging in the process of creating a unique identity apart from The Church's organization so that it might continue to grow and prosper.

The College is a private non-profit, four-year, baccalaureate level liberal arts college in the Western United States. The College was established in 1970 by a distinct group of vested individuals as an extension of the ministries of The Church with the distinct purpose of offering a liberal arts educational experience. Over the years, The College has drawn leadership and resources directly from the congregation and by attracting donors committed to this specific outreach. The relationship between The College and The Church has changed over the years as administrators and faculty were recruited from outside, as students from outside the congregation entered the school, and external reviews suggested necessary changes. While both The College and The Church value and want to maintain cordial relations, it has been determined by all concerned that it is best that the two separate, developing a new basis for cooperation. As part of the separation process, The College changed its name in 2005 which signified a strong initial step away from ties based on a subordinate relationship with The Church and towards the creation of its own identity. Since 1984, the school has maintained regional accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) (WASC, personal communication, 2005).

Before the location change could occur, leaders facilitated a transition in culture in order to establish a new framework under which the institution can operate independently as opposed to the one based on the previous close collaboration. The College, having been established as an outgrowth of the ministry of The Church, has been closely identified with it from its inception. The separation in cultures at this juncture is critical so college stakeholders, including the students served by The College, can begin imagining The College as a unique entity by redefining it as separate from the ministry and its vision and values.

A review of WASC reports further illustrates the problems facing The College since its inception. For years the institution has found working under the confines of The Church ministry restrictive as it attempted to establish itself as an institution of higher learning. Part of this internal struggle has been due to the fact that The College has shared leaders with The Church. Numerous WASC reports over the years indicate that there have been repeated and consistent challenges that The College faced in developing a unique identity while sharing the values and commitment of The Church that created it (Letting, personal communication, February 26, 2007; WASC, personal communication, 2005; WASC, personal communication, 2006; WASC, personal communication, 2008).



Over the life of the institution, the organization has lacked a reliable leadership team that was solely committed to its development and success. The issues began to surface the year before The College received official accreditation through WASC in 1983. WASC made a strong recommendation that the institution elects its own, permanent president to ensure continuity. Again in 1985 and 1989, WASC encouraged the organization to assign a high priority to filling all leadership positions. WASC warned The College once more in 1997 that it needed to hire and maintain a full-time president in order to comply with the association's standards (The Office of Institutional Research, personal communication, 2006). The accreditation body then expressed its concern at the sudden resignation of the institution's president in 2003 and again in 2005 before placing the institution on "show cause" in 2006, requiring the institution to provide evidence as to why it should continue to be accredited by WASC despite The College's inability to meet WASC standards (Wolf, personal communication, July 6, 2006). The lack of consistent executive leadership was only one reason for the sanctions levied on the institution at the time, but it was an important one.

Declining enrollments due to lack of funding and donor support were also issues that plagued the institution throughout its existence but appeared most prevalent during the early 2000s. The revolving and unstable leadership trend did not just affect the identity of the institution but had negative effects on student enrollment and alumni relations in the form of donor dollars. WASC reports also warned the institution regarding creating its own revenue stream that was separate from The Church in order to create a self-sustaining organization (WASC, personal communication; Wolf, personal communication, July 6, 2006).

## **About the Evaluation**

This study used formative, qualitative, process-oriented evaluation for collecting data about stakeholder perceptions of the change process with the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the process being used during the transition and the sustainability of the change. The study addressed the steps The College has taken to create a unique identity because the relationship between The College and its founding institution, The Church, was no longer sustainable in its previous form. It evaluates how well The College is making the transition to a new campus.

In the formative mode, evaluators assess the program or process while it is occurring. In contrast, summative evaluations produce data at the conclusion of the program or process and focus on the results (Weiss, 1998). Formative approaches help develop and assess current practices in order to make recommendations for adjustments designed to make improvements while summative approaches pass judgment and measure the achievement of results. When researchers collect data during the implementation phase, evaluators often use a formative approach to guide further development. Data collected at the conclusion of the study more often relates to summative evaluation. Because I collected

data during the process of campus relocation with the intent of facilitating change during implementation and after the process is complete, it is appropriate to consider the evaluation formative in nature.

Researchers use evaluation to assess the quality of the program or process under study and to serve two main additional functions: to evaluate process efficiencies or to evaluate program outcomes (McNeil, 2011). Because process evaluations examine the elements of what is transpiring inside the program while it is developing, they are often linked with the formative evaluation approach. Conversely, outcomes evaluations examine the results of the program or its effects and their impact on the environment; therefore, summative evaluation is most often associated with outcomes-based evaluations. However, the formative and summative evaluation forms are rarely mutually exclusive but exist on a continuum with formative evaluation often leading to summative results. Formative evaluations should include the creation of judgments about how well a program or process is progressing along with where improvements can be made in order to produce summative results. Because this study looked to gauge the strategies that are currently being used by institutional leaders to shape cultures during the process of campus relocation, I used a formative-process evaluation. While the relocation process has occurred the identity of the institution remains to be fully established to solidify sustainability and can be considered in a transitional state.

The essential question addressed in the study is what strategies are leaders using to create cultural change and prepare for the campus transition? Additional essential questions include:

- What challenges did leaders anticipate in preparing for the change process?
- What plans did leaders create in anticipation of the challenges they expected?
- What role do key stakeholders play in the continuing operations of The College, and how are they involved in the decision making process in the course of the move?
- What changes do internal institutional stakeholders perceive to be necessary to successfully change the culture?
- How do the changes permeate the institution across stakeholder groups? What kind of resistance to the anticipated changes developed, and how did leaders address this kind of resistance?
- How is information about the status of the organization and progress made toward resolving changes communicated to staff, students and other stakeholders, and what was the effect of the communication effort?
- What changes occurred (are occurring) in the transition from what existed to what is being created?
- What challenges remain after the change process is complete that may affect new change initiatives in the future?

## Methodology

Qualitative research often uses non-random sampling techniques because the goal of these studies is not generalizability, but rather to develop a complete understanding of the phenomenon under study. However, for the purpose of this study, trying to formulate a random sample would not be appropriate because a random sampling of the population may not provide the appropriate data required to identify the strategies used to create culture change during the campus transition.

In order to retrieve the data needed to address how the culture is being created at The College, I identified key participants at the institution who hold unique information that may not be available to the general population. This purposeful selection of participants included, at a minimum, administrative leaders from the institution (the president, executive cabinet, members from the Board), members of the strategic planning committee, faculty chairs, leaders from The Church, students and external stakeholders. All individual interview participants were initially contacted via email to invite their participation in the study. I worked with the director of student life to secure a list of student leaders to take part in interviews. I then contacted the students via email to solicit their participation in the study. All emails provided a short description of the study and included a copy of the consent form for review.

- 22 one-on-one semi-structured interviews occurred the first week of April 2014.
- The participants included 7 faculty members, 5 staff members, 3 institutional leaders and 6 students.
  - Note: some participants also identified themselves as alumni or having fulfilled multiple roles in the past i.e. some faculty members may have been institutional leaders or some faculty members may also have leadership ties to The Church
- Participants were initially selected or asked to participate because of their tenure with the institution and extensive history during major times of transition.
- All interviews were audio recorded and participants received written copies of their transcript for review.
- Data analysis started April 2014 through May 2014 and included an extensive coding process where key phrases were collapsed into a collection of codes that were further reduced to the main themes presented in the Findings.

## Findings

### Theme One: Institution in Reset

- **Expression of the theme 1a: Finding the Identity: Redefining the Meaning**

- **Expression of the theme 1b: Recognition of and Link to the Heritage**

Stakeholders expressed a general sense of excitement around the new campus location and the direction of The College in taking major steps toward independence; however, there was still a strong sense of needing to further define the identity of the institution. Stakeholders including faculty, staff, students and institutional leaders were challenged to define the current culture and give a structure that they could emphasize.

When questioned about defining the current culture of the institution or explaining its identity, stakeholders used words such as “transition,” “excited yet hesitant,” “building year,” and “in reset.” There is a strong sense on campus that all stakeholders are excited about what the future holds, but at the same time they are not sure what that means. There is also a sense of anxiousness or hesitance toward the next steps. While there is a sense on campus that stakeholders can express the institutional identity in new ways, they still believe that the foundation of the institution is stable and continued culture and identity creation will emerge from that foundation.

Staff members stated that:

*“I think identity is one of the bigger pieces right now so we can hone a narrative, and finding out what that narrative is going to be takes some time and effort. . . Our culture, I would define it as a renewed sense of energy and passion, excitement yet a fear of the unknown. I think there is real hope for where we have been. We have a lot of people that have a track record and know the history and know where we are at. There have been some heavy waters that we have had to navigate. Now that we are here people see what we are doing and what we are about, but in that there is hesitancy because this is the first The College has been on its own.”*

*“I think there is a sense of excitement, but there is this something new. For some people that excitement is tinged with trepidation because they don’t know what the future holds as far as how is my job going to morph in the future as far as technology and the way books are happening and the new-educational psychology. Just things that as we move forward need to improve. Just excitement and nervousness is probably the best way to describe it.”*

Faculty also agreed with these sentiments:

*“We are still in transition, and we so are still trying to figure things out. It is kind of funny because before we were always The College and then The Church. Now The Church part is gone and so now we are reexamining what does that mean for us as a standalone college, and maybe someday a small university. We have all of these hopes. So we are still kind of working that out a little bit . . . I don’t expect The College mission to change. If anything, I expect it to be tightened because we are taking on a corporate*

*model, but also we are dealing with WASC and other groups that are calling for increased accountability. I think that it will become clearer and clearer as we go.”*

*“There is a certain understanding of where we have come from as an institution. I think that is a key part of our identity and just continuing to understand that and explore that. Do we need to make any adjustments or changes in some of those religious tenants as we move forward? Because we have been under the umbrella of a church, but now we are not even on the same location as a church. Does that give us freedom to explore other, I don’t want to say theological areas because that makes it sound like we are going off the deep end. We are able to have more of a conversation about that because we are our own independent institution and finding that balance between wanting to hang on to our heritage, and yet at the same time knowing the world is changing.”*

Students also believe the culture is in transition:

*“The one thing that I have always heard was ‘it’s a building year.’ I feel like that is kind of how our college is. We are always in a building year, but next year it will be better and then the year after that it will finally be there. We have never been established. It has never been like ‘this is who we are,’ but we are working towards it. I don’t know if we have ever had an identity. . . I know I have talked about things being a building year, but this year actually feels like a building year. I am excited about the future.”*

