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Strategic Leadership Approaches at High-Performing Ontario Public Colleges

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Abstract

Colleges in Ontario face many challenges that threaten their future sustainability including a decline in the core 17 to 24 year old feeder group and growing limitations on provincial government funding (Usher, 2013). To generate adequate revenue to survive and thrive, many are embracing competitive approaches intended to grow enrolment. While the provincial government allows and has in fact rewarded competition (i.e. through additional growth funding), it has attempted to moderate the unintended consequences of wholesale marketization through regulation and mandated performance relative to student access and quality (Kirby, 2011).

Against this Ontario colleges' quasi-market context, Presidents and Senior Vice-Presidents Academic (SVPAs) are challenged to adopt leadership behaviours that most effectively support the concurrent achievement of the joint outcomes of enrolment growth, quality and access in their organization. Indeed, a large number of Presidents and their most senior team members may be overly focused on operational tactics and lack the interest, ability or courage to provide a vision, introduce key strategic priorities, and effectively execute on these priorities within their organization (Paul, 2011; Neumann & Neumann, 2000).

In this study I attempted to understand the strategic behaviours and actions of President and Senior Vice-President Academic teams at high-performing Ontario colleges, between 2011 and 2014, where high-performing was defined as consistently high ratings on objective system-level measures of enrolment growth, quality and access taken together. I designed a qualitative, multi-case study design in which each President and Senior Vice-President Academic team was treated as a case. Presidents and Senior Vice-Presidents Academic were interviewed independently using the same question frame. Cross-case analysis was conducted that focused

on similarities rather than differences across the cases (Stake, 2006). This approach was used to better understand what best practices may be generalizable to senior college leaders elsewhere, as well as to keep the identity of participants confidential. Out of this study, a preliminary working model of strategic leadership has emerged which ought to be further tested and refined.

Keywords: neoliberalism, quasi-market system, quality, access, 'market oriented' organizational culture, strategic leadership, 'socially charismatic' leadership, change leadership, strategic alignment

you enjoyed the opportunity to tell your stories. They have truly helped me to advance my own understanding of senior leadership and to become more rounded professionally.

Finally, I am indebted to the support provided me by Dr. Anita Taylor. You are such a strong emerging leader in your own right. Your critique of this manuscript, and for that matter any manuscript that I write, always leads to a more solid product.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Post-secondary institutions across Canada are experiencing a 'new normal.' The

traditional core enrolment feeder group, aged 17-24, commenced a decline in 2013, which can be

expected to continue for the next decade (Usher, 2013). The global recession of 2009-10, and

associated contraction of economic growth, introduced long-term limitations on government as

funder, and in turn, on post-secondary institutions' finances (Usher, 2010). At the same time that

traditional enrolment and grant revenue are beginning to decline, post-secondary institutions are

being asked to devise programs that categorize students into identities of domestic, international,

non-direct, mature, and non-traditional. With these changes, workload naturally increases as

institutions must modify their recruitment strategies, planning, curriculum, delivery models, and

pedagogy (Trick & Van Loon, 2011).

For at least the past two decades in Canada, marketization of post-secondary education

(PSE) has been one of the top key policy drivers (Kirby, 2011). With government funding

challenges anticipated to persist for the long-term, marketization can be expected to be an

increasingly important policy driver (Kirby, 2011). Fisher, Rubenson, Jones, and Shanahan

(2009) indicate that governments at the provincial and federal levels can be expected to continue

governing practices that favor market principles in education: making it easier for private entities

to provide education services that have been the exclusive domain of publics; directing more

funding to students as opposed to post-secondary institutions – creating heightened consumer

behaviour; and, incentivizing institutions who differentiate themselves, are entrepreneurial, and

who offer programs that align to government labour market objectives (Fisher et al., 2009).

