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## Higher Education Administrators' Experiences With Development of Faculty Pedagogical Skills

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# Walden University

College of Education

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Diane Cairns

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Walden University  
2021

Abstract

Higher Education Administrators' Experiences With Development of Faculty

Pedagogical Skills

by

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EdS, Wayne State University

MBA, Lawrence Technological University

BA, Cleary University

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Higher Education

Walden University

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## Abstract

One of the barriers most often cited by higher education faculty impacting the professional development of their pedagogical skills is the lack of support from the administrators in their institution. Identifying barriers, opportunities for support, and an approach for quality teaching using pedagogical techniques may contribute to a sustainable approach to impact student learning outcomes. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify higher education administrators' perceptions of barriers and support for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. The conceptual framework was based on Boyer's scholarship of the professoriate model. A semistructured interview protocol was used to interview eight higher education administrators who had oversight and approval of funding for the professional development of faculty. Thematic analysis was used to identify, analyze, and report patterns to describe and interpret the data. Four themes emerged: policies and procedures, skill development opportunities, collaboration for skill development, and faculty recognition. Understanding the barriers and support for the professional development of faculty may lead to a positive social change in student learning outcomes through faculty's advancement in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

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## Dedication

In memory of my father, Pablo R. Ruiz. Anyone who stops learning is old.

Anyone who keeps learning stays young. ~ Henry Ford

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In higher education there is an increased expectation of the quality of education (McKinney, 2013; Willits & Brennan, 2016). Consistency in the support and removal of barriers to managing an institution's quality of education includes various roles and responsibilities. Areas within an institution impacting the quality of education include a faculty member's role as a teacher and the use of pedagogical techniques impacting students' learning outcomes (American Council on Education, 2019; Lyon, 2015). The quality of teaching calls for consistency in defining standards and alignment with the institution's strategic goals (Kazu & Demiralp, 2016; Yob et al., 2016). Cherif et al. (2018) identified updated curriculum and effective faculty as two of the areas requiring support and recognition of administrators to impact the quality of education. I explored higher education administrators' perceptions of barriers and support for the professional development of the faculty's pedagogical skills. Research on higher education administrators' views on their role in the professional development of the faculty's pedagogical skills is limited. This research focused mainly on faculty's perception of the lack of administrations' support and organization, and an environment conducive to professional development that includes resources and recognition as barriers to professional development (Gravani, 2015; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016; Stefaniak, 2018).

Learning in higher education includes the professional development of faculty (Hutchings et al., 2011). The quality of faculty as teachers requires attention to emerging pedagogies, development as learners, and staying abreast of the discipline (Bain, 2004;

Hutchings et al., 2011). Harkavy (2015) shared that engaged faculty can advance knowledge, teaching, and learning. The ability to nurture professional learning has not been explored sufficiently through the lens of a program leader (Cahill et al., 2015). Jones and Hegge (2008) found that faculty are trained in their discipline but lack experience as teachers. Professional development of faculty pedagogical skills requires the support of institution administrators (Forgie et al., 2018; Jones & Hegge, 2008). The alignment of an institution's strategic initiatives with faculty role as teachers provides the opportunity to impact student outcomes (Curwood et al., 2015; Grupp, 2014; Stefaniak, 2018). The impact of the development of pedagogical skills on the quality of teaching and student outcomes is identified in research.

This chapter contains an overview of the significance of the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. The problem statement, purpose of the study, and research question provide an overview of the gap in research and intent of the study to identify higher education administrators' perceptions of barriers and support for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. The conceptual framework presents how Boyer's scholarship of the professoriate model with a focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning was applied to frame the study. The nature of the study indicates the basic qualitative methodology in relation to the research question. The definitions of terms clarify key concepts used in the study. The assumptions, scope and definitions, limitations, and delimitations include a brief overview of the study. The

significance of the study identifies a potential contribution to fill the gap of new understanding in priorities for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills.

### **Background of the Study**

Faculty participating in Boyer's (1990) *Scholarship Reconsidered* research found teaching to be central to the mission of an institution. Boyer identified the faculty reward system to be focused on research and publications versus teaching. Moser (2014) found that *Scholarship Reconsidered* remains relevant in challenging institutions to value the scholarship of teaching and learning. The investment in instructional quality and professional development of faculty pedagogical skills is core to an institution's mission (American Council on Education, 2017; Hutchings et al., 2011).

The advancement of a faculty reward system aligned with teaching responsibilities and relationship building among faculty is essential to skill development to sustain scholarship of teaching (Register & King, 2018; Stefaniak, 2018). An institution's commitment to professional development, the application of pedagogical skills, a clear vision, alignment with teaching responsibilities, and the institution's strategic planning goals support the quality of teaching and learning outcomes (Buchholz et al., 2019; Gravani, 2015).

Institutional policymakers' and educational leaders' understanding of what constitutes quality professional development requires a clear vision of the desired impacts on classroom practices (Huling & Resta, 2020). Administrators' lack of support and resources and recognition of creative teaching and learning are barriers to advancing

pedagogical skills (Kaynardağ, 2017; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016). Student learning has been positively influenced when faculty received formal training (Bryant & Richardson, 2015; Kaynardağ, 2017).

### **Problem Statement**

Faculty identify higher education administrators as a barrier in continuing their professional development of pedagogical skills (Mulnix, 2016). Changes within higher education, disciplinary accrediting organizations, and instructional technologies highlight the need for a renewed focus on teaching and learning skill development (McKinney, 2013). Alignment of institutional goals with faculty development has been suggested to maintain a sustainable approach to faculty professional skill development (Nichols & Raider-Roth, 2016). Fostering quality teaching is interdependent with the cooperation of individual faculty members, policy design, and organizational quality assurance (Hénard & Roseveare, 2012). One barrier most often cited by faculty is lack of support from administrators in their institution (Bradley, 2016; Case, 2013). Raffaghelli (2017) identified that a need for professional development of higher education faculty requires a professional development culture supported by administrators.

Prior research included faculty views on the barriers and support of professional development of pedagogical skills (NiliakaMukhale & Hong, 2017; Sabagh & Saroyan, 2014; Velasco et al., 2014). Sabagh and Saroyan (2014) found that university cultures were focused more on research and were not supportive of the development of pedagogical skills. Estep et al. (2012) found that faculty members were hired based on



proficiency in research with teaching viewed as a secondary concern. Activities deemed more tangible were assigned a higher priority than faculty development (Rathbun et al., 2017). Research examining administrators' perception of their role supporting professional development of faculty pedagogical skills appears sparse. Professional development of faculty pedagogical skills was found to be indispensable (Yurtseven, 2017). Yurtseven (2017) recommended identifying why professional development is not a priority within higher education institutions. However, there is a lack of research identifying higher education administrators' role and their perceptions of the barriers or support in the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. The current study addressed that gap.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify higher education administrators' perceptions of barriers and support for professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. Understanding administrators' perceptions of barriers to the professional development of faculty may promote opportunities for institutions' goals impacting the quality of teaching and learning. Identifying barriers, opportunities for support, and an approach for quality teaching using pedagogical techniques may contribute to a sustainable approach in professional development of faculty resulting in better learning outcomes for students.

### **Research Questions**

The following research question guided this study: What are the barriers and support for faculty development of pedagogical skills as perceived by higher education administrators who are facilitators of that development?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was Boyer's (1990) scholarship of the professoriate model. This model provides the opportunity for researchers to step back and look for connections across the overlapping functions between the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching. These four intellectual functions are separate but inseparable in the analysis of academic work to form an interdependent whole. Boyer's (2016) scholarship of the professoriate model continues to be relevant 25 years after publication. The alignment of the institution's mission, structure for types of scholarship distinct from publication, and emphasis on teaching affirms the relevance of Boyer's model (Braxton, 2016).

Since the initial publication of Boyer's model in 1990, the scholarship of teaching has emerged to include learning, and the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) is central to the field of faculty development (Hutchings et al., 2011). SoTL was the focus of the current study because it encompasses a broader practice in the professional development of pedagogical skills (see Hutchings et al., 2011). Pedagogical skills include planning, ongoing examination, development of relations to the subject taught, and transforming and extending knowledge. Faculty as learners develop and communicate

knowledge to bring the most intelligible account of new knowledge to the classroom. Development of pedagogical skills continues to evolve for higher education (Yurtseven, 2017). The call for accountability and evidence of impact requires institutional support and champions to remove barriers for faculty engagement in the concept of SoTL (Beach, 2016).

The principles and practices of SoTL depend on strong institutional support in promotion and recognition to make professional development a priority (Hutchings et al., 2011). SoTL offers ideas, practices, and the focus to engage faculty in professional development programs (Beach, 2016). The integration of SoTL is achieved through advocacy by campus leaders, not by individual faculty members (Beach, 2016). Hutchings et al. (2011) developed eight recommendations supporting the vision of integrating the SoTL into an institution's core goals. The eight practices for assessment of SoTL practices with adaptation to an institution's distinct mission, history, and culture include (a) understand, communicate, and promote an integrated vision of the scholarship of teaching and learning; (b) support a wide range of opportunities to cultivate the skills and habits of inquiry into teaching and learning; (c) connect the scholarship of teaching and learning to larger, shared agendas for student learning and success; (d) foster exchange between campus scholarship of teaching and learning community and those with responsibility for institutional research and assessment; (e) work purposefully to bring faculty roles and rewards into alignment with a view of teaching as scholarly work; (f) take advantage of and engage with the larger, increasingly international teaching

commons; (g) develop a plan and timeline for integrating the scholarship of teaching and learning into campus culture and monitor progress; and (h) recognize that institutionalization is a long-term process (Hutchings et al. (2011). These recommendations provide guidance for the development of an integrative vision and evidence of an institution's support. The eight recommendations were used in my study to discover evidence for the perception of the institution administrators' support and barriers to the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills.

### **Nature of the Study**

I used a basic qualitative design, as outlined by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), to elicit information from higher education administrators related to the barriers and support for faculty development of pedagogical skills as perceived by higher education administrators who are facilitators of that development. The study's participants included eight higher education deans or department chairs with 3 or more years of experience in oversight and approval of funding for professional development of faculty. To include participants beyond my geographical area and to accommodate varying work schedules, I conducted the interviews by telephone or by videoconferencing. The method of the interview was determined by the personal needs of the interviewee and the compatibility of technology. The conversations were recorded and transcribed using a transcription service. The thematic analysis of the data was used to support the recognition of patterns and to turn the data into meaningful categories and themes.

## Definitions

The following terms informed the study:

*Administrator:* A higher education person serving in the role of president, dean, director, or department chair (Cole, 2016).

*Boyer's model of scholarship:* The integration of a full scope of academic work, the building of bridges between theory and practice, and the communication of knowledge effectively to students. The separate but overlapping functions that make up this model include the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application, and the scholarship of teaching and learning (Boyer, 1990).