*“I think that our culture is actually changing. I think we are still very missional. Our worldview is still very much the same. We are a biblical school, and I do think that right now with this new transition that the culture changes look differently because now we are given a whole new set of cards. We have our own campus which allows us to gain freedom in a lot of areas, but it also forces us to cut ties with a lot of other places. I do think it allows us to learn to transition. When I keep thinking about our culture right now, I keep thinking about two words: transition and flexibility. Right now I think the culture, our culture is in transition and is in a mode of flexibility.”*

Institutional leaders also understand the challenges of creating identity:

*“Personally I think the overarching culture is that we are in the process of a reset. We are changing the dynamic of who we are. I believe most people believe that we are working hard to maintain our heritage, the proper parts of our heritage and moving that into 2014 and beyond . . . The institution was founded for a purpose, but there were a lot of things wrapped around that core that don’t need to be there. Grab the core and bring it into the current culture, and that is what we are trying to do.”*

Another institutional leader expressed some of these concepts regarding identifying the heritage, linking it to the mission and identity and finding ways to express this identity in daily practices. He called this flux in institutional distinctiveness the “identity

pendulum.” In this scenario, the institution is trying to find itself on the pendulum of identity. For so many years, its identity was entwined with The Church, and now stakeholders find themselves trying to determine what elements of their current identity are unique to The College as a higher education institution and which are a remnant of the previous relationship and connection with The Church. For the institution to fully realize its identity on the pendulum, it has to express continually who it is through the miniscule actions and decisions experienced on a daily basis. New norms and culture creation come from linking continuous actions to the mission and vision. In his estimation, identity is created by linking daily decisions and actions to the mission and vision of the institution through strategies that reinforce the new norms and remove the remnants of the old culture to establish a unique institutional identity:

*“Identity and culture are made up of the thousands if not millions of miniscule decisions that are made day in and day out that either reinforces what those words say on the piece of paper or are against them. In that, we have to be razor sharp in the decisions even if it makes everyone mad, but that it reinforces the new norm.”*

### **Theme Two: Creating Change-Stabilizing Empowered Leaders**

The stabilizing of institutional leaders, including legitimizing the power of the Board of Trustees along with hiring a qualified and experienced president, were the foundational elements of creating institutional change. Without these basic building blocks, the rest of the strategies to follow would not have occurred at The College.

One staff member commented *“I didn’t know the president before him, and the president that was there my first year was very hands off and just holding the reigns hoping somebody else was there. So there wasn’t a plan. We were kind of in a holding pattern.”*

Yet another staff member noted *“the first thing was we had to branch off from our previous governing structure from The Church. That was first and foremost. I think the stabilization of [having] the new president that understood what we needed to do and steps we had to take was the point in which we pivoted as a catalyst to change.”*

A member of the Board of Trustees commented on the legitimization of the arrival of the new president.

*“It cannot be understated the importance of this issue and that is the role of the president. It is not just that we have a president. It’s that we have a president that is wise in his leadership. We have a president that has vision. We have a president who has navigated the transition. I think we are here today not because WASC made us make a governance change. We are not here today, in these deciding days, because have a*

*great faculty which we do. We are not here today because we have a great Board which we do. We are here today because we have a great president.”*

- **Subtheme 2.1: Establishing Institutional Knowledge**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.1a: Know the Culture**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.1b: Slow to Make Change**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.1c: Transparency**

Leaders used intentional strategies to show that they had internal knowledge of The College and that they founded their decisions in the heritage of The College and well-being of the institution. First, early institutional leader took the time to understand the culture and the people that made up the culture in the mid-2000s.

There was also a sense that institutional leaders had to communicate that they understood the culture by tying changes and initiatives back to the heritage of the institution. Leaders had to know the people in the culture, but they also had to know the setting and climate of the institution that embraced the culture. This knowledge base was essential for creating buy-in from more seasoned stakeholder groups that may have rebuffed change in the past.

One staff member commented *“I just remember that when he [the president] first came he was really open with us about wanting to know who we were. As a student, I don’t really remember so much about knowing and being communicated with directly, but I think that knowing that [the president] and the Cabinet and all the people who were up at that level really cared about who we were as students, and that they cared about our best interest.”*

One faculty member and former institutional leader commented *“he [the president] was also very consistent about tying that message back historically. That was important because historically, if anyone tried to change things there were sectors of fear that we would lose our foundational values. . . One of the things [demonstrated] was honoring our heritage and securing our future.”*

If leaders are slow to make change, it does not mean that the leader failed to identify the needed changes early in their tenure. Often good leaders can easily identify the pressure points and adjustments that must occur but wait for the right timing for implementation.

One staff member stated *“my understanding was the previous president came in and didn’t slowly make change; he just came in and said ‘this is what we are doing.’ [The new president] did a nice job of building rapport and getting in with the right people. So that when we left it wasn’t total anger and frustration.”*

Another staff member noted the president's patience in determining the changes before implementation.

*"I'm sure that first year it was hard for [the president] to think of what is coming next because he probably identified that very early before it actually happened. I actually made a comment to him one time about it being remarkable that you did not do anything drastic in the first year because that is usually what a good leader does. They don't jump in and make these big changes right away, but, at the same time, it was sort of obvious what the fix should be."*

Multiple stakeholders including staff, faculty and students noted the idea of transparency and approachability during the change process. Most individuals in the study communicated that leaders were very transparent in the early stages of the change process and were open to providing information and allowing space for questions regarding the change.

One staff member commented that *"first and foremost, there has been a very deliberate effort to be as transparent as possible. I see that through monthly updates [and] communication especially now that we are in a new phase now that we are here."*

Another staff member noted the degree to which the president and leadership were accessible, when stating *"I think they [leaders] are receptive, and that is something I have always appreciated about our leadership here. I could go talk to the president if I was an admissions counselor. He came down this morning and was talking to these guys [admissions]."*

One faculty member, when describing the communication to the community within The College about the change process, reported *"I felt like the administrators were very transparent with as much as they could be. In certain areas, we don't need to know everything that is going on behind closed doors. I never felt like they were holding out on us or saying we couldn't ask something. I felt like, all things considered, they were very transparent."*

Additionally one student leader noted the transparent communication of the president of the institution and made special note regarding addressing the student population.

*"[The president] allowed so many different questions and complaints too. He just took them on and answered them honestly. He answered them very transparently. That is a huge thing in an institution. That you have to be transparent especially with the students who, we tend have this attitude of self-righteousness that we serve to know. In one sense with them responding to us and giving us all the information and giving us more information, I think we were prepared as a student body."*



- **Subtheme 2.2: Creating Financial Independence and Expansion**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.2a: Rightsizing**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.2b: Nontraditional Presence**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.2c: Shared Services: Owning or Outsourcing**

Institutional leaders implemented certain strategies related to enhancing financial independence separate from The Church in order to create their own identity and prepare for campus relocation. These elements, identified by multiple stakeholders, included downsizing or “right-sizing” as the stakeholders referred to it, establishing a strong nontraditional presence and moving away from shared services between The College and The Church. These basic components toward change helped the institution create a financial foundation on which to create the move.

First, institutional leaders determined that the ratio of faculty/staff to the student population did not support the budgetary constraints of the institution, and change was needed in the area of staffing. By rightsizing and aligning staffing within the institution, leaders were also able to ensure that personnel with the appropriate skill sets to promote sustainability remained at The College.

One staff member, who also happens to be an alumnus, talked indirectly about rightsizing the institution and how she saw this occur during her time as a student. She compared the earlier experience to the present circumstances:

*“I think now that there are more people in the right seat on the bus. Before when I first started as a student and most of my time as a student some staff and faculty members were super passionate about what they did, but they were not necessarily a great fit academically or personality wise or they were a great fit personality wise but not academically.”*

An institutional leader echoed these statements regarding the need to staff the institution with persons who fit within the faculty. This strategy was important in ensuring that a more professional and streamlined higher education culture was created in order to promote sustainability:

*“I think somewhere in the faculty, and this is just a perspective from the 50,000 foot level, but some of the faculty enjoyed a mom and pop kind of environment. Some of them longed for something more than mom and pop as an academic institution. I think some have made the transition to a different perspective and some were asked to transition for other reasons, not moral or anything. It is important to make sure everyone is on the bus in the right seat on the bus. That is what has happened, and [it] is probably still happening over the last few years in the migration of the institution.”*

One faculty member and institutional leader also noted the efforts toward rightsizing and the direct connection of that effort to the institutional budget. He also noted the pay cuts that stakeholders across the institution accepted to maintain the institution:

*“We ran lean and what we called right-sized the institution. We had to have tough conversations. It wasn’t uncommon to go to a meeting and say ‘you have to cut \$100,000 from your budget.’ You just had to make cuts. We ran lean but then we right-sized the institution. There were a lot of hard conversations and a lot of hard work. We all took pay cuts at one point just to make it through.”*

Another institutional leader addressed the idea of downsizing the institution and emphasized the emotional hardships that leaders faced in making these decisions. He provided a rationale for implementing the rightsizing and noted it as a direct strategy:

*“There was a rightsizing. We had too many employees, not enough students and some faculty members needed to be let go and some staff members needed to be let go. That was a very difficult period for leadership because this was, if anything else, a family. It might have been a dysfunctional family, but it was a family. People knew that they were coming here and they felt like they were called to be here, and that it was a ministry and things like that. To remove people intentionally from that community was a very difficult thing.”*

Another strategy used and identified as establishing financial independence was the expansion and success of the nontraditional programs. Institutional leaders spoke directly about establishing a strategic initiative towards creating a sustainable future. A large part of that was investing in programming. Not only was there emphasis on establishing a better adult program, but institutional leaders created an experienced leadership structure at the adult program level that would allow the programs to grow and thrive.

A staff member stated that *“I have been in that role and have seen significant growth in our division or department in that time frame. I believe the official statistics say that there were approximately 25 students in the program . . . I always say 33 because I saw some list that had 33 names of students, but today we were almost 500 students in that program.”*

Another faculty member and institutional leader noted how the growth of the online programs has played a role in shaping the identity of the institution and its capacity to sustain change:

*“I think that in the last couple of years there have been shifts in how things work and there are still periods of adjustments in how the role of faculty is viewed*

*organizationally. With the growth of the online program, who we are and what is our identity as a liberal arts institution with discussion about planning to start graduate level programs which require different kinds of resource issues. There's a lot of potential that can be challenging. We have undergone a huge amount of change in the last couple of years and [have developed] the capacity to sustain that change."*

Lastly, in establishing financial independence institutional leaders moved away from shared services with The Church and found new ways to establish their own services. At times this meant creating internal positions and at times it meant outsourcing services or creating partnerships outside the organization that could produce the change needed. Being strategic in moving away from shared services allowed the institution to create the final building blocks needed to establish themselves as a separate entity and prepare for campus relocation. This process allowed The College to fully operate independently from The Church which was something that had not happened in 40 years.