Post-secondary institutional cultures can be rather intractable against market influences. Faculty in particular, may view marketization as an instrument through which "students become reduced to a revenue stream and colleges to businesses" (Natale & Doran, 2012, p. 187). The administrative culture of post-secondary institutions can also be a barrier to change and the responsivity required of market conditions. For example, post-secondary institutions have a lengthy history of being relatively hierarchical - characterized by leadership through policy, and a premium placed on stability, and silos (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

Problem of Practice

Many post-secondary leaders are likely to be challenged to introduce the types of behaviours and actions that will cause them to be successful as leaders given the environmental challenges described. Where a large body of literature exists on leadership generally, there is a paucity related to how senior college leaders can optimize their effectiveness alongside the influences of marketization. The situation is further complicated by the fact that within Ontario, unlike, for instance, the United States, senior leaders need also balance the competing policy imperatives of student access and quality – what Kirby describes as "quasi-marketization" (Kirby, 2011). Through my research I attempt to generate new insights and understandings regarding leadership behaviours and actions, that can be taken by the most senior leaders in Ontario colleges, to lead their constituents toward the achievement of expected, mandated system outcomes (student access and quality) and sustainable institutional revenue (vis-à-vis enrolment growth and increased market share). Results from this study may therefore have the benefit of helping to improve results for the Ontario college system as a whole, since senior leaders from all of the 24 public colleges in Ontario may become adoptive of what study informants describe

as being the key behaviours and actions having the greatest impact in an Ontario and indeed the Canadian post-secondary quasi-market system.

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

In this study, I examined how Presidents and their Senior Vice-President Academic (SVPA) colleagues, at high-performing Ontario colleges, collaborated to lead their institutions toward the joint outcomes of quality, access, and enrolment growth. Colleges defined as high-performing were those that demonstrated strong levels of access, quality and enrolment growth, relative to competitor organizations within the 24 colleges Ontario public system, based on a series of objective system measures administered by the Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD).

My interest in this research study was somewhat personal. When I joined my current place of employment, a public Ontario college, eight years ago, I was hired as its first ever Executive Director of Strategy. One of my first undertakings in the new role was to examine how the college was doing with respect to its performance on key outcomes of quality, access, and enrolment. I was pleased following my initial review to find that the college had consistently performed well relative to itself and system comparators on quality. Indeed, on several key dimension of quality, the college had in fact led relative to comparators. Moreover, and again in comparison to the other 24 public college comparators, my college was demonstrably effective at creating supports and pathways for under-represented groups to enroll and indeed thrive once enrolled. What I was somewhat surprised to find however, was that compared to other colleges in the system, my college had been, year-over-year, growing its enrolment at a level below the provincial system average. Moreover, and over a 10-year period, students from my college's catchment were increasingly choosing to attend other colleges. This condition was, at least in

my view, very concerning, given that the government funding formula rewarded enrolment growth above the system average and penalized colleges that did not sustain or grow their market share. In short, I became very concerned about the college's future sustainability.

Many of the constituents who I asked at the time of my arrival to the college – management, faculty and support staff - about the aforementioned enrolment concerns, appeared relatively unconcerned, if not overly complacent. Consistent with Kotter's (1996) telltale signs of complacency in organizations, many described the college's past success as a reason to not be concerned; others asserted that the college need only consider its performance relative to itself instead of seeking sufficient "feedback from external constituencies" (Kotter, 1996, p.5). Some internal constituents firmly believed that a college could not perform consistently on joint outcomes of quality, access, and enrolment and that to try, would diminish the achievement of one or all of the outcomes. My concerns about my college's enrolment became heightened the further I examined the research on college effectiveness. By way of example, Martin and Samels (2009) defined stressed college institutions as being too dependent on government appropriations; having flat enrolment; and, engaging in "long-range planning efforts [to] address subsistence rather than sustained growth" (Martin & Samels, 2009, p.3).

Within the external, institutional, and personal context described, I determined that the overall question guiding this study ought to be, "How do Presidents and Senior Vice-Presidents Academic at high-performing Ontario public colleges effectively lead toward the joint outcomes of quality, access, and enrolment growth?" In this thesis, I argue that Presidents and their SVPA partner, across high-performing Ontario colleges, defined the constructs of quality and access similarly and invested considerable time and energy to operationalize them in a way that optimized the experience and labour market outcomes for students at their institution. While this

finding may exist for many or most other colleges in the system, given the emphasis of the