*Faculty:* The members of a branch of teaching and learning within an educational institution (Boyer, 1990).

*Pedagogical:* The planning, examination, and development of knowledge in relation to the subject taught, and transforming and extending knowledge (Hutchings, et al., 2011; Yurtseven, 2017).

*Professional development:* Activities centered on facilitating the professional growth of a faculty members' talents, expansion of interests within their discipline, and development of skills in their role as instructors (Beach, 2016).

*Scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL):* Boyer (2016, as cited in Hutchings et al., 2011) introduced the term to describe teaching as scholarly intellectual work to include knowledge of a discipline with inclusion of latest ideas of teaching, evidence gathering, and documentation of strategies.

### **Assumptions**

To support the evaluation of data collected for this study, identifying diagnostic assumptions assisted with analysis of the root causes and opportunities associated with the research (see Nkwake & Morrow, 2016). The initial assumptions for this study included recruiting a diverse population of participants with varying administration roles to gain a better understanding of their role in professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. I also assumed participants would have knowledge of faculty's role as teachers to identify requirements for effective teaching, and participants would be aware of and authorize opportunities for professional development of faculty pedagogical skills.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The boundaries of this study included the recruitment of eight higher education administrators serving in the role of a dean or department chair for 3 or more years with oversight of the professional development of faculty. I applied Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) basic qualitative inquiry approach because the understanding of people's experience was the focus of the study. That focus was related to the experiences associated with professional development of higher education faculty using Boyer's (1990) model of scholarship.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of the study included limiting the participant selection to a professional organization whose members include leaders in higher education with faculty development responsibilities. The small population size restricted the number of

perspectives. To minimize bias in the collection and interpretation of data, I developed a series of semistructured interview questions using Hutchings et al.'s (2011) eight practices for assessment of SoTL.

### **Significance of the Study**

My review of the literature provided a basis for inquiry with higher education administration to identify barriers and support for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. I explored the barriers and support for faculty development skills as perceived by higher education administrators in relation to faculty's expressed need for professional development of pedagogical skills as presented in the literature supporting faculty needs. The significance of this study was the opportunity to improve understanding of the priorities for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. New knowledge may impact educators' teaching and innovation connected to the quality of students' learning experience and faculty's advancement in the SoTL. The findings may promote the opportunity for pedagogical skills development for the faculty not only in their professional role but in advancing the betterment of students and society. Understanding the barriers and support for the professional development of faculty may promote social change and guide administration to have better student learning outcomes through teaching and faculty's advancement in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

### **Significance to Practice**

Identification of the barriers and support for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills may contribute to a method or plan that impacts the quality of

teaching and learning. The significance of this study was the opportunity for the contribution of new knowledge in prioritizing the development of faculty pedagogical skills. New knowledge may positively influence educators' teaching and innovation connected to the quality of students' learning experiences and faculty advancement in the SoTL.

### **Significance to Theory**

Boyer's (1990) research included over 5,000 faculty to solicit what it means to be a scholar. One of the conflicts faculty identified was the complexity of the administrative structure and priorities of the professoriate. The significance of the current study included an improved understanding of the administrators' perception of support and barriers to professional development of faculty pedagogical skills within the SoTL. This new knowledge may assist with the evaluation and continuous improvement of teaching as vital to the professional development of faculty and overall institution priorities.

### **Significance to Social Change**

The changes in higher education highlight a need for renewed focus on teaching and learning skill development (McKinney, 2013). Higher education institutions with a clear vision and strategic plans aligned with faculty teaching responsibilities create the opportunity to have a positive impact on student learning outcomes (McKinney, 2013). New knowledge provides the potential to impact educators' teaching and innovation and faculty's advancement in the scholarship of teaching and learning.



### **Summary**

In this chapter, I described the faculty's perception of barriers and support for the professional development of pedagogical skills and research surrounding the issue of administrators' perceived barriers and support to professional development of faculty. A review of the research indicated a gap in the understanding of administration's views on the barriers and support for professional development of faculty. A foundation was presented for exploring the identified gap. This study addressed the perceptions of administrators regarding barriers and support to promote a sustainable approach of quality teaching and use of pedagogical techniques impacting student learning outcomes.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the conceptual framework of Boyer's scholarship of the professoriate model. The origins of this model and why this model provides the opportunity to frame the scholarship and teaching and learning are presented. The literature review presents studies related to the key concepts of the research question.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Faculty identify higher education administrators as a barrier in continuing their professional development of pedagogical skills (Mulnix, 2016). Changes within higher education, disciplinary accrediting organizations, and instructional technologies highlight the need for a renewed focus on teaching and learning skill development (McKinney, 2013). A holistic approach assisting faculty in the enhancement of teaching and learning development is required for leaders to be forward thinking rather than complacent (Lockhart & Stoop, 2018). The literature I identified in this review focused mainly on faculty perception of the benefits and barriers related to their professional development. There is a lack of research on the administrators' perception of their role in the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills.

Some studies addressed the need for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills (Curwood et al., 2015; Grupp, 2014; Slapcoff & Harris, 2014; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016; Stefaniak, 2018). Teaching-oriented faculty, in contrast to research-oriented faculty, find promotion and merit pay a challenge within an institution that lacks uniformity of value between teaching and research (Boyer, 2016).

This chapter begins with my literature search strategy and approach toward a collection of quality and comprehensive literature related to the problem. Then, I discuss the conceptual framework of Boyer's (1990) scholarship of the professoriate model with a brief history of the model. This is followed by the literature review focused on faculty development practice in higher education, higher education administration's role in

faculty development, and research related to the Boyer model. The chapter concludes with a summary in which I describe the rationale for the study from the perspective of the framework and literature.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

Strategies I used for selecting literature sources included research-based articles drawn from peer-reviewed journals published within the past 5 years. My selection of research-based sources included books published on adult learning, higher education, and Boyer's (1990) theoretical framework of scholarship of teaching and learning. Dissertations applying the Boyer theoretical framework were also included. To narrow the large volume of research-based literature sources, as suggested by Dawidowicz (2010), I first reviewed the abstracts to identify the type of research conducted, perspectives, and results. The literature I identified includes knowledge of the research topic for this study, support for the need of new research, an overview of current and past research findings, and the body of research related to the benefits of professional development for faculty, as suggested by Fink (2005).

The literature search strategy included the use of Walden University's library databases, including education databases ERIC, SAGE Journals, and Education Source. I applied the terms *higher education*, *administrators of higher education*, and *faculty development* to identify professional organization websites. The professional organizations included American Association of University Administrators, American Council on Education, International Association of Universities, and the Society for

College and University Planning. I used the following search terms both individually and in combinations: *higher education, faculty development, administrators, scholarship of teaching, pedagogy/ical, andragogy/ical, scholarship, teaching and learning, professional development, Boyer's model of scholarship, professor, faculty, university, instructional leadership, adult learning, lifelong learning, performance assessment, and motivation.*

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was based on Boyer's (1990) scholarship of the professoriate model. This model provides the opportunity for higher education personnel to step back and look for connections across the overlapping functions between the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Boyer's research reconsidered the traditional meaning of scholarship as it related to analysis of dissatisfaction with the quality of undergraduate education. Boyer focused on the core of the curriculum, the quality of campus life, defining the work of faculty, addressing the reward system, the academic function of faculty, and what it means to be a scholar. Boyer's research data were derived from the 1969 and 1989 Carnegie Foundation national surveys of faculty results. The central theme of the research report was "what it means to be a scholar" (Boyer, 1990, p. 2).

Boyer's (1990) research, leading to development of the Boyer professoriate model, included over 5,000 faculty from a variety of higher education institutions. The complexity of the administrative structure, fragmented curriculum, education of students

lacking coherence, priorities of the professoriate, and priority of research were among the conflicts identified by faculty. About 70% of the faculty advocated for teaching as a central mission and time spent with students. The Boyer vision of scholarship was more aligned with a campus mission related to the work of faculty with a need to support the alignment of teaching and service with research for judgment of professional performance. The result of the study was the development of the Boyer professoriate model. The model moved beyond the understanding of scholarship as research only and established teaching and service along with research as a model for evaluation.

Boyer (2016) reminded higher education audiences that scholarship was once measured by the ability to think, learn, and communicate versus spending more time on research. Boyer (2016) noted that the reward structure of modern universities takes faculty away from teaching to spend time on research. Boyer (2016) insisted on viewing education in an integrated, holistic approach integral in the building of a quality education. The definition of scholarship was asserted to be expanded beyond discovery for inclusion of application, integration, and teaching (Boyer, 1990). The inclusion of application, integration, and teaching called for faculty, administrators, policymakers, and other members of higher education to identify core elements of scholarship beyond research (Boyer, 1990).

Bridges and connections identified in Boyer's (1990) work of the professoriate are described as the four overlapping functions: scholarship of discovery, scholarship of integration, scholarship of application, and scholarship of teaching. Boyer defined the

scholarship of discovery as the core of research that contributes to human knowledge and the intellectual climate of an institution. Scholarship of integration brings isolated facts into perspective by making connections and linking one's research with that of others toward the expanding of intellectual patterns. Scholarship of application reflects the application of knowledge, engagement of the scholar, and the service activities connected to one's field of knowledge. The scholarship of teaching is the departing of knowledge, intellectual engagement of the faculty member, careful planning of pedagogical procedures, structuring of active learning, and the engagement of future scholars.

The evaluation and continuous improvement of teaching are vital to the professional development of faculty and overall institution priorities (Boyer, 2016). Identifying barriers and opportunities for support can contribute to a sustainable approach for quality teaching using pedagogical techniques impacting learning outcomes for students. Lack of transparency and an equitable reward system for faculty scholarship efforts requires constant evaluation and support throughout an institution (Register & King, 2018). In the evaluation of Boyer's scholarship of teaching and learning conducted through their literature review, Register and King (2018) found the transmission of knowledge, collaboration, and pedagogical skills to be vital in the development of teaching skills. Register and King concluded that university administrators' knowledge of diversity in scholarship and the evaluation of faculty teaching skills is vital to sustaining scholarship and a reward system.

Raffaghelli (2017) found the area of medical education to have a high number of studies in the effectiveness of faculty professional development programs, and the work of Boyer is still relevant and an extensively adopted model of scholarship. Slapcoff and Harris (2014) developed a teaching and learning model founded on Boyer's definition of faculty scholarship. Slapcoff and Harris also identified that a faculty learning community with the inclusion of research in coursework to be effective with the reflection of cross-disciplinary skill development. Willits and Brennan (2016) identified Boyer's work as relevant in the call to action to reward excellence in teaching and to provide funding for communities of learning with a link to scholarship. The results of Moser's (2014) qualitative life history review indicated the faculty reward system to be specific to the publication of research instead of the role of teaching and learning.