One staff member commented that the results came *"in separating from [The Church] and from where we had to create our own systems and stand on our own two feet. I think that has been really helpful in figuring out who we are and what is important to us."*

Another faculty member and former institutional leader described the details of how the shared services structure began to dissolve as the institution began to realize its own independence:

*"We continued to gain more independence because we had the shared services piece that we were paying them to do from financial services to IT. There were all of these services [to develop] because The Church has the infrastructure [and] they ran all of those things. Slowly we started taking some of those pieces back. Instead of paying all of this money for the shared service we would take back the financial piece. . . We just got smart in the way we did that, and we would outsource as opposed to hiring a bunch of people to do that work for us."*

Another staff member provided an additional layer of detail and elaborated regarding how The College went about removing the shared services process:

*"All of the shared services were attached to The Church. Everything had to be peeled off. It was done in a timely fashion and in a strategic fashion. The first thing we took off was dining services and some of those student life services. We took over some of our own maintenance. Then the second level was just in personnel and staffing and what the needs were. In some instances it needed to be staffed at a stronger level than it was because we were taking services away and in some areas it needed to be cut because we longer needed the multitude. Then we peeled back the accounting services, the financial support services and the CFO. Eventually, the last thing that was plugged in, and I*

would say it was one of the biggest challenges that we still carry with us was, the technology.”

- **Subtheme 2.3: Addressing and moving past resistance**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.3a: Forms of resistance**
  - **Expression of subtheme 2.3b: Reactions to resistance**

Resistance is a factor that can derail any change effort and an element that appears in every change initiative. The College experienced different levels of resistance through the culture change and campus relocation change process. As noted by different stakeholders resistance emerged because of unknown or uncertain circumstances that led to skepticism, a connection to past identities, strong ties to The Church, struggles to maintain power, changes in institutional systems and a mindset of no expectations or passive aggressive outlook.

There is a strong sense that people fear the unknown and are hesitant to make changes based on uncertainty. Like much of the current culture and identity discussed earlier, stakeholders discussed the idea of resistance based on trepidation, fear, hesitation or a general skepticism for how things would or would not occur.

One student stated that *“we were all very hesitant about it and not really sure how it was going to work out. We were in the midst of the old campus but excited about the new things too. The general feelings were kind of nervous because we were not sure of what was going to happen.”*

A staff member who was once a student and also an alumnus of The College commented on how fear of the unknown caused resistance at the alumni level:

*“Also, in the alumni there was some resistance just like in the name change like ‘but it’s my place, but it’s my campus, but it’s my whatever.’ Most of the time when we were able to sit down with them face to face and one-on-one and ask the questions they were excited about it at the end of the day. It was just resistance to the unknown.”*

A faculty member touched on the idea of lingering skepticism among seasoned employees who were quick to dismiss grand ideas of change based on leaders’ past failures to do so:

*“Well I think the first aspect that, like I said, was [that], in the past people said ‘oh we are going to develop that property across the street or we are going to look at this property in north county’ with the big gung-ho enthusiasm. The initial reaction is ‘well*

*we will wait and see.’ There was that ‘we have heard this before, I want to believe it but I will wait and see.’”*

There were also those individuals that resisted because they were committed to the old identity and status of the institution. In their estimation The College needed to keep the same course that it was following for the past 40 years. These individuals were often also strongly linked to The Church and were committed to the longevity of the partnership in its current state.

One staff member commented that some individuals both internally and externally believed the notion that, *“if you are separating from The Church, you must not be a Christian school any more. Insert value change here, because it is just a different place. Whenever there is [the kind of] falsehood or misinformation that [has] happened previously, then people are always more resistant.”*

A current staff member who was also a student at the time of the initial institutional changes commented on the feelings of connection with The Church and the resistance that relationship brought out in certain individuals:

*“There was resistance initially to becoming separate from The Church. You got resistance from internal stakeholders who believed The Church has done all of this stuff for us. Who are we to separate ourselves from them? There was all sorts of animosity and resistance at that point. Resistance that came when we tried to change our name. We got resistance from students, staff, faculty and alumni. ‘You are changing the historical purpose.’ When it came time to move campuses there was resistance from those who thought we didn’t leave it in the right way.”*

Another staff member commented on the mindset of individuals who held an unrealistic view of the relationship with The Church and its connect to The College:

*“I think that some that have been here for a long time have felt a little more connection to the particular church then was actually there. They felt that they should be honored more even though [The College] is not connected to that church. [For] some of the people that had been here a long time that was a huge culture shift that we are a college on our own and have really nothing to do except for historically some of the founders had a denominational leaning theology wise.”*

An institutional leader further discussed the overarching mindset that individuals held regarding maintaining and protecting the integrity of The College. They wanted to preserve the current culture and save it from new institutional ideas:

*“This is a forty year old institution that was birthed by another organization that from its very beginnings the lines were blurred and it was a family atmosphere and a family unit. It was very, very ‘churchy’ which is fine. A church is a church. I believe there were*

*individuals that didn't really understand what we were doing even though we explained it. They felt like we were crossing purposes with the institution that they knew. . . I believe that at the core and this is ascribing motive to it, they believed they were trying to save whatever that institution was. The College of 300 forever from whatever [we] were trying to do with it. A college of 300 forever does not survive."*

Even the Board of Trustees struggled early on to fully understand the importance of change and the need to move towards a more sustainable culture. One Board member commented that:

*"I don't think you could say that the Board was immune to the confusion of resistance. I think even within the Board there were differing visions for the institution. I think there are some, for a while, that held on to 'this is the old who we are and we are going to keep this philosophy or strategy or culture.' I think that was the initial struggle with the Board."*

Resistance to the unknown could be linked to what was also known as maintaining the status quo. The allegiance to the status quo may also be connected to the idea that certain power structures were already in place and changes to culture would upset that balance and displace the balance of power as it existed. Changes in power struggles also emerged from changes to institutional systems that were put into place to streamline process, but that caused a shift in operational procedures and changed the status quo of how business was conducted at The College. New areas for growth and development were introduced which caused backlash from some stakeholders.

One faculty member who used to hold an institutional leadership position discussed the idea of resistance based on the restructuring of the power dynamic as new leaders emerged and began to change the system and operational functions:

*"When I first got to [The College] it was a ministry of [The Church]. A ministry like any other Sunday school ministry. At the end of the year, The Church would just cover any kind of deficiency there was. It was just like any other ministry. That being said, leadership was limited so there were certain functions on campus and certain people in those functions that maybe had more power, and they ran the place because somebody had to run the place. . . The resistance comes from people that were here and that have been here. They had more power. They had more keys because there was limited leadership. The institution needed to adjust and compensate for the way things were run. When we did have good leadership come in and started to establish systems and different things, then obviously, all of those people who had influence and power no longer have that. Faculty obviously had a huge role and huge influence as they should because they are faculty. In the absence of leadership faculty probably had more say. There was a lot of resistance from faculty and a lot of resistance from staff who had a little bit more power."*

One faculty member commented that there was *“some resistance to the push towards online. I think that is really common. Take any traditional faculty and we have a number of traditional faculty that have taught online who really don’t believe it is an equal experience. They don’t feel like the educational experience is the same as online.”*

Another staff member addressed issues of resistance from the traditionalist side of education towards new modalities:

*“There are things that are happening now in the direction The College is headed that not all staff have been included on. So, as rumors come out and speculation comes out, [it] can be disconcerting to us that are traditional education people in building that relationship between student and faculty in a typical classroom setting. There are those that contend that that is not necessarily the model for the future. The flip side is I think that, for the faculty that is what they live for. They like to be in that setting interacting with students being with them after hours, nurturing and mentoring. If the model moves away from that, I think that there would be concerns around how does that model sustain itself. I guess it may be the wave of the future, but I think The College’s niche in the past has been nurturing and discipling. Can you do that in a totally different model where it is maybe not the personally and hands on?”*

One institutional leader commented on patterns of passive aggressive behavior and low standards that led to limited or no expectations about improving the wellbeing of the institution:

*“The College was never allowed or able to have any expectations. We were just a small little college barely surviving on the shared campus. Zero expectation or zero picture of growth which was not based on the leadership, but was based on the cold hard fact that there is no money. It may be a horrible analogy and use it carefully about it’s the rice truck in Africa where people are starving. There is a drought and nothing is there. Any little glimpse of something that is coming down the road and people just grabbed all they could. So it became protectionist, very insular. . . Passive aggressive. I love this organization, but we have, in various form and functions and styles and substances, been brought up in an environment that did not breed accountability. Part of that is no expectation. You grab what you can. Passive aggressive was always the name of the game. ‘Oh yeah, great idea. Love it . . . no way that is happening.’ That fed through the organization. That is part of the resistance. In that span when there was four presidents in four years people built survival mechanisms inside The College cause one president would come in and say ‘we are going to the left.’ The next president would say ‘we are going to the right.’ The survival mechanism was that I am going to stay the course down the middle and they are going to be gone anyway because no one survives here. They treat it almost like life time civil servants versus elected officials.”*

These themes relating to resistance were evidenced and explained by institutional stakeholders, but these same stakeholders were also able to provide examples of how institutional leaders combated and addressed areas of resistance. These strategies included casting a vision and continuously communicating that vision to the constituencies while encouraging collaboration in the change process, establishing a relationship with institutional founders and navigating the political landscape both internally and externally.

First institutional stakeholders discussed the importance of continuous communication around the vision and direction of the institution. They emphasized the importance of including all the stakeholders in this communication process so that it felt collaborative in nature.

One staff member echoed these sentiments.