MAESD and the Committee of Presidents (COP), for more than a decade, on investing in and

variously supporting excellence in these areas, it is doubtful that Presidents and their SVPA from

flat or low enrolment growth colleges in the system behaved in a similar fashion to participants

in the study, respecting enrolment growth.   In fact, I argue that Presidents and their SVPA from

high enrolment growth institutions courageously engaged in a far-ranging number of change

leadership strategies intended to grow support and, in many cases, enthusiasm amongst their

faculty and staff toward enrolment growth. Moreover, they were very systematic and deliberate

in terms of changes that they made to existing college processes and systems to enable enrolment

growth. I argue that they were also likely different from peers less focused on enrolment growth

insofar as they modeled and encouraged risk-taking by faculty and staff, particularly with respect

to new program development, program renewal, and flexible delivery.   Finally, I illustrate

through the findings that Presidents and SVPAs from high enrolment growth colleges behave

like well-coordinated, synchronized ballroom dance partners – each clearly understanding his or

her unique strategic role and how and when their roles ought to come together to complement

one another, thereby optimizing impact.

Context of the Research

In this research study, I drew a sample of participants from the Ontario public colleges

system. As discussed earlier, the system is comprised of 24 colleges. These colleges are situated

throughout each of the regions of the province – North, South, East and West.

Colleges have been variously classified for this study as 'small' (less than 6,500 full-time

domestic and international students); 'medium' (between 6,500 students and 20,000 full-time

domestic and international students), and, 'large' (more than 20,000 full-time domestic and

international students). Participants for the study have been drawn from 'medium' and 'large'

institutions located in all regions except the North. Only college senior leaders from 'large' and

'medium' sized institutions were invited to participate in the study because enrolment amongst

the smaller institutions tended to be in decline, flat, or only very-slightly increasing during the

period of examination, 2014 to 2017. All northern colleges fit into the categorization of 'small'.

Ontario colleges situated within or proximal to Toronto have not been disadvantaged in the

same way as the other colleges, in terms of a demographic decline in prospective students,

largely owing to Ontario and Canadian immigration settlement trends favorable to large urban

centres. Moreover, it is quite possible that international students are more likely to study in large

urban areas because these communities offer rich, immersive, and myriad, cultural opportunities

within which to regularly engage. Large and mid-urban based colleges may also have an added

attraction factor in terms of their modernized transportation systems. They may, however, be

disadvantaged in terms of some negative prospective student perceptions toward community

crime rates and limitations on space available to optimize teaching and learning (i.e., per square

foot costs of building and leasing in large urban centres tend to be much higher than mid and

small urban centres). All of these contextual factors may be important in the current study

because they have not been controlled for owing to the qualitative nature of the research design.

It is, therefore, conceivable that behaviours and actions taken by senior leaders at high enrolment

growth institutions to grow enrolment, although similar across institutions, may differ in

intensity.

Participants in my study would have also had varying degrees of accessibility to Queens

Park and Parliament Hill, owing to differences in their level of geographic proximity. It can be

expected that colleges more geographically proximal to the centres of government, will have

greater and more frequent accessibility to senior bureaucrats and politicians having 'real-time' knowledge of formal special grants funding and one-off pilot project opportunities. Moreover, leaders from colleges in my sample, operating in mid-urban environments (as compared to large urban environments), would have a lesser number of business, donor, and not-for-profit partnership opportunities to cultivate and draw upon, in support of: alternative revenue generation, applied research and innovation collaborations, co-op and practicum experiences; and gifts and donations in support of teaching and learning.

Leaders from mid-urban as opposed to large-urban colleges in my study, may have been more challenged in their efforts to create the cultural conditions for success amongst international students on their campuses. The less diverse demography of such centres would have made it difficult to consistently recruit for already culturally-competent faculty and staff.

Participants who consented to be in the study were not representative of actual Ontario system leadership gender distributions. All Presidents in the study were male. This compares to a current system ratio of 15 males to nine females. SVPAs in the study were evenly split along gender lines. This compares to a current system ratio of 19 females to five males.

Positionality of the Researcher

I undertook this study first as an Associate Vice-President of Strategy, and for the past 19 months, as a Vice-President of Corporate Strategy and Business Development at an Ontario public college. These roles have caused me to work very closely with two separate college presidents, and two separate SVPAs. I have also had the benefit and pleasure of working alongside a range of other Vice-Presidents, Deans, and Executive Directors who comprise the college's senior leadership team. Together we have taken stock of our environment, assessed our internal strengths and weaknesses, and developed and executed upon a range of strategies

that have propelled us from a college that could not be considered high-performing by the standards of this study, to one that has led system enrolment for the past two years, whilst also leading on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) amongst the large colleges, and building and sustaining a robust institutional access agenda.