Criticism of Boyer's (1990) model included failure to link teaching and learning, clarity of a definition for the Boyer model of scholarship of teaching, and failure to incorporate a method for assessing the quality of scholarship (Moser, 2014). Since the initial publication of Boyer's model, scholarship of teaching has emerged to include learning and has become central to the field of faculty development (Hutchings et al., 2011). SoTL encompasses a broader practice in the professional development of pedagogical skills (Hutchings et al., 2011). Glassick et al. (1997) followed up with a study to identify methods for assessment of scholarship. The results of the study provided qualitative standards for evaluating faculty scholarship and were published in a report titled "Scholarship Assessed: Evaluation of the Professoriate." This study also identified

a lack of agreement within institutions regarding a solution for assessment of faculty, accountability, and evidence of scholarship alignment with the institution mission (Glassick et al., 1997).

The conceptual framework for the current study was Boyer's SoTL model. Boyer's (1990) research included a survey of faculty; however, understanding administrators' perception to barriers in the professional development of faculty may assist with realizing opportunities for alignment of institution goals that affect the quality of teaching and learning, and inclusion of faculty expressed needs. Principles and practices of SoTL require strong institutional support in the promotion and recognition to make professional development a priority (Hutchings et al., 2011). Scholars' knowledge is developed through research, publications, and the shaping of research and practice (Boyer, 1990). Teaching bridges the understanding between the teacher's knowledge and student's learning using pedagogical procedures. Faculty as scholars are also learners of ongoing knowledge and pedagogical procedures, and relate their knowledge to subjects taught. Pedagogical skills include the planning, ongoing examination, development of relations to the subject taught, and transforming and extending knowledge. Faculty as learners develop and communicate knowledge to bring the most intelligible account of new knowledge to the classroom. Development of pedagogical skills continues to evolve for higher education (Yurtseven, 2017). Diverse faculty go beyond their intellectual foundation and include the quality of their training (Boyer, 2016).



The alignment of an institution's mission, a structure for types of scholarship distinct from publication, and emphasis on teaching continue to speak to the current relevance of Boyer's model (Braxton, 2016). The integration of SoTL is achieved through advocacy by campus leaders, not by individual faculty members. The standards of excellence in scholarly work exhibit clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique (Hutchings et al., 2011). Hutchings et al. (2011) developed eight recommendations supporting an institution's vision of integrating Boyer's SoTL into its core goals. These recommendations provide guidance for the development of an integrative vision and evidence of an institution's support. The eight recommendations were used in my study to discover evidence or lack of evidence for the perception of administration of an institution's support and barriers to the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. The eight practices for assessment of SoTL practices with adaptation to an institution's distinct mission, history, and culture include (a) understand, communicate, and promote an integrated vision of the scholarship of teaching and learning; (b) support a wide range of opportunities to cultivate the skills and habits of inquiry into teaching and learning; (c) connect the scholarship of teaching and learning to larger, shared agendas for student learning and success; (d) foster exchange between campus scholarship of teaching and learning community and those with responsibility for institutional research and assessment; (e) work purposefully to bring faculty roles and rewards into alignment with a view of teaching as scholarly work; (f) take advantage of and engage with the

larger, increasingly international teaching commons; (g) develop a plan and timeline for integrating the scholarship of teaching and learning into campus culture and monitor progress; and (h) recognize that institutionalization is a long-term process. In summary, to examine the perceptions of higher education administrations barriers and support to development of faculties pedagogical skills, I framed the scholarship of teaching and learning using Boyer's (1990) model of SoTL.

### **Literature Review**

The literature supporting the research problem and question for this study included the topics of faculty development and higher education administration. In the first section of the review the literature, I focus on faculty development, the type of research, findings, and the need for future research. In the second section, I look at the research on the role of higher education administration in the professional development of faculty.

### **Faculty Development**

Leadership alignment with the institutions' strategic plans, and support of resources are identified as challenges in the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. Grupp (2014) completed a self-study to analyze his personal experience in faculty development using a conceptual model to demonstrate roles and responsibilities. A faculty developer's focus enhances the faculty member's pedagogical skills through instructional development with an emphasis on course design, curriculum, and teaching. Grupp found that the influence of the development of faculty pedagogical

skills was driven by the role of the faculty developer's alignment with the institution's leadership's strategic initiatives. Investing in instructional quality ongoing is essential to the mission of institution (American Council on Education [ACE], 2017; Grupp, 2014). Soriano de Alencar and Freire de Oliveira (2016) also found alignment to institution's strategic plans support an environment for professional development and reduces barriers.

To advance development, Soriano de Alencar and Freire de Oliveira (2016) found an environment supportive of creative teaching and learning required administrative support of resources, recognition, and professional development of course design with the presence of creativity. Their research included semistructured interviews to examine the importance of fostering creativity in higher education. Twenty graduate professors from a single university were interviewed. The study participants represented several academic areas within the university. Professors considered creativity important to produce knowledge, innovation, and strategies to motivate students. Barriers to professional development fostering professors' and students' creativity included the universities rules, patterns, bureaucracy, and a focus on publications.

This study provides insight into how academics engage in professional development and how they benefit from the opportunity to complete self-directed professional development (Curwood et al., 2015). This three-phase design-based research project analyzed the development and the evaluation of a mobile website that provides just-in-time professional development programs for faculty. In the design phase 15

academics and two students within the selected university participated in focus groups and interviews. The findings in the design phase indicated that faculty valued iterative and reflective instructional design for professional learning in higher education. In phase two of the study, 48 academics participated in a semester-long trial of the new software. Participants were surveyed and interviewed following the website trial period. Feedback from phase two was analyzed and used to update the mobile website. The final and third phase included feedback from five academics on the value of the online professional development training they had completed. The phase three participants identified that the changes they incorporated in their curriculum were a benefit to their student's learning outcomes. The findings align with the practice of providing opportunities for development of skills in teaching and learning (Hutchings et al., 2011).

Faculty development of pedagogical skills have a positive impact on quality teaching methods and learning outcomes (Curwood et al., 2015; Stefaniak, 2018). Three instructors participated in a three-phase case study that used a cognitive apprenticeship framework to examine how professional development of pedagogical skills influenced their teaching methods (Stefaniak, 2018). In phase one, the instructors selected learner centered instructional strategies to incorporate in their course curriculum. Guidance was provided for the instructors to develop lesson plans and coaching to implement the strategies into their curriculum. In phase two, minimal coaching was provided to the instructors with the identification and selection of instructional material. The instruction developed by the instructor was reviewed and feedback was provided. During phase

three, the instructors identified instructional activities without any guidance or support. The findings demonstrated that coupling coaching with reflective approaches provided scaffolding and support when learning new teaching methods and concepts. While approaches may differ, relationship building among faculty develops trust and commitment.

Forgie et al. (2018) and Soriano de Alencar and Freire de Oliveira (2016) found that administrative support advancing the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and student outcomes. In a generic qualitative study Forgie et al. (2018) examined situations that directors of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL) experienced at research and teaching intensive universities across Canada. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 directors of the CTLs. The universities selected included CTLs independent of faculty and the study participants reported to the Provost, Vice Provost, or an academic office. Although the directors' indicated their CTL was well supported, they were challenged with championing the importance of teaching and learning and developing a culture of faculty development within a university focused on research. The research findings indicated a lack of administrative support inhibited a culture of faculty development. Forgie et al. (2018) recommended a future study measuring the impact of CTL programs on student learning outcomes to bridge the identified gap.

Gravani (2015), Forgie et al. (2018), and Soriano de Alencar and Freire de Oliveira's (2016) research demonstrated the need for alignment with an institution's

vision and strategic planning in professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. Gravani (2015) conducted a follow-up study by re-interviewing the participants to explore the extent to which faculty applied the knowledge acquired from their professional development training that was developed and provided within the university. Study participants included 18 secondary teachers and eight academics. Kirkpatrick's (1975) concept of behavior evaluation was used as a foundation to identify the success for application of the new skills. Gravani (2015) found that all but one participant acknowledged the professional development program made no difference in the approach to their work. The study participants justified that the lack of application was due to the disparity between the training provided and the lack of relationship to the practical elements of the courses they taught.

A phenomenology research study was conducted by Webb (2019) to understand the intellectual and institutional barriers that faculty members faced while engaged in a training program to learn about the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) and leadership. The study participants included 13 faculty members who were enrolled in the program and 30 past graduates. The past graduates completed a questionnaire and participated in one-on-one semistructured interviews. The current students' data collection included classroom observations, two one-on-one semistructured interviews, and portfolio documents. One of the findings demonstrated the lack of support for the university policy on recognition of the merits of SoTL. There was also a lack of alignment with the university policy and the unwritten culture of the faculties home

department. Recommendations addressed the importance of fostering institutional cultures, formalizing professional development programs for educational leaders, and to provide guidance in the research of SoTL.

Kaynardağ (2017), Bryant and Richardson (2015), and Strom and Porfilio's (2019) research found that faculty engaged in the development of pedagogical skills demonstrated a positive effect on student learning. Bryant and Richardson (2015) conducted an empirical study comparing student learning outcome rates between study units taught by PhD qualified lecturers and PhD qualified lecturers who also acquired formal certification in higher education teaching. A total of 244 study units taught by the lecturers were included in Bryant and Richardson's (2015) research. The findings suggested each study group exhibits different patterns that can help to inform where faculty development may be needed to impact student retention rates (Bryant & Richardson, 2015).

Kaynardağ's (2017) descriptive study surveyed 1,083 higher education students attending a private Turkish university to explore instructors' pedagogical competencies. The students were placed in two groups: in group one (650 students) instructors received no formal pedagogical training, in group two (433 students) instructors received pedagogical training. Analysis of the data demonstrated there was a meaningful difference with student learning where instructors received additional training than the study group receiving no training (Kaynardağ, 2017). Strom and Porfilio (2019) conducted a qualitative self-study focused on the improvement of pedagogical practices.

The reflective dialogues, a collection of personal reflections, and personal narratives obtained from two faculty members demonstrated the value of collaboration among faculty in sharing pedagogical practices to improve the quality of teaching and learning. These studies confirm that the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills contributed to the quality of teaching and learning and had a positive impact on student learning outcomes.

Collaboration among faculty to enhance teaching practices and pedagogical skills had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning (Bryant & Richardson, 2015; Strom & Porfilio, 2019). Faculty identified that the support of administrators and colleagues was needed to remove barriers to engage in the professional development of pedagogical skills. Kalb et al. (2015) conducted a study to gain an understanding of nurse educators' perspectives for the pedagogical practices they applied in their evidence based teaching program (EBTP). A total of 551 nursing faculty and administrators participated in completing an online survey. An external review panel consisting of 12 faculty experts in EBTP were used to evaluate the survey responses. Results of the study indicated awareness of EBTP with nursing faculty referencing professional journals as a main source for learning. Continuing education and faculty development programs followed as the next most referenced sources for learning about EBTP. Kalb et al. (2015) concluded that creating a culture of learning and practices in EBTP requires ongoing support to advance faculty's knowledge in academic practices and modeling approaches of pedagogical skills in EBTP.