*“I don’t know what it was like before that, but when he [the president] came it was very clear that there was like a 15 year plan. This is what the plan is going to be. This is where we are. This is where we are going to be in 5 years. This is where we are going. Not only did he have that plan, but he shared the plan with everybody. He communicated that to the students as well as the faculty. So everybody could get on board with that plan. I think that was really helpful.”*

Yet another staff member commented on the means through which the communication took place: community updates, emails and town hall meetings:

*“I think there has been a consistent message. Like I said-four presidents in four years. You never knew what was going on and there was never consistency. How that has trickled down at times has been a little rough, but we went through a two to three year season where things got cut and things got slashed, but there was always a consistent message of where we were going, and there were new opportunities ahead, but to reach those took some time. . . I think there was an intentional effort from part of our leadership to give, at least part of our internal staff and faculty and students a vision of where we were going and keep them updated on program and reports. That was done through our community updates. It was done through emails. It was even done through some town hall meetings to let student know. There was a clear ‘hey we are setting the framework.’”*

Faculty believed that they were kept abreast of most changes as they occurred. *“I thought they did a good job of communicating. They brought everybody together. Not being an academic, I don’t know if all colleges do this. I know at larger institutions it is impossible, but at a smaller one you can bring all your professors and all your adjuncts into one room and say ‘here is the plan,’ and they did that. They had what they called community every two weeks. The whole faculty got together. There would be*



*announcements that these things take years not months, and pretty soon years had passed and how they were taking months not years. The faculty was kept up to speed the whole way.”*

*Another faculty added “every big decision I have seen made has been communicated to people. That’s not to say that people don’t grumble. Of course, they have questions, and there is always that aspect and that does in any corporate situation. There has been, to me, remarkable unity because of the communication at every step and because of this moving west vision that [the president] had. People had tremendous buy in. . . The next thing he began to do was cast the vision. He has this little chart that we would do. Here we are down here. . . .Okay we have come over the hump and now we are doing great, and he communicated that. Now is it going to be completely accepted by every single person? No, of course there will be people who do not necessarily agree with every little thing, but on the whole, everyone could see a reason in it. That’s all it took, and he took the time to explain why we are going and what we are doing.”*

While communication, collaboration and vision casting were large components in addressing resistance, certain constituencies still felt that the vision that was being created was in contradiction to the heritage and foundational elements of the institution itself. In light of these mindsets, institutional leaders deemed it appropriate to reconnect with some of the founders of the institution and bring them on board with the direction of The College.

One faculty member, who was an institutional leader of The College for a number of years, commented on this strategic opportunity to reconnect with the heritage of The College and establish an enduring relationship with the initial founders:

*“[The president] and his wife establishing a strong relationship with [the Founders] was instrumental in enforcing not only the community on campus but alumni, that we are still committed to both the institution that alumni are cherished. When they changed the name in 2005, there was a lot of feelings that it was going to try to be something other than the perceived or the valued identity. . . [The president] was able to take those key foundation pieces, reinforce those in all literature in public venues and in terms of communicating a consistent message to faculty, staff and students in various areas.”*

Another institutional leader who was an active part of reestablishing the relationship with the founder acknowledged the importance of the relationship in being able to move certain initiative forward. He emphasized the significance of having the founder in agreement with the direction of The College:

*“One of the biggest things [the president] did was making sure [he and] the founder of the institution, who is still alive, were locked at the hip, and he understood everything we were doing. [The president] explained everything to him at every juncture. He was*

*100% behind it, and [the president] felt like those were kind of marching orders to move forward. That was along with the bringing the core into 2014 or whatever year it was. It's 2014 now or continuing to bring the core into whatever . . . the future. I think our founder, who is older, caught on to that and really felt good about it. So that helped."*

Lastly, stakeholders commented on the importance of navigating the political landscape as part of the resistance process. This included both internal positioning with stakeholders and The Church itself as well as external stakeholders in the greater community.

One faculty member discussed how the president was a good fit for making the changes and touched on why the changes needed to occur:

*"The need of The Church was to expand, and they are one of the few large churches that are growing and expanding almost exponentially. The College had been in decline, but now it too was rising. So somewhere along the way the capacity for both had been met. Along on the side campus was a grade school and a high school. Something had to give. I think it was the Lord's providence that this all came together at the same time. Now The Church can rise to their needs, and The College is over here to rise to their needs. That is a pretty interesting culture to develop. [The president] came along at the right time to put all of that together."*

Another faculty member strongly emphasized the role of the president in understanding people and having the skills to work both internally and externally on the landscape of where the institution needed to grow to:

*"Then [the president] came, and his approach to The Church and the way he dealt with The Church was the key thing. He knows how to deal with people. He understands people. He takes them the way that they are, and he doesn't get all upset because they are the way they are. He understands them and meets them right where they are. To me that was very impressive. It just seemed like the minute he came the culture began to change because he was so accepting; and yet, that is the ideal combination. . . He knows how to work with a larger community, work with planning commissions, work with architects and people like that, work with political folks, work with The Church and that was so important."*

One of the members of the Board of Trustees commented on the president's leadership in the midst of a complicated environment:

*"He [the president] came in giving tremendous leadership to the complicated environment in which the school was when renting from The Church. They have distanced themselves from the pastor of The Church and lots of complications there and*

*navigated, for the past six or seven year, that tension well to this point where they are on their own campus and completely independent from The Church and its facilities.”*

Another institutional leader added sentiments regarding the president’s knowledge of higher education, accreditation and the economics of running a college. He emphasized the importance of communicating a vision as part of navigating the climate:

*“That is when The College hired our current president. In that, for the first time ever, there was really a higher ed professional who understood accreditation, who understood higher ed and who understood the business economics of what it means to run an institution such as this. He came in with a vision [even though] it took a couple of years to get there, but a college of three or four hundred is not sustainable. Through his vision he really pushed the online education, pushed looking for a spot to move away from that campus so we could start to be a true higher ed institution.”*

## **Recommendations**

### **Theme 3: Challenges to change: roadblocks to sustainability**

All stakeholders agreed that culture shifts and campus relocation were positive efforts to improve the reach and reputation of The College and to increase sustainability efforts; however, study participants also had strong feelings about areas that still need improvement or details that were missed or overlooked in the campus transition process. They also noted important opportunities in the future to lead to further success. Feedback around future challenges included maintaining the institutional community, receiving consistent communication, engaging in institutional dialogue in decision making, continuing positive momentum while maintaining balance and processes for engaging the new external community.

- **Subtheme 3.1: Maintaining community**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.1a: Threats to community**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.1b: Engaging alumni**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.1c: Establishing traditions and pride**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.1d: Scope of students**

When discussing culture and the identity of the institution all stakeholders noted the concept of community and how the internal community and ethos was important to the life of The College. It is interesting to note that this sentiment was expressed across all stakeholder groups regardless of status in the hierarchy.

There is a sense that the idea of community, as stakeholders are aware, may be threatened by the campus relocation due to limitations of the physical structures that are not as

conducive to community ethos as the previous campus. It is an interesting juxtaposition that stakeholders are excited about the future potential that the new campus has to offer but lamenting the loss of the community feel they once had at the old location.

Stakeholders reported that to regain the community ethos they once had and further develop community, the institution needs to complete residential buildings, athletics facilities and community spaces, engage in alumni relations, establish unique traditions to foster college pride and expand and refine the scope of the student body.

One staff member spoke about how the feel of community has shifted on the new campus and how the concept of community is harder to pinpoint:

*“We don’t have residency apartments yet that are on campus. So that is a temporary problem, but that is an issue that we currently face. Our community aspect is kind of a little different because we used to be all together in the same space, and now we are not so much. We always talk about how we are such a community. In moving, it has been interesting to see the shift in how that looks. I know it is still there, but I don’t see it the same way that I did on the other campus.”*

One staff member noted the importance of community to the student life experience and how community has been a strong suit of the institution in the past. The current space challenges can threaten that fragile community concept:

*“I would say one of our greatest challenges coming from the existing campus is striving to keep the community intact. A lot of what we have here is a beautiful facility, but we are a little more displaced than on the old campus which for resident life could mean lounge space and athletics. All those things now there is a little bit of distance involved. Within the student life area, which I am a part of, that is one of our concerns because that has been one of the big attractions of why a student would come to a smaller institution, and our community has been a big strong suit. We are very conscious of that. I know that the administration is working very hard on the build out of all of those things.”*

Another faculty member spoke more about the new commuter ethos that is linked to community and how cultivating community is harder on the new campus. He points to specific aspects of the old campus that are not present on the new campus:

*“In essence, [The College] has become a commuter campus. Yes we have residents, and we have residence halls. A majority of our students even at the last campus were commuter students [because] of the number of beds we had. Just look at the numbers—we had more commuter students than residential students, but moving to this campus makes everyone a commuter student. At the last place there was a commuter lounge. Where they could get plates and there was a fridge for their lunch and stuff. There is not space like that now for them. I know it is little picky things. I am sure everyone was*

*consulted on these kind of things, but because we missed some pretty major things students have talked about it. Of course, they are the ones living with it. They miss all of the little features of the last campus that were important to college life. We don't have [them] anymore, and those are the things that are missing. We will figure those things out. It is just kind of how culture works right. People miss the main hallways because people would hang out there. There isn't as much student space to hang out in as there was at the last campus. That is all because we are in transition. We are in a new building. We are in a new place, but our mode of being and our mode of doing business really hasn't changed. Community is a lot harder being on this campus."*

Besides building an internal community ethos, institutional stakeholders noted the importance of engaging with alumni to extend the community of The College and add to the dynamic. In the past, alumni engagement has not been successful in folding previous students into the practices and community of The College. Building community in the future must include the alumni stakeholders.

One staff member discussed connecting with alumni individually:

*"I think we need to continue to engage our alumni a little bit at a time on the individual level or a more individual level than just mailing or phone calls and asking for money is not the only things what we do. I have seen, when I was in the alumni position, that we were much more successful in [having] people catching the vision and being excited about what was going on when we were sitting with them or when we had a specific letter written specifically for them from people that they had a connection with."*

Another staff member talked about using athletics to engage alumni. He believes athletics plays a key role both developing internal community and serving as a crucial step in reengaging the alumni population:

*"A big piece for me too is that I feel like our alumni have been sort of slighted from the athletic standpoint. I think it was before [the president] came. Now it's a different campus and a different name and a different school. I think they feel like they have some bitterness toward the institution. When we get facilities we want to have alumni weekends where we do a hall of fame ceremony. Where we do this type of stuff to reengage our athletic alumni? If we can engage them athletically and if you are an athlete, that is your primary group of friends. If I can get some key athletes to engage, hopefully, I can get their friends to also kind of reengage and develop that athletic alumni community. That is just an utterly crucial piece, and we just don't have it right now."*

The students feel strongly about creating traditions that produce pride and create a legacy and sustainable culture for The College. These traditions have yet to be formed, but are the building blocks to a strong and stable community. They provide visual representations of the culture and heritage of the institution. Members of the staff also

believe that establishing traditions will enable the community ethos to grow stronger. Traditions play an important role in enhancing community, engage current students in the culture and create an institutional memory and a legacy that those students carry with them once they become alumni. Building community ethos is essential to culture and connecting that to the alumni is dually important. Traditions draw students into that ethos, but community starts with the type of students that are drawn to an institution.