Conducting this research study has been very helpful to me and my colleagues insofar as it has informed, through the ongoing literature review and preliminary findings stages, much of the approach we have adopted at our college to successfully move toward achieving the joint outcomes of quality, access, and enrolment growth. Through our journey, we have experienced the early frustration and stress of under-performing with respect to enrolment, not least of which has been the hard decisions that would need to be taken, including laying off staff and being less relevant programmatically to students. We learned along the way that we needed to take risks and accept and indeed celebrate failure otherwise people would be feel unsupported and afraid to take risks in future. We also came to understand that we were trying to entertain too many college priorities and in so doing, were unable to appropriately commit with respect to resources and human spirit toward the active discipline of enrolment growth. At the same time, and benefiting from these transformative experiences in my workplace, I was better equipped to make sense of and interpret the data that I was gathering in my study. In short, the research process and my recent experiences with related transformative change at my college, have been reciprocally reinforcing.

I would be remiss not to acknowledge that there could be biases as a result of my working intimately with the study topic, that left unattended, could make the study's findings less valid. Indeed, Merriam (2011) indicates that qualitative researchers need to acknowledge their own biases and positionality to understand how it influences the research process. That is, in

qualitative research, it is not possible to park biases aside from researchers' understandings of

the phenomena they study, as such, it is important to state the researchers' experience with the

topic that influence how they understand it. Without doing so, there is a danger that I could

project my own experience onto the data, rather than letting the data speak for itself. To largely

mitigate against this occurrence, I engaged in a systematic cross-case analytical procedure that

arguably, forced me to wrestle with and make sense of what participants told me in interview.

Additionally, by sharing my findings with the supervisor at the University, I was challenged to

justify the findings I was presenting, a process that Merriam (2011) argues is helpful in

qualitative analysis. Moreover, I was constantly attentive to a range of ethical considerations.

Greater elaboration on the cross-case analysis and the ethical considerations I applied, are

provided in Chapter Three – Methodology.

Overview of Methodology and Methods

To explore how Presidents and their SVPAs effectively led toward the joint outcomes of

quality, access, and enrolment growth, an interpretivist, multi-case study design was employed.

Interpretivism involves an integration of human interest into the research project (Myers, 2008).

With this approach, reality is treated as an intersubjective phenomena which is based on

interpretations made of social and experiential narrative (Dudovskiy, 2015). Case study research

situates the researcher within the world of the subject of study, "attempting to make sense of, or

interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Merriam, 2009, p. 13). In

multi-case study research, the individual cases are chose because they share "a common

characteristic or condition", features that "somehow categorically bound them together" (Stake,

2006, p.6). In the current study, cases were Presidents and their SVPA team member deriving

from Ontario public colleges that between 2011 and 2014, achieved consistently high ratings on MAESD objective system measures for quality, access, and enrolment growth.

Participants were interviewed by me at their place of work, except on two occasions, where, because of time constraints and/or distance, I interviewed them by phone. A confidential, semi-structured interview was utilized in an effort to connect to relevant theory described and discussed in the literature and with a goal of having respondents provide a rich and uninhibited description of their role in leading effectively at their college. Details regarding the study's methodology are captured in Chapter Three – Methodology.

Definition of Key Terms

Neoliberalism. Neoliberalism involves the active promotion of free markets and relatively unobstructed free trade. It "prescribes a limited role for government and emphasizes the role of the private sector, encouraging deregulation, decentralization and privatization" (Fisher et al., 2009).

Quasi-market system. Several authors (Farham, 2016; Fisher, Rubenson, Jones & Shanahan, 2009; Kirby, 2011; Marginson, 2013; Martin, 2009; Trick & Van Loon, 2011) conclude that the Canadian post-secondary system is best characterized as a quasi-market owing to a focus being placed amongst the federal government and provinces on a range of regulated and market-oriented themes. Fisher et al. (2009) report that "unprecedented demand has made education a viable industry, sustaining both a proliferation of private providers and a range of new entrepreneurial activities within public institutions" (p. 549).