To examine the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills it was important to frame the benefits and barriers from the perspective of faculty. With this literature review, I argued that barriers to professional development of faculty include lack of support from the university administration and the lack of alignment with the institution's strategic initiatives (Bryant & Richardson, 2015; Grupp, 2014; Kalb et al., 2015; Kaynardağ, 2017; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016; Strom & Porfilio, 2019). Faculty engaged in continuous development of pedagogical skills identified a positive impact on their teaching and learning (Buchholz et al., 2019); Curwood et al., 2015; Gravani, 2015; Stefaniak, 2018).

The professional organization American Council on Education (ACE, 2017) stated the field of faculty development improves instruction and student learning outcomes. In response to a method to evaluate the professional development of faculty and institution alignment ACE developed an evidence-based plan for evaluating the organizational structure, the center of teaching and learning, resource allocation, and development programs (American Council on Education, 2019). In the next section of the literature review research, I focus on higher education administrators' perception of their role of professional development of faculty.

### **Administration and Professional Development**

Willits and Brennan (2016) found that the administration's engagement and reward of excellence in teaching, innovation, and the linking of scholarship of teaching and learning stimulates an active community of learning. Their research explored the

success of the Pennsylvania State University's adoption of Boyer's (1990) standards of scholarship as a framework for administrators to meet new and emerging challenges of their institution. Sustaining the vitality of an institution and community incorporating the dimensions and characteristics of campus life can be challenging. In all phases of the study participants included students and instructors who completed a survey consisting of six statements drawn from Boyer's description of a Community of Learning.

The first phase of Willits and Brennan's (2016) research was conducted in 1995 across 19 campus locations. The study participants included 362 students and 589 instructors. In the 1997 phase, study participants included 993 students and 1028 teachers across 19 campus locations. In the 2011 phase, study participants included 1,837 students and 1,537 instructors participated in the same survey. The 1,537 instructors taught one or more courses during the fall semester of 2010 at one of the 19 campus locations used in the 1995 phase of the study. Consistent, clear, and measurable increases in student and instructor perceptions were reported as a community of learning across the six Boyer (1990) criteria. This success, as indicated by the Willits and Brennan's (2016) study, was attributed to the purposive action by the administration of the university.

Lyon's (2015) qualitative grounded theory study explored educators' skill and work patterns from the educator's point of view and those recognizing their abilities. Study participants included 10 educators with a minimum of 10 years teaching experience in fulltime graduate level instruction, five academic deans with teaching experience, and five fulltime faculty from five dental schools in California. The Dreyfus

(2004) model was used to establish the level of novice to expert performance in the acquisition of skills development in higher education within dental education. Findings indicated faculty become more experienced in developing strong teaching skills through trial and error and in a supported community of faculty.

Kazu and Demiralp (2016) conducted a phenomenological pattern qualitative study to determine faculty members' views on the effectiveness of teacher training programs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 7 faculty members. Findings indicated lack of necessary arrangements for the development of effective teacher training programs for lifelong learning impacting teaching skills and identified a need for institutions to take responsibility and to provide a supportive environment.

Yob et al. (2016) identified that the adoption of a curriculum guide across the university was helpful in the alignment of curricula to the mission of the university. The implementing of social change in Walden University's courses required the engagement of faculty to develop new pedagogical skills that impacted curriculum alignment with its mission of positive social change in higher education. Experiences of the task force's approach to piloting and implementation included the review, reflection, and sharing of curriculum across nine courses to support scholarship and positive impact on embedding best practices for curriculum updates.

Masoumi et al. (2018) conducted a sequential explanatory two phased study to explore and map the methods by which the professional development of faculty. The study included semi-structured interviews with 14 faculty and the collection of policy

documents addressing faculty development. Faculty demonstrated that within their research centered Ph.D. programs usually did not require the development of pedagogical competencies. The professional development of faculty was found to be self-directed and ad hoc activities. The policy practices of faculty development revealed contradictions in how teachers' competencies should be measured and developed, that policies were contradictory, and lack of a framework for promoting faculty development. Further research is recommended with a larger sample to verify and consolidate insights into how faculty professional development can be transformed (Masoumi et al., 2018).

Administration's lack of alignment with required interpretation of interprofessional education (IPE) goals was found to be a barrier by not setting IPE as a priority, along with the encouragement of faculty collaboration (Loversidge & Demb, 2015). A phenomenological study seeking to understand the challenges for embedding interprofessional education in academic programs was conducted by Loversidge and Demb (2015). Semistructured interviews were completed with 32 faculty members across three Midwest universities based on collaboration and cooperation theories. Findings included inconsistencies in IPE, regulatory innovation of IPE, and structural curricular challenges.

Institutional practices and policies were found to favor research within the faculty members' field of study versus the universities requirements for the integration of service learning in curriculum. Arellano and Jones' (2018) qualitative instrumental case study explored faculty the use of service-learning opportunities to advance their scholarship of

teaching and learning. Boyer's scholarship of teaching and learning methodology framed the study. Seven faculty engaged in service learning at a private research university participated in the semistructured interviews. The interviews as participants to reflect on their syllabi, publications, reflective journaling, field notes, and documents related to their teaching responsibilities. Two main themes emerged. Service learning pedagogy was effective in the ability to connect students to real world problems and the engagement of students in newly development curriculum provided deeper learning, in addition to enhanced faculty teaching skills and making them more thoughtful professors. The study findings recommended higher education institutions support faculty research in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).

Goodlad and Leonard's (2018) research found that faculty participating in pedagogical development requires support of the administration for the integration of the university's adoption of service-learning curriculum. They conducted a study applying a reflective interview process and survey to learn the results of a pedagogical practices seminar designed to engage students in the learning outcomes of courses attended. A total of 172 participants attended a living lab seminar that was focused on the inclusion of place based learning (PBL), a new pedagogical model for implementation in course curriculum. Of those attending the seminar, 23 fully participated in the study to identify the benefits of implementing PBL learned in the pedagogical seminar. Reasons given by 10 of the 23 study participants for incorporating PBL included the support of their department and the benefit of collaborating with other study participants. Those that

responded negatively to the benefits of PBL implementation stated the lack of support by their department, financial support, and the burden of administrative requirements kept them from fully engaging students in PBL.

The fostering of quality teaching is interdependent on the cooperation of faculty members, institution policy design, and alignment with institutional goals (Hénard & Roseveare, 2012; NiliakaMukhale & Hong, 2017). Masoumi et al. (2018) found that institution policies for the professional development of faculty were inconsistent and lacked a collective understanding in terms of what empowered the professional development of faculty. Studies found administration supports the professional development of pedagogical skills that are associated with updates to an institutions' curriculum standards (Arellano & Jones, 2018; Willits & Brennan, 2016). Recommendations included the integration for a community of learning across faculty, release time to implement newly develop pedagogical skills, funding to redevelop courses for inclusion of newly acquired skills, and recognition of administration for development of skills impact teaching and learning.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Boyer's (2016a) SoTL model included faculty development and provided practices and methods to include the traditional concept of scholarship and research. SoTL calls for faculty to engage in instructional change, assessment of student learning, and to share their concepts of teaching to support scholarship and research (Boyer, 2016a). The literature demonstrated faculty remain divisive with administration regarding

their teaching role. Research on the engagement of faculty in professional development of pedagogical skills identifies the lack of support and recognition from institution administrators as a struggle for them to engage in scholarship. Acceptance of SoTL and professional development of faculty requires strategies for inclusion of values governing endeavors in professional development benefitting teaching and learning (Loversidge & Demb, 2015; Persell & Mateiro, 2013).

In this literature review, I identified that providing professional development of faculty has a positive impact on teaching, learning, and the SoTL (Curwood et al., 2015). Faculty are not motivated on their own to engage in development of pedagogical skills because of time constraints and lack of recognition (Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016; Willits & Brennan, 2016). Teaching is considered a primary role of faculty yet receives little recognition as research in their field of study is accepted as a priority in review of their standing with the university.

Literature on higher education administrators' perception of barriers and support in the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills focused mainly on their past role as a faculty member (Lyon, 2015), concentrating mostly on faculty views and not those of administrators. Faculty identified the culture of their university concentrated mainly on research (Grupp, 2014). Administrators' support for professional development was identified when the university engaged in a curriculum change, but recognition was not found in the assessment of their teaching role and time constraints required for implementation (Forgie et al., 2018; Gravani, 2015). The lack of literature on

administrators' perception of the barriers and support for professional development of faculty pedagogical skills demonstrated a need for my study. The research design and rationale incorporated the study purpose and define the central concepts of identified gap in research.



### Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify higher education administrators' perception of barriers and support for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. Understanding administrators' barriers to the professional development of faculty may inform opportunities for institution goals impacting the quality of teaching and learning. Identifying barriers and opportunity for support may contribute to a sustainable approach for quality teaching using pedagogical techniques impacting learning outcomes for students. This chapter includes the details of the research design; the role of the researcher; methodology; data analysis procedures, and issues concerning validity, reliability, and trustworthiness.

#### **Research Design and Rationale**

The following research question guided this study: What are the barriers and support for faculty development of pedagogical skills as perceived by higher education administrators who are facilitators of that development? I used Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) basic qualitative design to elicit and analyze information obtained from higher education administrators serving in the role of dean or department chair for 3 or more years, with oversight of the professional development of faculty. My primary focus was understanding higher education administrators' perception of barriers and support within their role as facilitator of faculty professional development related to pedagogical skills. Understanding the perspectives of the participants' experiences is how meaning can be constructed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The identification of recurring patterns or themes

helps with the overall interpretation of the participants' understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

I considered a narrative design for my research. Like basic qualitative research, in narrative research the researcher collects experiences of the study participant through interviews (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, because my study did not require detailed narrative stories or life experiences related to the research questions, I eliminated narrative as the approach for this study. Case study was another approach I considered. However, neither a program of professional development nor a specific group of administrators was the unit of analysis for my study (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Participatory action research was also considered (see Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) but was not chosen because inclusion of administrators in a way to have them create meaning or interpret a specific problem in the workplace did not align with my research question. Therefore, a basic qualitative design, as described by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), was best suited for this qualitative study.

### **Role of the Researcher**

My role was to design the research, collect the data using interviews, and interpret the data. In the role of researcher, it is important to remove bias while conducting the research and in the interpretation of data. I was required to recognize my biases by adhering to making the research process as objective as possible, including communicating the rationale of the interview and soliciting the study participants' objective knowledge of their experiences (see Karagiozis, 2018). A step toward removing

bias included not using any participants I may have been affiliated with in my higher education career.