One student commented that

*“I think the biggest challenge is just creating a legacy or a tradition that keeps us together. At the old campus, we used to have a pancake breakfast during finals week since the school started. I think we have a good sense of community in some ways, but I think that would push us over. Having things that are traditions and really mattered to us as a whole school. I don’t know exactly what that would look like.”*

Members of the staff also believe that establishing traditions will enable the community ethos to grow stronger. One specifically noted the importance that athletics can play in fortifying community:

*“I think athletics are absolutely crucial in developing a campus culture and traditions and a lot of different things. . . to get the common students to come out because it is something to do. It is an event. It’s fun to cheer for your classmates who might sit next to you in English class. It is a big part of community and it can be very crucial piece in developing those traditions. For me, one thing is creating something that people want to be at-traditions. Things that they never really had here. The school I went to was very old. So there [were] always traditions that you do. The homecoming traditions that you do. The big bonfire and all this type of stuff. Where it helps bring a sense of community and helps bring everyone together, and is passed on from generation to generation to each college student. So I think really that is a big piece of helping cultivate that community.”*

Stakeholders also noted the recruitment and selection of students as an important part in community building. In the eyes of staff and institutional leaders, the institution needs to continue to refine and find the right balance of students.

A staff member noted the importance of attracting students who understand the purpose of the institution and want to be a part of the efforts to advance the purpose. She wanted students who *“understand who we are as an institution and what are values are in serving Christ first and helping mold students to have a desire to change things in the next generation and not just be good at their craft. I think that will be a big part of that and also having conversations with students, faculty and Cabinet about how our students can impact the world, specifically the arts world and how we can push the envelope and stretch our audience and constituency to be more accepting of things that are not*

*necessarily overtly Christian with a message that is clean and wholesome and good all the time.”*

An institutional leader also discussed the importance of evaluating the type of student that is admitted to The College. He believed that this time of transition provides the opportunity to reassess and set new goals for the student base. He also noted the reasons for the current student demographic:

*“Today we are reaching a student that, for a lot of reasons, are by in large students that do not go to other institutions. That may sound obvious, but maybe either cannot go for academic reasons. I don’t think our financial difference of cost of going to this school versus most of the other schools in our league of school is that different that it would be a mark to set us apart. We are not quite getting the academic quality of students that the other institutions are getting. Probably, in large part, because of the breath of programming these other institutions have or the breath of what is anticipated in college/university such as athletics.”*

- **Subtheme 3.2: Communication difficulties**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.2a: Importance of communication**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.2b: Gaps in communication**

Institutional stakeholders were clear that communication is an important element in the success of any change process. They also noted that communication has changed over the course of the last few years leading up to the move. While using a different frame of reference, each stakeholder discussed how the institution was impacted by communication and how it should be used in the future. To stakeholders, communication was stronger at the old campus than at the new campus. Part of the reason for this change in communication is the stress that was placed on leaders to make quick decisions as the campus relocation approached. The institution needs to establish a set of communication standards now that it is on its own to create sustainability into the future.

One staff member discussed why communication has yet to improve since the campus relocation. She noted that one main reason for the change in communication was the fact that in the middle of the planning stages institutional leaders decided to move up the date of the relocation by six months. This caused gaps in the communication change process. She also discussed the fact that communication channels have yet to be established at the new locations:

*“I would say that there was lack of communication the closer we got to it. It just got rapid fire and there were pieces that were probably missed. There were systems that were being annihilated and people were trying to figure out ‘where do I go for this,’ and they weren’t organized. I remember, and it was kind of in exasperation in one meeting*

*somebody said 'so how are we going to do campus mail?' Nobody had thought about it, and, because no one had thought about it, there was a curt answer given back. There were people that took offense to that. It was a legitimate question and nobody had thought about it because it was down at such a lower level. I felt like at that time it was an indicator that the vice presidents needed to bring in a stronger voice from the user end of services to say 'what are we going to need; how are we going to do that.' It got so fast and furious at the end that those things fell apart. It literally took us two months in transition to start organizing and putting pieces together. I would say that we are still trying to define some of those systems. . . The second thing is designing information flow, and, again, that is tied to communications. If the information doesn't flow, from my perspective, every single meeting that takes place from now on, there should be some kind of action report from that meeting so say 'how did you take what was given in this meeting and disseminate it down to the janitor?' That is not happening. Everyone is still so fast and furious trying to get things settled. I say we are still unpacking the closets. There is going to be a need to figure out how we start disseminating information. Those one hour blocks of time a month for the faculty and community are not getting it done. The directors are not getting it from the vice presidents; and therefore, they cannot push it down into the workforce. They have got to get that communication flow rapid firing so people can get back to pushing the initiatives of the vision and the mission through there. Otherwise, all we are going to do is start to get stuck again."*

One student also talked about how communication seemed to change from the old campus to the new campus. She was not able to pinpoint what exactly had changed but noted that people seemed less aware of what was occurring on campus:

*"At the old campus everyone kind of knew what was going on, and we just did a way better job of communicating. I don't exactly know what we did just because I had just recently started working for the school this year. Before that I did not care what the school was doing. I didn't care if they communicated with me at all. Then as I started working here, I realized the communication could be better. Then, as we moved here, I started to realize, 'wow faculty have no idea what students want' or students don't know what is going on with this. All of these different things. Then I started to understand that this is a huge downfall for us. So I can't really pinpoint what it is that changed. I just think that not everyone is informed about what everyone else is doing. Something as simple as the student body was having an event and some faculty and staff said 'oh usually we get emails what we are doing this week and we are not getting those.' Not that it was a big deal that the students were putting on an event, but that is one thing I saw that we can improve on."*

A faculty member believed that improving effective communication was the biggest challenge that the institution currently faces to create a sense of connection between the constituencies. Leaders must communicate with other stakeholders so everyone is aware what is transpiring in the institution:



*“I think that challenge as we grow is to become more effective in our communication: organizationally, internally and externally. That has historically been a theme that occurs, but as we launch toward more growth that becomes more important that everyone has a sense of connection about how we are moving forward . . . In terms of helping leadership to try to navigate making decisions moving forward, I think that it is really easy at this point in the momentum of moving forward to not always take stock of what is happening with faculty and staff and students in the process. Although the shift has been more a student focus so there tends to be that focus, but in talking with student leaders they don’t always think there is enough communication. I think the communication is our biggest challenge to make sure everyone understands what is happening.”*

- **Subtheme 3.3: Need for more Institutional dialogue in decision making**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.3a: Decision making breakdown**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.3b: Decision making rights**

The concept of wanting a voice in the decision making process of institutional success is not new to the landscape of organizations. People want to feel that they have been heard and that their ideas are being incorporated into the work they are required to complete on a daily basis. Stakeholders at The College expressed similar sentiments when addressing how their voices were incorporated into the decisions that were included in the culture change and campus relocation efforts.

To the stakeholders of the institution, The College missed opportunities in the process of the move that could have improved the transitional period in the life of the institution. As the move approached, leaders lost the lines of communication that were so crucial in the early culture change stages years before. As communication broke down, stakeholders began to feel like their voices were lost in the transition process. This outcome could lead to a lack of ownership of changes and may cause new areas of resistance in the future if not addressed by leaders.

A faculty member noted that the communication about what was going to happen was adequate but that there was no feedback loop:

*“While there were a couple of sessions for people to talk about needs and stuff, I think there are a number of people who feel like their voices were not a part of the process or they were not an important part of the process in terms of needs that were not met. There seems to be some resistance to the notion that some peoples’ ideas were not respected.”*

One faculty member expressed concerns that the future path to success must include a concerted effort effectively to hear and respond to peoples' concerns about change. It must include dialogue and group effort regarding how decisions are made. People need to know the how and why decisions are being made and how it will impact their work:

*“Communicating what we need and making sure that it is heard by ears with a genuine and not lip service but actually genuinely listens to what the needs are. If I were to make a general statement there is not the confidence that the voice is heard and that people don't say what they really feel because they don't want to be perceived as a whiner or they don't want to be rocking the boat. They don't want to lose their jobs. . . . Just a mild criticism that if you are going to punt this campus to a new level, don't lose sight of the fact that it still has to deal with people and it has to empower them, but more taken into consideration their needs, and create community. Not just a community where I am going to tell you the latest news with a report from her and him, but let's talk about what we can do to me the best institution.”*

Another staff member echoed sentiments about the inclusion of the stakeholder voice in the decision making process as it related to the campus relocation and the frustrations that occurred in the breakdown of communication channels. He stressed the importance of being a participant in the process:

*“I think there was, in the relocation though, as much as there was an effort to bring people in, I don't feel like people were really brought in to be a participant in the relocation. Where I sat, I kind of just trusted leadership above to make decisions, but I think in the relocation process people just knew decisions were getting made up here, and I'm not really being brought into the conversation. Early in the planning stages, 'hey what do you want these spaces to look like? What is your philosophy on all of these things?' That happened, but it was never followed up on. There was a high priority on certain aspects of The College. They made sure certain things went well, and you have to triage stuff and prioritize. I think in the process, people felt like it was great and exciting and good and I catch the vision, but I was never really a participant in the process. I think that created some tension and some frustrations. The other side of it in the relocation process is that people wanted to know what they didn't need to know. You don't need to know every little dynamic. I know there had to have been some internal politics with the relationship with The Church. People wanted to see certain things happen. People got frustrated about that kind of stuff.”*

He also noted and related to the struggle that institutional leaders must grapple with in relinquishing ownership of the change process due to the unstable history of past cultures. He took the opportunity to view the situation from a different stakeholder lens:

*“It has to be incredibly difficult when you have taken over an organization, and this isn't just [the president] but the entire Cabinet, where you have taken over an entire*

*organization that was in such dire straits and was really on the brink of collapsing, to pull the institution out of the situation, make a lot of tough decisions—you cut a lot of budgets, you cut a lot of staff, you're cutting faculty, having to navigate the politics and relationships, all that stuff. To now get to a point where we have bought property and moved. Financially, it's better, but it's still tight. To begin to relinquish ownership has got to be a really difficult thing to do because we are there, but we are not there. There is now a leash that can be let out a little bit, but we are still trying to figure out the left and right banks. So there are some confines and boundaries to how those things happen. 'We are okay but let's not get ahead of ourselves.' So how do you relinquish control and finding the right balance between? I think that is taking place right now."*

Decision making rights were also discussed by a staff member. She feels strongly that the decision making process needs to be clearly defined now that The College is realizing its own identity and learning how to function completely on its own. She also noted the previous problems that may have caused a breakdown in including stakeholder voices in the decision making process:

*"The first one is clarifying decision rights. I would say that, while there has been a lot of change in our organization from moving a campus, there have also been lines of the organizational chart that have been changed and moved around and created that never really got to develop on the old campus: a vice president of advancement and administration was created. They basically took some of the cabinet and restructured some of the responsibilities and put it there. The vice president of academics also serves as an operations component, but the operations piece doesn't even sound like it is in his title. So people don't know if they go to the vice president or do I go to the director of operations, but those things have yet to be defined. The director of student services oversees the admissions and enrollment but the marketing piece comes under advancement. There is a new CFO and a director of finances. This was all done less than five months before the move. They were so fast and furious about how we were going to do the physical move they have not created the decision rights of who gets to make decisions and how are those decisions made."*

- **Subtheme 3.4: Continuing momentum while maintaining balance**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.4a: Adding majors**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.4b: Marketing efforts**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.4c: Fatigue and hiring**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.4d: Future mindset**

For The College, this element will be an interesting area for future investigation and development. Now that the institution is completely separate from The Church and reaching new levels of success with each school year, stakeholders have lots of ideas for improvement and advancement. However, there is a sense that everyone is exhausted from the campus transition and needs balance in managing workflow to prepare for future

change. Stakeholders believe there are too few faculty and staff to produce the changes necessary to insure the future. They also believe there are now new opportunities to expand academic offerings, and with this change, new opportunities to reach untested or untouched markets.