Quality. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2008) indicates that there are many interpretations of quality. Acknowledging this, Vidovich (2013) argues, "in abstract terms quality can be defined as the distance between the objective and the

result, with the implicit assumption that quality improves as this distance shrinks" (p. 169). The Ontario system, through agreement of the colleges' organizing body, Colleges Ontario (CO) and its Committee of Presidents (COP), has adopted a quality regime focused upon quality assurance as opposed to assessment (Klassan, 2012). Where 'assessment' efforts look for the presence of quality, 'quality assurance' presumes that a level of quality already exists and focus upon continuously raising the level of quality to higher standards (Klassan, 2012).

Access. According to the OECD (2008),

"Equitable tertiary systems are those that ensure that access to, participation in, and outcomes of tertiary education are based only on individual's innate abilities and study efforts. They ensure that achieving educational potential at the tertiary level is not the result of personal or social circumstances, including factors such as socio-economic status, gender, ethnic origin, immigrant status, place of residence, age or disability".

(p. 14)

Within Ontario, access to universities and colleges has increased over the past 10 years (Finnie & Pavlic, 2013). In fact, "colleges have an 'open access' mandate (Klassan, 2012, p.1) and have led the pursuit of equity in Ontario, "acting as incubators for those who have historically been excluded, providing basic literacy and numeracy for those who did not finish high school, and providing exposure to the liberal arts and civics for those pursuing technical vocations and trades or transfer credit to universities" (Muzzin & Meaghan, 2014, p.11).

'Market' oriented organizational culture. According to Cameron and Quinn (2006), a market-oriented culture is characterized by a workplace that is results-driven. Processes, systems, and rules are typically simplified to allow a more unfettered approach by constituents to achieve outcomes. In the long term, such organizations compete to achieve stretch goals and

targets. Market share and penetration, and doing better than the competition, are what defines

success (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). In their large sample research of American colleges and

universities, Cameron and Quinn found that institutions having a dominant 'market culture'

orientation more capably acquired needed resources "such as revenues, good faculty,

institutional visibility, and so forth" [while] "institutions with 'hierarchy' cultures did not excel

in any performance domains" (p. 156).

'Socially charismatic' leadership. Conger, Kanungo, and Menon (2000) assert that

followers, in complex, contemporary organizations attribute charismatic leadership to leaders

who do three things capably. First, they indicate that charismatic leaders are perceived by

followers as persons who have a strong desire to move beyond the status quo. They are people

who regularly assess the external environment for opportunity and, based on their systematic

assessment, act as agents of radical change. They are also persons who are perceived by

followers to construct a shared as opposed to independent, idealized, future vision and capably

articulate this vision in a very inspiring way (Conger et al., 2000).

Change leadership models. Many change leadership models exist (Collins, 2000; Fullan,

2000; Heath & Heath, 2010; Kotter, 1996; Senge, 2006) that share principles for guiding

individuals and groups to receive buy-in of large constituencies toward change. Such models

very often are intended to condition change agents to the notion that, with any change, they must

have a high tolerance for ambiguity and a positive attitude.

Strategic Alignment. Strategic alignment is "agreement on strategic priorities by

decision-making groups, including those at the top, middle, and/or operational levels of their

organizations" (Walter, Kellermanns, Floyd, Veiga & Matherne, 2013, p. 304) that lead to

enhanced cooperation and coordination in the execution of strategy. It is both a process and an outcome.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study is underpinned by an assumption that senior leaders at Ontario colleges, and particularly Presidents and their SVPA partner, are capable of developing strategy and marshaling its execution in a way that is impactful to college outcomes – in particular, those associated with quality, access, and enrolment. Additionally, I assumed in this study that these principles are effectively represented in the metrics presented through MAESD. In this study, I also worked to build a trusting relationship with the participants and interview participants across different institutions. In doing so, I assume that participants felt comfortable and relatively forthcoming in their sharing of their experiences and knowledge and that consenting participants, based on the bounding criteria, were representative of leaders who would successfully lead toward college high-performance.