### **Methodology**

The methodology section includes the participant logic applied to identify the study population, participant criteria, sample size, and an explanation of the data collection instrument constructed for data collection. Procedures for the recruitment, participation, and data collection are explained to provide sufficient knowledge for the replication of the study. Finally, issues of trustworthiness for assurance of confidentiality, respect of the study participants, and honor to the study protocol strategies are described (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

#### **Participant Selection Logic**

As a qualitative researcher, I collected data from eight administrators who were members of one of the nine professional organizations identified on the social media platform LinkedIn or Facebook. The professional organizations included a network of higher education professionals from around the world, with members representing professors, administrators, and other staff members. The criteria for selecting the study participants included higher education administrators serving in the role of dean or department chair for 3 or more years, with oversight of the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. I selected 3 or more years of experience as a study inclusion requirement to ensure the study participant had time to experience the results of any decisions or feedback in which the professional development of faculty was concerned.

This approach was selected to minimize the time required to identify participants across multiple institutions and professional organizations. Convenience sampling was used to select the eight participants. The administrators were employed by accredited higher education institutions and were members of the social media LinkedIn group Leaders in Higher Education. It is desirable to include participants from different institutions to identify recurring and varying patterns and themes for each participant and across institutions (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Although the population in a professional organization may not be well-defined (Lavrakas, 2008), those who receive the invitation will self-select based on the criteria included in the invitation. I also used snowball sampling by asking each of the possible participants to refer other potential study candidates not identified through direct invitation. The eight study participants provided a sample size to explore alternative points of view and various aspects of barriers and support of faculty professional development (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Finally, the management of expenses and the need to quickly implement the research were also considerations for the identification of study participants.

### **Instrumentation**

The data collection method included one researcher designed interview protocol (see Appendix). Development and validation of the interview protocol included guidance of the advanced qualitative reasoning and analysis course professor and consultation with my dissertation committee. The data collection instrument consisted of nine interview

questions constructed to elicit responses about the interviewee's experience, actions, activities, beliefs, and knowledge (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The interview questions included probes to clarify and elicit supporting information that assisted with understanding an explanation given (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the development of the interview questions, I considered Hutchings et al.'s (2011) eight recommendations designed to identify an institution's vision of integrating Boyer's SoTL supporting the professional development of faculty. Hutchings et al.'s recommendations provided a basis to discover evidence or lack of evidence of higher education administrators' perception of barriers and support within their role as the facilitator of faculty professional development related to pedagogical skills.

To affirm that the interview questions would elicit the data needed to answer the research question, I completed a field test. For the field testing, I used two volunteers who met the participant selection criteria for the study. One participant was chair of the institution's communication program. The second participant was dean of the institution's information technology program.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

I posted a notice in the LinkedIn professional group Leaders in Higher Education communicating the purpose of my study, criteria for participation, and a request to participate. Potential study participants were asked to return a private message to me with their name, contact information, and a summary of how they met the study criteria. I read each communication to determine whether the information provided by the potential

participant aligned with the participant selection criteria. After confirming a potential participant's qualification to participate in the study, I reached out to this person to confirm their participation and request they complete the consent form and return it to me. I worked with the study participants to confirm a date and time to conduct the interview. I provided the interviewee with a copy of the interview questions (Appendix) to assist with preparation for the interview. For the potential study participants who did not meet the participant criteria, I emailed them a note thanking them for taking the time to volunteer and confirming they did not meet the requirements.

Two days before each scheduled interview, I sent an email reminding the study participant of the date and time for the interview. Each interview began with a confirmation of the purpose of the call. I proceeded with the interview and confirmed that the digital recorder was turned on. The interview questions were covered one by one. I confirmed that the interviewee completed their response to a question before proceeding to the next one. I designed the interview protocol to be completed from start to finish in approximately 60 minutes. The approximate time for completing the interviews was 30–40 minutes.

At the conclusion of each interview, I thanked the participant for their time, acknowledged that the recording had stopped, and confirmed that I would send a transcript of the interview for them to review for accuracy. A follow-up email was sent with a reminder that the participant's confidentiality was maintained, my contact information, and a \$25 gift card as a gesture of appreciation for their time and

participation. I transcribed the audio recording using Temi professional transcription software. Each of the interview files was transcribed using the transcription software and secured to protect each participant's information. A review of each transcription file was required to confirm accuracy by listening to the recorded interview and comparing this to the transcribed text. When I could not identify what was said, I made a note using the notes section of the transcription software and followed up with the interviewee to correct their transcription file. During the review of the transcription file, I removed any identifying information about the interviewee and inserted a code to protect their confidentiality. All recorded interview data and transcription files were secured on my password-protected personal computer and with a cloud data backup system that only I have access to.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Recognizing patterns and turning data into meaningful categories and themes began with immersion in the interview data. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) identified the analysis of data as the most challenging process of doctoral studies to answer the research question. The data analysis included identifying recurring patterns across the data. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stressed the importance of reflecting on the purpose of the study and how people make meaning while analyzing the data.

To analyze the interview data obtained from the study participants, I used thematic analysis. This analysis method provided the opportunity to describe and interpret the study participants' views using their interview responses (see Smith & Firth,

2011). Creating meaning from qualitative data requires taking the data apart and creating groupings, completed through coding (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Thematic analysis is used to identify themes within data by identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

Procedures for coding the interview data included the marking of content representing variables of the research question, and those recurring patterns and themes frequently mentioned. The research question contained the following variables: perceptions of barriers, perceptions of support, examples of faculty professional development, and specific types of pedagogical skills. I created initial data codes marking themes, concepts, and examples identified in the transcribed interview file for each research question. Extending the granularity of the codes beyond the initial set required a review of the interview transcriptions multiple times for thoroughness, as suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2012).

Once the interviews had been coded and placed in the coded interview data spreadsheet, I read through the data for accuracy. In the process of reviewing the coded file, I began summarizing the participants' collective answers. To refine the data analysis and complete a comparison of the results, I summarized the data into themes, terms, and concepts. I did not identify any discrepant data that challenged my expectations.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

Providing thorough details that depict the research strategies, conclusions, and perspectives, and that the results are consistent with the data collected, promotes



trustworthiness (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Qualitative research strategies establishing trustworthiness include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. An accounting of how I collected the data, how codes were developed, and how my decisions were made as the research was being conducted was maintained in my reflexive journal, as suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2016). By maintaining a journal, I validated the research findings by being able to follow the steps taken during my research. The following sections present the rigor required for qualitative interpretive research.

### **Credibility**

A strategy to establish credibility is providing the study participants the opportunity to review their interview transcripts. I provided each of the study participants a copy of their transcribed interview to confirm the content was interpreted properly and to rule out any misunderstandings identified in the transcribed interview. An accounting of the methods, procedures, and decision points I had taken were recorded in the reflexive journal.

### **Transferability**

Providing a sufficient understanding of the research results for application in other research required an adequate knowledge of the population from which the study participants were drawn (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I provided sufficient descriptive data in the reflexive journal to enable transferability.

**Dependability**

Establishing dependability in qualitative research requires appropriate strategies demonstrating “whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 251). To ensure dependability, I used my reflexive journal to document how I arrived at the data results.

**Confirmability**

The trustworthiness of the data is dependent on the ethics of the researcher collecting and analyzing the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The notes recorded in my reflexive journal created transparency in my research study to establish confirmability. The journal provided an accounting of the research process as it was taking place. I included reflections of any decisions I made to address problems, issues, analysis, and the interpretation of the data.

**Ethical Procedures**

The Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) ensures that research follows prescribed ethical guidelines before allowing a research project to go forward. After I defended my proposal and my committee approved it, I submitted my IRB application to Walden University. Upon approval (08-05-20-0419814), I began my data collection by recruiting the research participants.

A description of my research study providing full disclosure of the purpose, type of participants required, method of data collection, and respect for a participant’s anonymity was included in the participant invitation. I posted the study information to

recruit participants who are members of the selected higher education professional groups identified in the social media sites LinkedIn and FaceBook. The consent form was presented to each study participant to acknowledge their acceptance to volunteer to participate in my research. The consent form included the purpose of the study, procedures for conducting the interview, risks, and benefits, and how their privacy will be maintained.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I discussed the rationale for conducting a qualitative research study to explore the perceptions of administrators' experiences with the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. The role of the researcher, methodology, and issues of trustworthiness were developed to inform the methods for recruitment, participation, data collection and analysis of the research data. In chapter 4, I discuss the outcome of the study findings. I include the reporting of the collection procedures, any changes, or discrepancies, how these were addressed, and I report on the statistical analysis and findings.

## Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify higher education administrators' perceptions of barriers and support for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. I addressed the following research question: What are the barriers and support for faculty development of pedagogical skills as perceived by higher education administrators who are facilitators of that development? In this chapter, I describe the results of the study. The demographics and how the data were collected and analyzed are presented, along with evidence of trustworthiness. I conclude with a summary and introduction to Chapter 5.

### **Research Setting**

The timeline for submission, correction, and receiving IRB approval from Walden University started on July 7, 2020 and concluded with approval on August 5, 2020. The study invitation was then placed in a message to all members of the LinkedIn social media group Leaders in Higher Education on August 9, 2020. On August 10, 2020, one member, a former student, messaged me, stating she did not meet the study criteria but would share the study invitation with a professor in her department. On August 11, 2020, a message from the referred professor stated he declined to participate because her research was in the same field as my study.

After not receiving any additional communications from members of this LinkedIn group as of August 17, 2020, I contacted my doctoral chair to discuss adding additional social media higher education professional groups to increase the participant

selection pool. I then attended an online IRB office hours session on August 17, 2020, to discuss the lack of study participants to date and procedures for updating my study protocol to add additional social media groups to my participant selection logic.

Following the guidance from this IRB session, I updated the IRB Form C: Ethics Self-Check application. I made updates to include multiple social media professional groups related to higher education, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. I updated the study invitation to instruct volunteers to respond with their interest using my Walden email address and to include their name, contact information, and a summary of how they met the study criteria. The study invitation updates included a message to please share the study invitation with other potential participants. The study invitation updates provided a standard method of communication across multiple social media platforms. The updated IRB documents were sent on August 18, 2020, and received approval on August 24, 2020.

On August 24, 2020, I posted the study volunteer invitation in five higher education professional LinkedIn groups in which I am a member. To maximize exposure, I reposted the study invitation on August 28, 2020, and placed the invitation in three higher education Facebook groups. I did not receive any responses from these postings despite the size of the group membership. Table 1 lists the social media groups and the number of members.

**Table 1***Social Media Groups*

Social media site	Group name	Number of members
LinkedIn	EDUCAUSE	42,546
LinkedIn	International higher education and learning association	86,386
LinkedIn	The teaching professor	118,180
LinkedIn	The adjunct network	10,351
LinkedIn	Professor expert	28,908
LinkedIn	American evaluation association	22,977
Facebook	American association of university women	7,534
Facebook	Higher education forum	2,671
Facebook	Higher education training for teachers group	1,134

Members of the Facebook group American Association of University Women engaged in a conversation within the social media group that focused on sharing the information with their contacts. I did not obtain any study participants from the Facebook groups. As of September 1, 2020, I did not have any study participants from multiple social media postings. My next step to recruit study participants included searching through members of the LinkedIn groups listed in Table 1 to identify potential candidates to message them directly with the study invitation. The terms used to search the member

list included *dean, administrator, provost, and/or chair*. From this list, I contacted 80 members across the LinkedIn group using the personal message option. This communication method resulted in seven volunteers accepting to participate in the study and two referrals. Using this direct communication approach, I obtained a total of eight study participants.