With the stabilization of the institutional ethos, The College can now begin to plan for the future and move from survival to expansion. Part of this expansion process includes branching out into new academic offerings. Stakeholders at the institution believe the institution must look to offer new majors.

One student shared her experience when feeling limited in her choice of major and how it related to her connection to The College:

*“Something that has always bothered me about this school is that we don’t have enough majors. I don’t know what that process is. So it is hard for me to complain about it because I do not know what it is like. Personally if I had to do it over again and if I was able to choose where I wanted to go I wouldn’t come back. It’s not because of the atmosphere or the culture or the people. It’s the fact that I am not studying what I love. I am not studying anything that I am passionate about. There is nothing here for me to study. They have a few majors and I am studying business which is not what I want to be studying. I think that has been a huge thing for me. I have always wanted to transfer. I am glad I stayed because I have gotten so much from this college. It has invested so much into me. I tried to give back myself, but I think for myself academically that’s something that this school has always lacked. It is hard to change and I don’t know the process for getting more majors.”*

A faculty member talked about expanding programming to include a master’s degree program and adding a graduate component to the institution. She also noted the importance of expanding the undergraduate portfolio as well. She stated that *“having master’s programs will help us grow. Probably more course offerings like when we used to advise. . . I think we have to have other majors too. I feel like we should have a major in Spanish. We should have a language department. I think we need to have some ESL for those second language students.”*

The institution must now learn new ways to market itself and present its brand as a separate entity. Some stakeholders expressed their concerns regarding continuing momentum through the use of marketing techniques to narrow down the scope of students the institution wants to recruit. There is a natural connection that as the institution expands its offerings and branches into new markets there will be a need for increased staffing to cover these increases. Many stakeholders feel there is a need to hire qualified personnel at this stage to make the next steps toward efficiency. This is also due to the level of fatigue that stakeholders are feeling as they prepare for and implement the campus transition.

One faculty member stated that *“there is a market out there and we need to capture that market. A little bit more conservative theologically. This is a rare breed of school, and what is really interesting about that identity question is that I think it is founded on the heritage. So we can’t forget the heritage.”*

Another faculty member also discussed marketing opportunities:

*“Marketing this college on the internet, in local advertising, in every venue that is reasonable to market and having experts do it. We don’t have that. We took a step back. People that were really good at that were either let go or decided to leave. This is a time where you hire marketing experts. Hire people that can do press releases, and advertise this college on every level and the Christian level especially that it can go to. People who, and I am talking about in a marketing sense because that was the stuff we worked on in public relations in the union so I kind of know about that, but I think we are missing the boat on some of that.”*

One student specifically addressed the feelings of fatigue and trying to balance excitement with weariness:

*“We get here, and we are all tired from this transition and might get weary as in the staff and faculty. We are here which is exciting but with coming to a new campus there is a lot of mishaps and things going not the way that we had planned. I think that might bring fatigue too. So I think just the vision and the excitement of that and preparing us for what is next. So that might be the third thing that might be challenging.”*

One faculty member discussed the importance of hiring more staff to relieve stress on departments and show that administration supports departmental efforts:

*“The other thing is allowing more departments to hire qualified personnel and pay them accordingly. Many of the departments are squeezed by the budget because they are hoarding money to pay for unknown costs that are guaranteed to come around. That is okay to a point, but one of my major concerns is that I see what the other professors and I talk to them and what their needs are. We have lost some. They have left because they were not getting the support they needed. So that is kind of the downside of a move where priorities are not necessarily staff needs.”*

Another faculty member addressed the balance between implementing additional changes and workflow to avoid stakeholder burn out. She noted the importance of hiring support staff with the appropriate skills to take the institution to the next level:

*“Right now I think you have a faculty and staff that are exhausted. Needless to say moving in the middle of the year that in and of itself is enough, but it is also that we have a special WASC visit next week. There have been a lot of extra tasks associated with that. There also is a feeling that we are still staffing shy of what it is going to take to*

*move forward in terms of the tendency to add job onto people. My observation at this point is that people are here and it is going to be critical to navigate the right balance in workload so that we don't burn people out. I think there is a sense that there is much more work to do than there are hours in a day for people or bodies to do it. Then, that is a catch 22, because we have to grow to support more staff, and yet some of the things we need to do to grow require the expertise of staff we don't have."*

As the institution grows, stakeholders begin to identify new areas that can be improved and expanded. As this expansion occurs, stakeholders can get locked into advancing certain agendas. Other stakeholders, feeling exhausted from the campus transition, may believe that the institution has either fully arrived at its destination of complete independence or has done enough and this weariness with change can slow change momentum in favor of the status quo. Institutional leaders feel strongly that the campus transition was only phase one in addressing the goals that The College seeks to accomplish in the coming years. With any change, leaders must strive to maintain a balance and help convince stakeholders to buy in to new concepts. With a major change behind them, institutional leaders have new challenges in balancing momentum with maintaining stakeholder balance.

One institutional leader discussed being out in front of change and finding ways to bring stakeholders into the future as well:

*"I think the biggest challenge is taking the institution into a new phase after just having done more in seven years than they did in forty years: moving to a new location and acquiring assets. So people may believe that is the end of the road yet there is a lot to do at this point in time. Getting everyone to understand that we didn't get this far to come this far. . . If you are the leader you have to be way down the road. Sometimes that doesn't get understood. Sometimes you get too far out there and you have to back up a little bit a gather everyone and bring them with you. As the leader, I am actually living 10 years out. It is just reality that you almost have to live 10 years out and understand that sometimes creates a disconnect, but you want to show them whatever light they can see from their vantage point. [For] some of them the light is six months, and some of them can see four years. Most people cannot see 10 years just in general. I don't know, when I was younger, that I could see 10 years. As you develop as a professional, I think you understand that if you want to be a leader you have to get the long look. . . . The key for me is getting back to that getting people to see beyond six months. If they can see beyond six months they can see where we are going which then imbeds all of those very important features to what we think we are as a college and what our niche is and what are values are. It embeds it in there. Until then we have to create that on the side with programming or whatever. We are not going to stop the programming once we get it, but sometimes things just take care of themselves if you create the right spaces."*

Another institutional leader addressed momentum and balancing stakeholder perspective and the ability to balance expectations. He discussed some of the changes that are on the horizon and how the institution will again look drastically different in the near future:

*“The opportunities and this is where we have to drive as leadership, this really is act one scene one- this move. Where some people might have thought ‘we got through the move now we can relax’ no that’s really the big challenge that we will have to face. The vision was not to get over here. The vision is to amplify our mission. In that, you have never reached the end line. You never say ‘now we rest. We’ve made it.’ I think that is a frightening aspect for, maybe not frightening but daunting aspect for some people in terms of can we not take our foot off the gas pedal for a little bit. Maybe that’s a fair comment and organizationally we need to make sure that we are not pushing everyone to the limit and causing people to burn out or to lose their enthusiasm. That is something we will have to be very discerning on . . . One of the things we are going through right now (and this is going to drastically change [for]our organization and I am speaking freely here) is that we are going as an institution from term to nonterm. While we still may have a semester based type of thing, but that we are going to a complete year round nonterm basis. We are changing around our technology. We are changing around how Financial Aid works. How student financial accounts work. How recruitment works. How admission works. How faculty interact with their students. A year from now, this will be a drastically different organization.”*

- **Subtheme 3.5: Engaging the external community**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.5a: Assessing for external threats**
  - **Expression of the subtheme 3.5b: Creating external partnerships**

As the institution looks to its new community for areas of support and expansion it is also taking the opportunity to scan for possible threats. Stakeholders have acknowledged that the new and more urban location does open up The College to increased security risks from the local community as well as the area beyond. The College is currently located in a western suburb of a major metropolis which is easily accessible using public transportation.

A staff member discussed these new security threats and linked them to opportunities to make a good impression in the new community:

*“The relocation provides new threats, community threats as we are in a new dynamic. We are displaced now [with] the new campus and the residential being a mile down the road and our athletic offices across the way. Those dynamics present new challenges. So the security and safety from the student perspective. How do we educate and make aware the dangers of living in a new community for our students and faculty? So that is a huge challenge. Lastly, is developing a presence, it’s a challenge/opportunity, but*

*developing a presence within our new community. We want to make a good first impression. We want to start building relationships and consistency in engaging with new stakeholders in a way the builds credibility. I think that is a huge risk for us right now. We want to start that off really well.”*

A faculty member also expressed his concerns regarding the security risks that an open campus poses and offered suggestions to offset these risks:

*“Another big gap is that there has to be security. This is an open campus. Anybody can walk on here and that concerns me that someday there is going to be a door open and all of these windows are going to be broken and all of these computers are going to be stolen because it is pretty easy to do if you don’t have an armed guard protecting your people. . . If you have someone with the use of deadly force and the authority and the training and the uniform and the badge or maybe you hire the sheriff to come by. Our people are vulnerable and sit in a wacko world. I don’t worry about it so much, but some of our older female professors who are working late at night in the APS program, you just want to make sure they are protected. I’d like to see a fence around the place and parking and some things that make it easier for people.”*

Also, a student commented on how the change in location requires The College to recreate an appropriate emergency plan due to the due threats to the environment:

*“I think what challenges that we could face are as simple as emergencies or what to do in an emergency. I think we have developed a new emergency action plan, but I think that because we have a brand new campus it brings a challenge of actually implementing these preventative measures. So how do we prevent new emergencies that could happen here being on this campus? We are in an area that is a litter bit drier and things like wildfires or we are in an open campus.”*

While institutional leaders plan for and work closely with student services to address these security risks, they are also scanning the external environment for new community partnerships. These partnerships create opportunities to establish themselves in the local community and enhance the reach and reputation of The College. Staff members have already expressed their excitement regarding partnering with the new community and finding new ways to positively engage these external stakeholders to make them part of The College community. As stakeholders see the importance of community engagement, leaders also cast this vision and set the tone for creating external partnerships. They act as the gate keepers to the institution and create opportunities for these partnerships to occur.

One staff member discussed the *“connectedness of our community as we come to a new community here. We are looking forward to building new partnerships. We had that at*



*the existing location, but I think we can actually heighten that. Moving from the campus of a mega church to our own property gives us new strategic opportunities.”*

Another staff member talked about how new resources can play a part in engaging the community. He said that *“once we have an events center, and I know [the president’s] vision with this is that an event center can foster community involvement, and if we build a nice baseball field we can host city championships and different things like that. It gets the community involved. We are here for the community.”*

One institutional leader discussed some of the new partnerships that are currently being created:

*“I think we have aligned ourselves with some good partners in the nontraditional world. We have gone through some very, very interesting dynamics there. We have grown from almost nothing to a great staff in nontraditional, but to grow like we want to in there we have to align ourselves with educational partners. I think we just, within the last week, finalized an agreement with an educational partner that will then take that to the next level.”*

Another institutional leader discussed his efforts in determining what community involvement looks like from an institutional perspective. He mentioned a new community engagement group that has formed on campus to determine and define how The College will work with the community moving forward:

*“I have had probably 20 meetings since we have been here with business leaders. With the president of the chamber of commerce, with the mayor, with different businesses around here of what does it mean to partner with you guys? What can you guys offer? We have developed an institute of community engagement where we start looking at how we can enrich, empower and engage the community around us through the in house expertise that we have. I see that as a huge opportunity to connect with the community like we never have before. That has a snowball effect of more people know about us, more people are engaged with us, other donors come and hear what we are doing, bring in more students and allow just a greater flourishing of what we are trying to do. So that is a huge opportunity for us as we develop the campus, develop our athletic facilities then we see ways that we can minister to the youth around here and sport camps and different things like that.*

## Appendix

### Figure A1 Themes of the Study

#### Theme 1: Institution in Reset

- Expression of the theme 1a: Finding the Identity: Redefining the Meaning
- Expression of the theme 1b: Recognition of and Link to the Heritage

#### Theme 2: Creating Change: Stabilizing Empowered Leadership

- Subtheme 2.1: Establishing Institutional Knowledge
  - Expression of subtheme 2.1a: Know the Culture
  - Expression of subtheme 2.1b: Slow to Make Change
  - Expression of subtheme 2.1c: Transparency
- Subtheme 2.2: Creating Financial Independence and Expansion
  - Expression of subtheme 2.2a: Rightsizing
  - Expression of subtheme 2.2b: Nontraditional Presence
  - Expression of subtheme 2.2c: Shared Services: Owning or Outsourcing
- Subtheme 2.3: Addressing and Moving Past Resistance
  - Expression of subtheme 2.3a: Forms of Resistance
  - Expression of subtheme 2.3n: Reactions to Resistance

#### Theme 3: Challenges to Change: Roadblocks to Sustainability

- Subtheme 3.1: Maintaining Community
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.1a: Threats to Community
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.1b: Engaging Alumni
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.1c: Establishing Traditions and Pride
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.1d: Scope of Students
- Subtheme 3.2: Communication Difficulties
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.2a: Importance of Communication
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.2b: Gaps in Communication
- Subtheme 3.3: Need for More Institutional Dialogue in Decision Making
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.3a: Decision Making Breakdown
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.3b: Decision Making Rights
- Subtheme 3.4: Continuing Momentum while Maintaining Balance
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.4a: Adding Majors
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.4b: Marketing Efforts
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.4c: Fatigue and Hiring
  - Expression of the subtheme 3.4d: Future Mindset
- Subtheme 3.5: Engaging the External Community

- Expression of the subtheme 3.5a: Assessing for External Threats
- Expression of the subtheme 3.5b: Creating External Partnerships

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## Appendix B: Generic List of Possible Study Participants

The President

Vice President for Academics

Vice President for Student Services

Chair: Board of Trustees

Dean for Administration & Finance

Dean of Adult Professional Studies

Dean for Assessment & Planning

Director of Library Services

Director of Enrollment Services

Director of Admissions

Director of Spiritual Life

Director of Student Life

Manager of Alumni & Events

Strategic Communications Manager

Faculty Member

Faculty Member

Church Leader

College Founder

Student Leaders (5-7)

## Appendix C: Interview Protocols

## Interview Protocol: Institutional Leaders

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

## Questions

1. What is your role at The College?
2. What is your history with The College?
3. What challenges does The College currently face?
4. How do you anticipate facing these challenges?
5. What elements do you feel are most important in producing culture change?
6. How would you describe the current culture of The College?
7. If you have experienced a different cultural framework during your tenure at The College, how has it differed from the current culture?
8. Who or what affected the change or creation of the current culture?
9. When did these changes occur?
10. Were there specific strategies used to establish the culture?
11. What are your feelings towards the campus relocation?
12. How do you believe the current culture aligns with the campus relocation?
13. What steps must still occur to solidify the relocation and establish the culture?
14. How was the campus relocation communicated to The College constituency?
15. How was this information received by the institution?
16. What is your role in producing culture and preparing for campus relocation?

17. How has resistance affected the culture or campus relocation?
18. What factors might cause people to resist?
19. What have leaders done to address these resistance factors?
20. What issues do you believe still exist that need to be addressed during the campus relocation to establish The College's culture and identity?

## Interview Protocol: Faculty/Staff

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

### Questions

1. What is your role at The College?
2. What is your history with The College?
3. What challenges does The College currently face?
4. What elements do you feel are most important in producing culture change?
5. How would you describe the current culture of The College?
6. If you have experienced a different cultural framework during your tenure at The College, how has it differed from the current culture?
7. Who or what affected the change or creation of the current culture?
8. When did these changes occur?
9. Were there specific strategies used to establish the culture?
10. What are your feelings towards the campus relocation?
11. How do you believe the current culture aligns with the campus relocation?
12. What steps must still occur to solidify the relocation and establish the culture?
13. How was the campus relocation communicated to The College constituency?
14. How was this information received by the institution?
15. How have your thoughts and ideas about the campus relocation been addressed by leaders?
16. What is your role in producing culture and preparing for campus relocation?
17. How has resistance affected the culture or campus relocation?



18. What factors might cause people to resist?
19. What have leaders done to address these resistance factors?
20. What issues do you believe still exist that need to be addressed during the campus relocation to establish The College's culture and identity?

## Interview Protocol: External Affiliates

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

### Questions

1. What is your current affiliation with The College?
2. What is your history with The College?
3. What challenges does The College currently face?
4. What elements do you feel are most important in producing culture change?
5. How would you describe the current culture of The College?
6. If you have experienced a different cultural framework during your tenure at The College, how has it differed from the current culture?
7. Who or what affected the change or creation of the current culture?
8. When did these changes occur?
9. Were there specific strategies used to establish the culture?
10. What are your feelings towards the campus relocation?
11. How do you believe the current culture aligns with the campus relocation?
12. What steps must still occur to solidify the relocation and establish the culture?
13. How was the campus relocation communicated to The College constituency?
14. How was this information received by the institution?
15. How have your thoughts and ideas about the campus relocation been addressed by leaders?
16. What is your role in producing culture and preparing for campus relocation?
17. How has resistance affected the culture or campus relocation?

18. What factors might cause people to resist?
19. What have leaders done to address these resistance factors?
20. What issues do you believe still exist that need to be addressed during the campus relocation to establish The College's culture and identity?

## Interview Protocol: Student

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

### Questions

1. What is your current grade level at the institution?
2. What made you decide to attend The College?
3. How would you define your level of involvement at The College?
4. What is your history with The College?
5. What elements do you feel are most important in producing culture change?
6. How would you describe the current culture of The College?
7. What challenges does The College currently face?
8. Who or what affects change to the culture of the institution?
9. Were there specific strategies used to establish the current culture?
10. What are your feelings towards the campus relocation?
11. How do you believe the current culture aligns with the campus relocation?
12. What steps must still occur to solidify the relocation and establish the culture?
13. How was the campus relocation communicated to The College student body?
14. How was this information received by the student body?
15. How have your thoughts and ideas about the campus relocation been addressed by leaders?
16. What is your role in producing culture and preparing for campus relocation?
17. How has student resistance affected the culture or campus relocation?
18. What factors might cause students to resist?
19. What have leaders done to address these resistance factors?
20. What issues do you believe still exist that need to be addressed during the campus relocation to establish The College's culture and identity?

## Appendix D: Letter of Cooperation

March 17, 2014

Dear Dana Ague,


Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Strategies for Creating a Unique Culture in Preparation for Campus Relocation: A Process Evaluation within the [REDACTED] community. As part of this study, I authorize you to submit emails and phone calls to recruit the participants of your study, engage in interviews to collect data, review institutional documents as they might pertain to the study, provide copies of interview transcripts to participants for accuracy of data collected, and return the results of the study to institutional leaders with the understanding that they will review the results and disseminate to the parties they deem appropriate. Study recipients will also receive the results of the study. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: providing access to and contact information for the participants of the study as well as institutional documents as they pertain to the study while providing a clear point of contact, Elizabeth Stanton, at the college if any questions or issues arise during the study. Please note this individual will act as a point of contact only and does not assume responsibility for supervising the research study. Supervisory responsibility will still fall to the committee members of the study. We also understand that since this study is an evaluation, the researcher will be providing possible opportunities for growth, change and development. If our institution decides to incorporate or modify its practices based on the results of the study, we take full responsibility for adopting the changes and will not hold Walden liable to produce any outcomes. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change. We also want to recognize that Dana has openly disclosed her familial relationship with the president, and we do not believe, based on the parameters of the study, that the results would be compromised by this relationship.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Stanton, Chair

Institutional Review Board Committee

## Appendix F: Consent Forms/Data Use Form

**CONSENT FORM**

Strategies for Creating a Unique Culture in Preparation for Campus Relocation: A Process Evaluation

You are invited to participate in a research study of change. You were selected as a possible participant since your role at the institution provides you with unique information about the identity of The College that may not be available to the general public. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before acting on this invitation to be in the study. This study is being conducted by Dana Ague, a doctoral candidate at Walden University and daughter-in-law of President [REDACTED]. This information is being disclosed to dispel any conflicts of interest that may arise.

**Background Information:**

The purpose of this study will be to develop an understanding of how The College is moving to control and shape change in its culture to create a unique identity for itself in preparation for and in the process of making a move to a new campus, a major transitional event in the life of the institution.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in a one time interview with a set of questions that have been prepared and which you will have access to before the interview for your review to get your perceptions and insight to the time frame under study. Each individual interview should take no more than one hour to complete.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with The College being studied. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time later without affecting those relationships.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study and there are no short or long-term benefits to participating in this study. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with The College being studied. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time later without affecting those relationships.

**Compensation:**

There will be no compensation provided for your participation in this study.

**Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any report of this study that might be published, the researcher will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is Dana Ague. The researcher's faculty advisor is Dr. Delmus Williams and he can be reached via email at [delmus.williams@waldenu.edu](mailto:delmus.williams@waldenu.edu). You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact them via Dana Ague at the following email contact: [dana.ague2@waldenu.edu](mailto:dana.ague2@waldenu.edu). If you feel the need to contact the Research Participant Advocate at Walden University, you may call 1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210, if you have questions about your participation in this study or email [irb@waldenu.edu](mailto:irb@waldenu.edu). You will receive a copy of this form from the researcher. Walden University's approval number for this study is 03-20-14-0256221 and it expires on March 19, 2015.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers. I consent to participate in the study. I may also keep a copy of this consent form for my records.

Printed Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_



## CONSENT FORM

Strategies for Creating a Unique Culture in Preparation for Campus Relocation: A Process Evaluation

You are invited to participate in a research study of change. You were selected as a possible participant since your role at the institution provides you with unique information about the identity of The College that may not be available to the general public. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before acting on this invitation to be in the study. This study is being conducted by Dana Ague, a doctoral candidate at Walden University and daughter-in-law of President [REDACTED]. This information is being disclosed to dispel any conflicts of interest that may arise.

### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study will be to develop an understanding of how The College is moving to control and shape change in its culture to create a unique identity for itself in preparation for and in the process of making a move to a new campus, a major transitional event in the life of the institution.

### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in a one-time interview with a set of questions that have been prepared and which you will have access to before the interview for your review to get your perceptions and insight to the time frame under study. The interview should take no more than one hour to complete.

### **Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with The College being studied. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time later without affecting those relationships.

### **Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study and there are no short or long-term benefits to participating in this study. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with The College being studied. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time later without affecting those relationships.

### **Compensation:**

There will be no compensation provided for your participation in this study.

### **Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any report of this study that might be published, the researcher will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

### **Contacts and Questions:**



The researcher conducting this study is Dana Ague. The researcher's faculty advisor is Dr. Delmus Williams and he can be reached via email at [delmus.williams@waldenu.edu](mailto:delmus.williams@waldenu.edu). You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact them via Dana Ague at the following email contact: [dana.ague2@waldenu.edu](mailto:dana.ague2@waldenu.edu). If you feel the need to contact the Research Participant Advocate at Walden University, you may call 1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210, if you have questions about your participation in this study or email [irb@waldenu.edu](mailto:irb@waldenu.edu). You will receive a copy of this form from the researcher. Walden University's approval number for this study is 03-20-14-0256221 and it expires on March 19, 2015.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers. I consent to participate in the study. I may also keep a copy of this consent form for my records.

Printed Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_



### DATA USE AGREEMENT

This Data Use Agreement, effective as of January 31, 2013, is entered into by and between Dana Ague and Dr. [REDACTED]. The purpose of this Agreement is to provide Data Recipient with access to a Limited Data Set ("LDS") for use in research in accord with the HIPAA and FERPA Regulations.

1. Definitions. Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement, all capitalized terms used in this Agreement not otherwise defined have the meaning established for purposes of the "HIPAA Regulations" codified at Title 45 parts 160 through 164 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, as amended from time to time.
2. Preparation of the LDS. Dr. Paul Ague shall prepare and furnish to Data Recipient a LDS in accord with any applicable HIPAA or FERPA Regulations
3. Data Fields in the LDS. No direct identifiers such as names may be included in the Limited Data Set (LDS). In preparing the LDS, [REDACTED] shall include the **data fields specified as follows**, which are the minimum necessary to accomplish the research: Strategic Plan, WASC History Report, WASC Reports 2005-2012, WASC letters to The College, Self-Study and Special Visit Reports.
4. Responsibilities of Data Recipient. Data Recipient agrees to:
  - a. Use or disclose the LDS only as permitted by this Agreement or as required by law;
  - b. Use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the LDS other than as permitted by this Agreement or required by law;
  - c. Report to Data Provider any use or disclosure of the LDS of which it becomes aware that is not permitted by this Agreement or required by law;
  - d. Require any of its subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to the LDS to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the LDS that apply to Data Recipient under this Agreement; and
  - e. Not use the information in the LDS to identify or contact the individuals who are data subjects.
5. Permitted Uses and Disclosures of the LDS. Data Recipient may use and/or disclose the LDS for its Research activities only.

## 6. Term and Termination.

- a. Term. The term of this Agreement shall commence as of the Effective Date and shall continue for so long as Data Recipient retains the LDS, unless sooner terminated as set forth in this Agreement.
- b. Termination by Data Recipient. Data Recipient may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying the Data Provider and returning or destroying the LDS.
- c. Termination by Data Provider. Data Provider may terminate this agreement at any time by providing thirty (30) days prior written notice to Data Recipient.
- d. For Breach. Data Provider shall provide written notice to Data Recipient within ten (10) days of any determination that Data Recipient has breached a material term of this Agreement. Data Provider shall afford Data Recipient an opportunity to cure said alleged material breach upon mutually agreeable terms. Failure to agree on mutually agreeable terms for cure within thirty (30) days shall be grounds for the immediate termination of this Agreement by Data Provider.
- e. Effect of Termination. Sections 1, 4, 5, 6(c) and 7 of this Agreement shall survive any termination of this Agreement under subsections c or d.

## 7. Miscellaneous.

- a. Change in Law. The parties agree to negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement to comport with changes in federal law that materially alter either or both parties' obligations under this Agreement. Provided however, that if the parties are unable to agree to mutually acceptable amendment(s) by the compliance date of the change in applicable law or regulations, either Party may terminate this Agreement as provided in section 6.
- b. Construction of Terms. The terms of this Agreement shall be construed to give effect to applicable federal interpretative guidance regarding the HIPAA Regulations.
- c. No Third Party Beneficiaries. Nothing in this Agreement shall confer upon any person other than the parties and their respective successors or assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations, or liabilities whatsoever.
- d. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

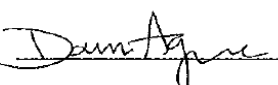
- e. Headings. The headings and other captions in this Agreement are for convenience and reference only and shall not be used in interpreting, construing or enforcing any of the provisions of this Agreement.


IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and on its behalf.

**DATA PROVIDER**

**DATA RECIPIENT**

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name:  \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: Dana Ayve \_\_\_\_\_

Print Title: President \_\_\_\_\_

Print Title: Ed.D. Student \_\_\_\_\_

## Curriculum Vitae

**Dana C. Ague**

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- Ten years of higher education experience in the areas of administration, advising, communications and registration, with an emphasis on the adult student experience
- Progressive leadership roles in the areas of student centered retention initiatives, employee training, interdepartmental collaboration/communication and data-driven decision making
- Highly successful in fostering process and policy improvements in a fast-paced and adaptable environment.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Banner, Visio and OneNote)
- Received Manger's Choice award for creating departmental process improvement initiatives: quarterly events, academic progress, time to degree completion campaign, etc.

## EDUCATION

**Doctor of Education: Higher Education Leadership Expected 2014**  
*Doctoral Study Title: Strategies for Creating a Unique Culture in Preparation for Campus Relocation: A Process Evaluation*  
 Walden University, Minneapolis, MN

**Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership May 2007**  
 Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN

**Bachelor of Science in Youth/Social Science May 2004**  
 Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN

## EXPERIENCE

**Academic Advisor**, Walden University, Minneapolis MN, 07/09-present

**Leadership**

- Created and led outreach campaign to guide students reaching their time to degree completion limit on steps to complete degree within time limit
- Led retention risk outreach campaign to support students with a high likelihood to attrite resulting in continued enrollment and successful program completion

- Led team to create an academic advising website which provided students and staff a central location for program policies, forms and streamlined the students' ability to obtain information
- Restructured the academic progress campaign in which advisors outreach to students who fail to meet the minimum academic standard to provide guidance on steps to improve academic performance, retrained advisors on the new process
- Mentored new academic advisors
- Acted as lead for the academic advising data management team
- Chaired the academic advising advisory council that assessed and provided process improvement ideas and change initiatives to the department
- Created and piloted a senior academic advisor role which assisted the managerial team with operational projects
- Acted as an team point of contact/senior academic advisor
- Managed a team of academic advising coordinator temporary hires to ensure effective workflow in the department

#### **Data & Assessment**

- Assisted in the creation, compilation and organization of the academic advising SWOT analysis which was submitted to the Higher Learning Commission as part of the institution's review
- Acted as a liaison to the student services committee that assisted in writing and approving portions of the self-study which was submitted to the Higher Learning Commission
- Created electronic quality assurance assessment forms which were used by managers to gauge the effectiveness of advisors
- Compiled monthly quality assurance data and reported results to the director of academic advising
- Developed academic dashboards which displayed campaign results and trends to assist management in assessing effectiveness and creating new areas for efficiencies
- Created academic program metrics presentations to provide visibility for the efforts of academic advising to executive leadership
- Managed an academic advising workflow pilot which compared the workflow efforts of the undergraduate and graduate advising teams to help determine where resources should best be allocated
- Partnered with business intelligence to develop new process structures for many of the campaigns in academic advising
- Created an academic advising SharePoint site to assist in the dissemination and sharing of program specific data

#### **Student Service**

- Guided doctoral students in program planning and problem solving

- Partnered with the Doctor of Business Administration program director to create policies and procedures to increase student satisfaction for doctoral students and maintain retention
- Collaborated with the Doctor of Business Administration program director and marketing department to develop a new student webinar: 12 Steps to Earning a DBA
- Worked with business operations to create an exploratory studies option for the undeclared undergraduate student population to encourage skill exploration in choosing an appropriate major
- Wrote the business rules and process guide to assist academic advisors in manually registering courses in the Banner system

**Adult & Graduate Studies Registration Coordinator, Crown College, St. Bonifacius MN, 09/06-10/08**

- Created a new electronic form of registration, policy manual, credit for prior learning process, electronic educational plan, curriculum minors and managed and updated the Adult & Graduate Studies Catalog
- Performed multiple academic advising functions for graduate students both on campus and online
- Partnered with Financial Aid, Billing, and the Registrar's Offices to create and implement new policies and procedures and monitored student registration including course section maintenance
- Worked closely with the Adult & Graduate Studies Enrollment Office to implement new process and procedure changes

**Marketing & Media Relations Office Manager, Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN, 07/04-09/06**

- Managed schedules and printing projects for three graphic designers
- Organized college survey completion (IPEDS, CollegeBoard, U.S. News and World Report)
- Interdepartmental coordination in correspondence with outsourced printing as well as in house projects
- Performed benchmark research and created the first student blogs

**Assistant Bookstore Manager, Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN, 09/03-06/04**

- Assisted manager in store organization, stock room organization and store décor
- Managed and trained student workers
- Ran and balanced the cash register