Seven of the study participants volunteered for the study using the communication system within LinkedIn. I obtained their email address to facilitate sending and receiving emails with the consent form, scheduling an interview time, and sending the interview transcript. Of the two referrals, only one met the study participant criteria and participated. I used email to complete the required communications to process the consent form, schedule an interview time, and send the interview transcript.

### **Demographics**

To maintain the study participants' confidentiality, I removed all identifying information and assigned a participant number to each volunteer. The study participants worked in eight different public and private institutions in six states and two international locations. Six participants served in the role of dean, one as a provost, and one as chair. I selected the first eight higher education administrators responding to the study invitation who met the study criteria. Table 2 includes the study participants' numbers, institutions, and roles.

**Table 2***Participants' Demographics*

Participant number	Institution	Role
1	private	Chair
2	public	Dean
3	public	Dean
4	private international	Dean
5	public	Provost
6	private	Dean
7	public	Dean
8	public international	Dean

**Data Collection**

Data collection included participant interviews and completion of reflection journal entries. A total of eight participants volunteered to participate in the study. Each participant participated in one semistructured interview that averaged 30 to 40 minutes to complete the nine interview protocol questions. I conducted the interviews by telephone using Google Voice or Zoom between September 15, 2020 to October 14, 2020. After each interview, I submitted the audio recorded interview for transcription using the Temi transcription service. Table 3 presents the participants' interview collection information.



**Table 3***Participants' Interview Collection*

Participant number	Date	Method	Length (minutes)
1	9/15/2020	GoogleVoice	31:01
2	9/16/2020	GoogleVoice	31:08
3	9/18/2020	GoogleVoice	23:48
4	9/22/2020	Zoom	42:01
5	9/22/2020	GoogleVoice	26:35
6	9/22/2020	GoogleVoice	17:11
7	9/22/2020	GoogleVoice	32:11
8	10/14/2020	Zoom	43:47

**Interviews**

For the study participants residing in the United States, I conducted telephone interviews using Google Voice. I interviewed the two international participants virtually using the Zoom video conference service. I scheduled the eight interviews during the time frame available to each participant. The interviews took place after obtaining written consent from each participant. I also recorded the interview using my Sony handheld recorder as a backup. The two international interviews were recorded from the Zoom session using my handheld Sony recorder and my Olympus recorder as a backup. My Zoom subscription did not include this service, so I did not record the interview using Zoom. I conducted the interviews between September 15, 2020, and October 14, 2020, and submitted the recorded interview for transcription. I secured the recorded and

transcription files on my password-protected personal computer and within a secure cloud service. The eight interviews took an average of 30 minutes to conduct.

Each transcribed interview file produced using the Temi transcription service was reviewed using the playback and read along option. This review method enabled me to confirm the accuracy of the transcription text. When there was a discrepancy between the spoken word and the text, the edit option enabled me to make corrections. When the study participant's voice was inaudible, I made a notation to indicate this.

After reviewing the recorded interviews, I emailed each study participant a copy of the transcribed file and a Temi link to listen to their interview. I provided the participants 5 days to review the interview information for accuracy and provide updates. If I did not receive a response, I concluded that the participant had chosen to accept the transcription as presented. Five participants did not respond. Two study participants confirmed the interview content was correct. One responded with updates to the interview, clarifying a few terms in the transcribed file. Each participant received a \$25 Amazon gift card following the confirmation of the interview transcription.

### **Researcher's Reflexivity**

Data collection included my journal notes documenting the steps taken to prepare for data collection and reflections during each of the interviews. I started journaling on July 7, 2020, with notations of the IRB application process, and continued documenting the steps taken to recruit participants through the completion of each interview. The

method of maintaining this journal allowed for documentation of procedures and decision points made during my research.

### **Data Analysis**

I compared the audio recording of each interview to the Temi professional transcription software transcription file and applied updates to reflect the study participants' words. All updates to the original transcription file were redlined for future reference if needed. I also provided study participants the opportunity to review their audio recording and transcript to confirm the content and provide corrections. Data analysis included thematic analysis by reporting, identifying, and analyzing the data. I read each transcript and made notes in the margins indicating recurring patterns and themes frequently mentioned and highlighting relevant data. The process of making notations and marking data relevant to answering the research question supported the coding process (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

I generated codes to construct categories for the analysis of the data. I transferred the hand-coded transcripts to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet organizing the interview participant data for each question. The coded data organization included documenting the alignment of generated codes, emerging themes, and supporting excerpts selected from the interview transcripts. I categorized similar data across each interview question. I mapped the codes to each other to create themes aligned to the research question. I included verbatim data from the interview transcripts to support the emerging themes from the participants' views. Four themes emerged from the analysis:

- policies and procedures
- opportunities for skill development
- collaboration for skill development
- faculty recognition

Discrepant data are data that challenge expectations or emerging findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). An example of discrepant data would have been data collected from participants who served in the role of faculty member and not as leaders in the position of administering the faculty professional development of pedagogical skills. The study participants served in the administrative leadership position of dean, chair, or provost. I did not identify any discrepant data.

### **Themes Related to the Research Question**

The four themes I identified in the interview data, and their related codes, are presented in Table 4. The following sections include a discussion of the identified themes and associated codes.

**Table 4***Themes and Codes*

Themes	Codes
Policies and procedures	Committees review and confirm curriculum development Process to change and review curriculum Proposals for attending training Standardized practices Assessment requirements Accreditation Policies and procedures
Opportunities for skill development	Required training by institution during COVID Budget to fund training Institution faculty development day Conferences Centers for teaching and learning
Collaboration for skill development	Training and development sessions Community of practice Share expertise Participation in training is voluntary Symposiums Brown bags are provided to share practices Faculty are encouraged to share with peers Participation is encouraged Lead by example Role models Poster Sessions
Faculty recognition	Teacher awards Compensation Publicize within institution Performance reviews Student evaluations Tenure

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Ethically producing valid and reliable knowledge is evidenced by demonstrating rigor in conducting a study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I used my reflexive journal to record an accounting of the steps taken to collect, code, and record notes demonstrating reliability. My notes evidence transparency and adherence to an orderly set of procedures. This section includes a discussion on the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability strategies used to support the trustworthiness of my qualitative research study.

#### **Credibility**

To establish credibility, I followed the strategy of providing each study participant the opportunity to review their interview transcript. In my reflection journal, I recorded the timeline and steps taken to allow each of the participants the opportunity to review their interview transcripts. The participants were provided five days from receipt of the transcript to return a response. One participant returned the interview with updates reflecting clarifications. The original transcript and the updated transcript files were secured, following the research data protocol.

#### **Transferability**

Understanding the research results for application in other studies was maintained by recording, in my reflection journal, how the data were collected and analyzed. I recorded the administrative role of each participant. The descriptive information recorded in my journal explains the research results for application in future research.

**Dependability**

Only eight participants responded to the recruiting attempts. Seven of the participants served in the role of Dean. One study participant served as Provost and met the criteria for oversight of professional development of faculty. The strategies taken to solicit and confirm each study participant were recorded in my journal to document how I arrived at the data results.

**Confirmability**

I used my journal to record the decisions made to address problems, issues, analysis, and interpret the research data. My journal notes demonstrate adherence to the interview protocol designed for this research study and the management of communications with each participant. By recording the details of how I documented the research process demonstrates the data's trustworthiness.

**Study Results**

I collected the study results from my interviews with the eight study participants who identified as administrators serving in the role of provost, dean, or department chair. Each had three or more years, with oversight of faculty professional development. I developed four themes to answer the research question. The study participants' discussions using the nine interview questions revealed their professional approach, practices, and the resources available within their institution concerning faculty professional development. The four themes generated were (1) policies and procedures,

(2) opportunities for skill development, (3) collaboration for skill development, and (4) faculty recognition.

### **Theme 1: Policies and Procedures**

The first theme covers the various policies and procedures to guide faculty and administrators, reflecting the study participants' dependency on processes and approvals for faculty to participate in professional development. Each of the participants discussed the various committees, procedures, and institutional guidelines for oversight of faculty professional development. The administrator responses included the terms "centralized team", "standardized", "approval", "processes", and "oversight" in their responses.

Participant 2 commented on the processes and approval required for faculty requests: "I evaluate the department needs, subject matter, and prioritize the faculty requests. To develop an understanding in teaching and learning requirements and approvals, we work through faculty senate, academic affairs, and faculty committees."

Participants 8, 1, and 5 described similar approaches requiring the use of policies and procedures to support an integrated vision of teaching and learning practices.

Participant 8 stated:

Gatekeepers for curricular change include a central body of stakeholders which include staff, faculty, some administration, and the college of education council.

The curriculum and policy committee's look at faculty proposals to make sure that things are aligned and working properly.



Participant 1 shared, “Courses redesigned by faculty are reviewed by a curriculum committee led by senior faculty members. I then review the curriculum committee reports to confirm agreement with the faculty committee decisions.” Participant 5 expressed: “Our teaching faculty do not have an individual role for assessing quality improvement, a centralized team implements course changes. Faculty as the subject matter expert are engaged to assist in the development of each course.”

To communicate and promote an integrated vision for course design and curricular development, the study participants discussed the institutions’ practices for maintaining their latest teaching ideas, evidence gathering for assessment, and documentation of strategies for adherence to accreditation requirements. Maintaining educational achievements requires adherence to institution policies and procedures, supporting accreditation requirements, and assessing student outcomes. Participant 4 discussed the importance of the institution’s adherence to the set standards, and general guidelines required by accreditation bodies. The standards and guidelines included curricular decisions between the international and USA programs and curriculum. Adherence to these expectations affects faculty teaching and learning requirements. Participant 8 shared: “We are working to develop strategic sources of information to capture strategic decisions and evaluate results for informed decision impacting course outcomes and faculty assignments that consider their skill requisites and teaching experience.” Participant 2 explained, “The future plan is to have guidance in professional development and assessment initiatives be faculty driven and to engage deans and

administration to play a larger role in assessment across the campus.” Providing professional development opportunities includes policies and procedures in the planning and organizing of these skill development programs and oversight of institutions standards.

## **Theme 2: Opportunities for Skill Development**

The second theme I identified was opportunities for skill development supported by the institution. Participants 2 and 4 mentioned the financial support for faculty to attend conferences, promote their research, and develop professional networks.

Participant 8 encouraged faculty to submit a professional development proposal to approve funding at the beginning of each year and explained, “There are expectations that faculty will apply the new knowledge relevant to their development as an instructor.”

Participant 3 noted the requirement for new faculty to attend training:

The requirements for new faculty to attend a seminar to learn about the institutions’ approach to teaching and learning practices are provided through the onboarding process for new faculty, the goal is to provide a consistent method of professional development toward consistency in teaching and learning practices.

Participant 6 shared that faculty are strongly encouraged to participate in academic and pedagogical referencing, “Our best teachers are continually learning, and the weak teachers struggle to be involved in teaching opportunities.” Participant 2, 3, 6, and 7 each identified their center for teaching and learning as a resource to understand course design and curricular development.

Participant 2: There are internal programs provided by the teaching and learning center.

Participant 3: The center for teaching and learning provides a series of professional development for faculty.

Participant 6: We have a faculty development process that includes an ongoing series of training sessions and education for faculty. This is done by the university center for teaching and learning.

Participant 7: The director of eLearning provides workshops for faculty professional development.

During the COVID-19 period, universities across the world moved to online delivery of their education programs. Before COVID-19, participants identified that faculty professional development did not require participation, but it was encouraged.

Three participants talked about their institutions' requirement for all faculty to participate in training to support the institutions' need to deliver all programs online.

Participants 4, 8, and 7 reflected on the sudden move to teaching online and the challenges.

Participant 4: The sudden move to teaching online was challenging but a tremendous success and virtually seamless. Faculty and students expressed satisfaction with the teaching and learning.

Participant 8: During the COVID-19 period, initiatives supporting online instruction required faculty to participate in training to learn how to teach online.

The center for teaching and learning has been enormously helpful, heroic really in the support to faculty.

The requirement for training identified faculty weaknesses as instructors with adapting their curriculum requirements to another modality. Based on the success of the transition to online delivery I suspect we will see more engagement in training as faculty become aware of their needs and opportunities to enhance their pedagogical skills.

Participant 7: During COVID-19 training in methodologies for adapting to online teaching and working with learning management technology was mandatory.

Prior to COVID-19 professional development was not mandatory.

### **Theme 3: Collaboration for Skill Development**

The third theme I identified demonstrates the importance of collaboration for faculty skill development. Each participant discussed the various informal methods for collaboration in the development of faculty skills. These opportunities included access to voluntary training offered by the institution's center for teaching and learning, mentoring by the administrator, and gathering for peer-to-peer sharing. Participant 1 pointed to the lack of budget for professional development. The participant stated that internal symposiums were the primary method for professors to collaborate, share pedagogical improvement, professional experiences, and discuss published papers. Participants 6 and 7 commented about using "brown bag lunches" where faculty talk, share, learn and identify teaching and learning resources. Four of the participants discussed their

professional networks to promote teaching and learning within their institution, and that leading by example fosters the quality of teaching. Participants 2 discussed the use of department meetings as an opportunity where faculty shared methods for assessment and ideas for improving courses. Participant 4 stated that the sharing of best practices during individual department meetings supported a discussion across faculty of what went well and learning barriers.

The study participants shared their institutions practices promoting an integrated vision, cultivate skills and habits amongst faculty, and influence faculty engagement of social networks. Participant 3 commented on the opportunity for faculty to apply for grants, such as the Perkins grant, which provides funding for external professional development. Participants 8 and 7 complained about the lack of their institution's encouragement for deans to be consistent in their involvement with faculty development and to foster communities of interaction. Participant 7 added that there are no practices in place to articulate the role of the institution planning strategies, discussion of projects, or the outcomes of teaching and learning. Participant 8 also shared how they are trying to create and foster a community of interaction, as faculty tend to work in isolation. Some of the faculty monthly check-in sessions tend to become complaining, venting, and a release of tension in dealing with challenges.

The participants also shared their personal approach as leaders to guide faculty in their development. Participant 8 made recommendations for training where needed, made peer connections for faculty, and provided mentoring. As a leader, participant 4 promoted

and engaged in professional societies and encouraged social networks to engage faculty and increase the visibility of the university teaching and learning practices.

Participant 5: I strongly believe in providing faculty the opportunity to “get out of the four walls of the institution to attend professional development. Funding is provided for faculty to attend conferences associated with teaching and learning or their pedagogy.

#### **Theme 4: Faculty Recognition**

The fourth theme that emerged from my data analysis was that faculty recognition programs were used to recognize faculty skills and that various evaluation methods provided an analysis of faculty needs. The participants each shared the strategies identifying the impact of faculty skills in planning, examining, developing, transforming, and executing knowledge on student learning and success. The methods shared by the participants included formal and informal processes, performance reviews, institution awards, and monetary compensation. Three participants (5, 6, 7) shared that teaching awards recognize exemplary behavior for teaching and learning practices, student success, accreditation standards, and excellence in teaching fundamentals. Participant 5 discussed the use of the institutions audit procedures to identify a faculty member’s challenges. The faculty members front line supervisor is then notified to assist faculty in understanding the gaps in their performance. Participant 6 provided an example of how student evaluations are used to evaluate faculty members to identify for identification of areas of weaknesses and provide feedback for improvement. Participant 7 stated faculty

awards are given to recognize excellence in teaching, support of the 27 university teaching fundamentals, and going above and beyond. Participant 4 discussed course portfolio reports as the primary method for reviewing and discussing teaching and learning strategies. Participant 2 said that they do not have a formal recognition program but are developing a framework. Recognizing faculty's skills and articulating their role in the planning, examination, and development of curriculum, and teaching and learning outcomes included formal evaluations and awarding success.

I identified the use of faculty evaluations as the primary source for accountability of teaching and learning. Participant 4 used the annual faculty evaluation as the main source for discussing strategic progress and teaching and learning outcomes. Participant 6 shared that student evaluations "provide feedback for faculty areas of weakness. Those identified with poor teaching skills are encouraged to participate in improvement activities." Another example of faculty evaluation was provided by Participant 6 stated, "I direct the faculty development process and the traditional annual review for faculty. We do not have a requirement for attending professional development, but the faculty's promotion and tenure take participation in professional development into account." Participants 1 and 7 provide faculty guidance for improvement in their shortcomings identified in their curriculum development. Participant 1 stated, "this can include anything from attending a seminar, national meetings, or specific resources for the development of skills. This depends on where I thought they were in their career." Participant 7 discusses

with the faculty member their end of semester assessment and plan for improvements and strategies to address concerns.

The participants included institution and department examples used to recognize faculty success. Participant 2 stated they do not have a formal recognition program.

Participant 1 discussed the reward systems within the department and at the institution level.

Participant 1: At the Dean's meeting we commend faculty for their work on a regular basis. There is also an institution award given at the division level and an overall teacher of the year award. Faculty publication outside of the college are also recognized.

Participant 4: The annual evaluations contribute to strategies for discussion of faculty progress and outcomes of teaching and learning. Faculty also complete a self-evaluation using a standard rubric to self-rate and provide evidence of their teaching effectiveness. Department chairs also complete an independent evaluation. This information is discussed jointly to devise a development plan.

### **Summary**

I presented the study participant demographics, how the data were collected and analyzed, and evidence of trustworthiness in this chapter. I designed this basic qualitative research design study to elicit and analyze information obtained from higher education administrators with oversight of the faculty's professional development. The data analysis led to identifying four themes identifying higher education administrators'



perceptions of barriers and support for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills: policies and procedures, skill development opportunities, collaboration for skill development, and faculty recognition.

In Chapter 4, I presented the research study description and the setting used for each of the interviews. Each of the study participants was assigned a number to maintain confidentiality. I used the demographic table to list the participants' assigned number, type of institution, and administrative role. I also provided a table listing the social media groups used to solicit participants. I included the study data collection procedures, data analysis methods, evidence of trustworthiness, and discrepant cases in chapter 4. These processes and procedures led to a summary of key findings.

In Chapter 5, I summarize the key findings of the study and present the results of this study with the literature review, conceptual framework, and recommendations for future research.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to identify higher education administrators' perception of barriers and support within their role as facilitators of faculty professional development related to pedagogical skills. I designed the study to identify barriers and opportunity for support to contribute to a sustainable approach for quality teaching using pedagogical techniques impacting learning outcomes for students. Four themes emerged from the interviews: policies and procedures, opportunities for skill development, collaboration for skill development, and faculty recognition.

The first theme to emerge from the analysis was policies and procedures where the understanding, communicating, and promotion of an integrated vision of the scholarship of teaching and learning comes from understanding how practices can be applied broadly in course design, curricular development professional development experiences, and assessment activities. The second theme, opportunities for skill development, identified practices and opportunities for faculty to cultivate the skills and habits of the SoTL and promotion of professional development experiences. The third theme, collaboration for skill development, provided an array of practices in place where institution leaders promote and encourage the visibility of teaching and learning practices. The fourth theme, faculty recognition, demonstrated the practices in place to articulate the strategy for evaluation and recognition of faculty teaching and learning practices.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

In this section, I interpret the findings in the context of the peer-reviewed literature discussed in Chapter 2. The four themes are also reviewed in the context of the conceptual framework of Boyer's (1990) SoTL model. Boyer's SoTL model addresses the imparting of knowledge, intellectual engagement of the faculty member, careful planning of pedagogical procedures, structuring of active learning, and future scholars' engagement.

Previous studies indicated that a holistic approach, leadership support, and a renewed focus on teaching and learning skill development are required for leaders to be forward thinking (Lockhart & Stoop, 2018; McKinney, 2013; Mulnix, 2016). Principles and practices of SoTL require institutional support, alignment of the institution's mission, an emphasis on teaching, and standards of excellence in scholarly work exhibiting clear goals (Boyer, 1990; Braxton, 2016; Hutchings et al., 2011). The findings from my study identified opportunities for professional development supported by the administration and various institutional practices requiring faculty to follow institutional guidelines for oversight of their curriculum improvement initiatives.

### **Policies and Procedures**

The literature review indicated that barriers to creativity and innovation included rules and bureaucracy integrated with multilayered systems of evidence gathering, which lacked clear goals and alignment with the institution's strategic initiatives and identification of core elements of scholarship (Boyer, 2016; Grupp, 2014; Hutchings et

al., 2011; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016). Previous studies suggested that understanding of support for teaching and learning scholarship required that faculty and staff had informed views and communication with the broader campus community (Grupp, 2014; Hutchings et al., 2011). The integration of SoTL is achieved by development of pedagogical skills, improvement in quality of training, and advocacy by campus leaders but not by individual faculty members themselves (Boyer, 2016; Braxton, 2016).

The eight participants in the current study identified their reliance on involvement with various committees and knowledge of policies and procedures for faculty to explore both common ground and differences in teaching and learning related to the assessment of student learning. The administrators in the participant group reiterated their reliance on processes external to their area of responsibility to develop an understanding of teaching and learning requirements. Supporting the findings in the literature, these participants reported various institutional entities that provided oversight of faculty curriculum design, gathering assessment evidence, and documenting strategies and adherence to the institution's standards.

### **Opportunities for Skill Development**

In the literature review, I identified the importance of aligning university policy with the faculty's home department procedures to foster institutional cultures and formalize professional development (see Webb, 2019; Yob et al., 2016). Kalb et al. (2015) and Kazu and Demiralp (2016) found that a culture of teaching and learning and

practices required ongoing support to advance faculty's knowledge in academic practices. Boyer (2016) stated that a faculty member's intellectual foundation goes beyond their field of study and includes the quality of their training. The participants in the current study shared a range of practices they administered within their departments for teaching and learning that offered professional development opportunities. These included allocating stipends, providing release time, and bringing faculty together to cultivate the skills and habits of good teaching and learning. The participants identified their centers for teaching and learning as the primary source of internal training encouraging faculty to participate.

Alignment of an institution's vision and strategic planning with the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills is reported in successful application of newly developed skills (Forgie et al., 2018; Gravani, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 1975; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016). The embedding of best practices for curriculum updates and aligning curricula to the university's mission has a positive impact on curriculum updates (Yob et al., 2016). Kaynardağ (2017), Bryant and Richardson (2015), and Strom and Porfilio (2019) found that faculty engaged in development of pedagogical skills demonstrate a positive effect on student learning. The participants in my study discussed their institution's policy for mandatory participation by all faculty to attend training necessary to move all programs to online delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants stated they experienced challenges in these endeavors in transitioning all programs to online but found the efforts had a positive outcome and

enhanced collaboration across the institution and departments. Participants also shared how faculty participated in working groups across their institution to inform colleagues, identify solutions, and share best practices to advance the requirement for the new and necessary online instruction. Boyer (1990) found that consistent and clear scholarship standards across an institution supported measurable increases in student and instructor perceptions of a community of learning. This seems to have been the case in this period of transition for the participants in this study.

### **Collaboration for Skill Development**

The third theme developed from the participants' experiences was the administrators' support for informal practices and methods that provided collaboration and self-directed professional development. This was supported by Curwood et al.'s (2015) and Stefaniak's (2018) suggestions that self-directed professional development, coaching, reflective approaches, and relationship building is of value to academics. Reflective dialogues and personal narratives demonstrated the value in sharing pedagogical practices to improve the quality of teaching and learning (Strom & Porfilio, 2019). Faculty gain more experience in development of teaching skills through trial and error and within a community of faculty (Lyon, 2015). Combining coaching, reflective approaches, and relationship building among faculty provides opportunities for learning new teaching methods and develops trust and commitment (Curwood et al., 2015; Stefaniak, 2018). The participants in my study reported employing multiple informal

practices and methods that included brown bag lunches, sharing of professional experiences, and mentorship provided by administrators.

### **Faculty Recognition**

Soriano de Alencar and Freire de Oliveira (2016) and Willits and Brennan (2016) noted the importance of administrative support of resources and recognition of creative teaching and learning as necessary in advancing professional development. An active community of learning can be stimulated through administration's engagement rewards excellence in teaching initiative and a community of learning (Boyer, 1990; Willits & Brennan, 2016). Register and King (2018) concluded that university administrators' knowledge of diversity in scholarship and evaluation of faculty teaching skills is vital to sustaining scholarship and a reward system. Masoumi et al. (2018) and Glassick et al. (1997) found that contradictions in policies in how teachers' competencies are measured lacked a framework for the assessment of faculty, accountability, evidence of scholarship, and alignment with the institution's mission.

The participants in my study provided examples of their formal and informal faculty teaching and learning reward systems used within their department, including excellence in teaching, teacher of the year, and recognition of publications. The common themes participants mentioned included identifying gaps in their performance and feedback by identifying weaknesses using student evaluations. The participants' recommendations included encouraging faculty to address their problem areas with

requests to attend professional development training, seminars, or participation in SoTL initiatives.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Limitations of the study included the limited number of participants who volunteered to participate. I designed the study to conduct the interviews virtually and to accept participants from across the world. I started with one social media site to solicit study participants. I had to increase the number of social media sites to acquire the required number of participants. I attributed the lack of participant interest to the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on secondary education institutions. These institutions faced the task of rapidly moving their degree programs to online delivery. During the interviews, each participant mentioned how busy they were managing their responsibilities to engage faculty in moving all programs online.

### **Recommendations**

I have three recommendations for further research. The first recommendation is to conduct a qualitative comparative case study within a real-life context to understand faculty's and administrators' perceptions of barriers or support of professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. One department within the selected institution would be selected to conduct the study using the same interview protocol to understand the perspectives of faculty and their administrators. The data collection would involve interviews, documents, and artifacts demonstrating the actions taken by the participants. The findings may indicate the lack of agreement with the barriers and support of faculty



professional development of pedagogical skills. Identifying the institutional cultures for the development of pedagogical skills can positively affect student learning (Boyer, 1990; Glassick et al., 1997; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016).

The second recommendation is to conduct a qualitative case study including documents, artifacts, and observations of systematic processes of how professional development is initiated and evolves into reality. The interview data collected from the administrators would be the source for identifying the collection of data necessary to uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem. Faculty and administrators would benefit from this study because it would provide an understanding of the gaps in knowledge inhibiting the alignment of strategic plans and resources in the professional development of faculty. Professional development of faculty identified as ad hoc revealed contradictions of policy practices and a lack of a faculty evaluation framework (ACE, 2017; Grupp, 2014; Hénard & Roseveare, 2012; Loversidge & Demb, 2015; Masoumi et al., 2018; NiliakaMukhale & Hong, 2017; Soriano de Alencar & Freire de Oliveira, 2016).

A third recommendation is to conduct the study face-to-face instead of virtually. I recommend the study setting be confined to a geographical location conducive to short-term travel within the researcher's area. I recommend using the same interview protocol to conduct the semistructured interviews. In the virtual interview setting, the interviewees responded to the interview protocol as a question-and-answer session. A face-to-face interview may allow for an in-depth conversation to learn more about actions taken and

the outcome of the administrators' action. This setting would provide the opportunity to build a relationship of trust and enable the interview questions to evolve based on the interviewee's responses.

### **Implications**

This study may contribute to positive social change for students, faculty, and administrators of institutions of higher education. The advancement of professional development for faculty can have a positive impact on the SoTL (Curwood et al., 2015). The results of the current study indicated that an aligned understanding of opportunities for faculty professional development of pedagogical skills may lead to positive social change in student learning outcomes.

Higher education changes highlight a need for a renewed focus on teaching and learning skill development (McKinney, 2013). Higher education institutions with a clear vision and strategic plans aligned with faculty teaching responsibilities create the opportunity to positively impact student learning outcomes (Boyer, 1990). Aligning the institution's mission by fostering a community of SoTL can lead to continuous improvement in the development of teaching and learning skills (Boyer, 1990; Hutchings et al., 2011). The SoTL strengthens and supports the development of an integrative vision for students' sustainable journey from novice to expert learners (Hutchings et al., 2011).

### **Conclusions**

In this chapter I reported on the key findings related to barriers and support of faculty development of pedagogical skills. This basic qualitative study was conducted to

identify administrators' perception of barriers and support for faculty development of pedagogical skills. Administrators discussed their role in the oversight of faculty in the professional development of pedagogical skills. In the interviews, the administrators discussed the practices and methods within their institution available to faculty related to oversight and professional development. Much of the information shared identified support in understanding, communicating, and promoting SoTL. Within the participants' departments, the opportunities to bring faculty together to collaborate, build relationships, and share common interests to advance pedagogical skills included informal settings described as brown bag lunches, symposiums, discussions of publications, and sharing of best practices at department meetings. The results indicated that the participants recognized the value of faculty professional development of pedagogical skills. Developing a plan and timeline to engage in professional development is the faculty member's responsibility. The words "encourage" and "recommend" were commonly used by the participants when giving faculty feedback to guide them in improving their pedagogical skills.

The two themes of opportunities for skill development and collaboration for skill development demonstrated support for faculty professional development of pedagogical skills. The two themes of policies and procedures and faculty recognition included both barriers and support. The guidance for professional development given by administrators to faculty directed them to other resources. Overall, participants' perceptions

demonstrated support by guiding faculty to resources for the professional development of their pedagogical skills.

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## Appendix Interview Protocol

Thank you for accepting the invitation to participate in this interview. Do you have any questions before we start? The recording of the interview is now starting.

I'll begin with an overview of the study purpose.

This study explored administrators' barriers and support related to faculty expressed need for the development of pedagogical skills presented in the literature supporting faculty needs. The significance of this study is in the opportunity for the contribution of new understanding in priorities for the professional development of faculty pedagogical skills. New knowledge provides the potential to impact educators' teaching and innovation connecting to the quality of students' learning experience and faculty advancement in the scholarship of teaching and learning. This may result in the opportunity for pedagogical skills development of the faculty not only in their professional role but in advancing the betterment of students' and society.

Pedagogical skills include the planning, ongoing examination, development of relations to the subject taught, and transforming and extending knowledge.

Before we begin with the interview questions, do you have any questions or need for clarification? Feel free to ask questions at any time.

The interview will now begin. I will be using the same questions provided in a previous email for your review.

1. Tell me about your role in relation to oversight for faculty.
  - a. Prompters provided by the researcher:
    - i. In faculty development



- ii. In faculty evaluation
  - iii. In teaching and learning assessment
- 2. What practice is in place to understand, communicate, and promote an integrated vision in course design and curricular development?
- 3. What practice is in place to understand, communicate, and promote professional development experiences and assessment activities to improve student learning?
  - a. When did this practice begin?
  - b. How has the practice been adjusted over time?
- 4. What opportunities are in place to cultivate the skills and habits of teaching and learning amongst the faculty?
  - a. Promoters provided by the researcher.
    - i. Faculty development committees
    - ii. Sharing of lessons learned in the success and need for improvement regarding methods applied
    - iii. Training modules: online or in person
    - iv. Funding of teaching and learning projects
    - v. Faculty fellowship
- 5. What methods are in place to foster community to explore common ground and differences in teaching and learning practices and the assessment of student learning?

6. What practices are in place to recognize the impact of faculty's skills in the planning, examination, development, transforming, and executing knowledge on student learning and success?
7. What practices are in place where institution leaders promote and engage in professional societies and the developing social networks encouraging the visibility of teaching and learning practices?
8. What practices are in place to articulate the role, planning, and strategy to discuss progress and outcomes of teaching and learning?
  - a. Prompters provided by the researcher:
    - i. course design
    - ii. curricular development
    - iii. professional development experiences
    - iv. assessment activities to improve student learning
9. What is the plan to maintain the institutionalization of the latest ideas of teaching, evidence gathering, and documentation of strategies?

#### Closing Statement

Thank you for taking the time participate in this interview. Your participation will help me to complete the dissertation research study. If you wish to provide any additional information please contact be the phone or email, included in the initial email. I will also provide the contact information in a follow-up email. Any identifiable information will not be included in the final data analysis or published in the final dissertation.

The recording is stopped.