I acknowledge a few limitations of this study. Although, intuitively, strategic leadership could be expected to contribute to enrolment growth, alongside quality and access, it is impossible to know from this study, because of its design, the extent to which strategic leadership by Presidents and SVPAs at high enrolment growth colleges influenced these outcomes. The current study also did not examine the strategic leadership approach of Presidents and SVPAs who oversaw colleges having favorable quality and access, but fair to poor enrolment outcomes, to determine how they were similar or differed in their approach to Presidents and SVPAs meeting study inclusionary criteria. It is also possible that the time period of study, 2011 to 2014, was somehow contextually different – from an environmental perspective – to the Ontario colleges system today. Finally, geography of an institution,

uncontrolled for in this study, could be a factor that greatly enables or hinders the three outcomes under study.

Significance

Results from this study can be shared with senior leaders in all of the province's 24 publicly operated colleges. Moreover, given that there exists much commonality amongst all of Canada's provinces respecting college educational delivery and the political, economic, and legislative context within which operations occur, senior leaders from colleges across Canada could benefit from the results. I expect that the results will be important to senior leaders because it will reinforce for them many of the things that they may already be doing, cause them to reflect on actions and behaviours that can and should be emphasized and de-emphasized, and possibly even cause them to question the effectiveness of some of their existing practices altogether. Furthermore, I hope that research such as this can ignite conversations across college sector leaders about their practices.

Overview of the Document

In the first chapter, I provided the reader an overview of several of the key challenges facing the Ontario colleges system and the need for senior leadership that not only emphasizes and drives constituents' hearts and minds toward high levels of achievement, with respect to quality and access, but enrolment growth as well. It is this trifecta of leadership behavior that I illustrated as being critical to organizational sustainability within a 'quasi-market' environment. In the following chapter, I provide a review of the policy literature focusing on colleges' sustainability and effectiveness; the history of quality and access in higher education – with a focus on Ontario; 'market culture' leadership; and key aspects of strategic leadership (i.e. change management; socially charismatic leadership; and strategic alignment). In Chapter Three, I focus

upon Methodology. Specifically, I address the study's conceptual framework; case study

approach; and case selection, data collection, and cross-case analysis methods. The focus of

Chapters Four through Eight is on the findings derived from cross-case analysis. Finally, in

Chapter Nine, I discuss my understanding of the findings relative to the study research questions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This literature review focused on five themes that have emerged throughout my search of the literature addressing higher education leadership within a market and quasi-market system. The themes include: 1) neoliberalism and the quasi-market system; 2) quality in higher education; 3) access in higher education; 4) effective leadership within a 'market' context; and, 5) strategic leadership. The first section on neoliberalism and the quasi-market system provides detailed information about the reasons for the emergence of neo-liberal influences in higher-education and the way that these influences manifest themselves as a quasi-market as opposed to a full market condition within the Canadian college sector. In the second section I seek to define both 'quality' and 'access' from several perspectives – global through provincial – and illustrate how these two constructs have been operationalized within Canada and more particularly, the province of Ontario. In the third section I examine a promising competing values approach, based largely upon the extensive quantitative research of Cameron and Quinn (2006), that can be adopted by post-secondary institutional leaders to more effectively map their leadership style to the Canadian quasi-market higher-education policy context. Finally, the fourth section begins with an operational definition of strategic leadership and ways that it has been described as having been operationalized - both effectively and ineffectively - by North American senior leaders of higher education. In this section I then elaborate upon three major tenets of strong strategic leadership, that taken together, optimize strategic impact - 'socialized-charismatic' qualities, a strong change management orientation, and efforts to create strategic understanding and integration throughout the organization, otherwise known as 'strategic alignment'.

Neo-liberalism and the Canadian Quasi-Market System of Higher Education

Canadian institutions of higher education have experienced the growing influence of marketization for the past two decades (Fisher, Rubenson, Jones & Shanahan, 2009; Kirby, 2011). Neoliberalism involves the active promotion of free markets and relatively unobstructed free trade. It "prescribes a limited role for government and emphasizes the role of the private sector, encouraging deregulation, decentralization and privatization" (Fisher et al., 2009, p. 156). At a micro-economic level, it equates to the promotion of choice and freedom for individuals (Fisher et al., 2009).

Neoliberalism's influence on education looks different by country, and very much depends upon a country's history of both introducing and consistently honoring "social democratic policies and visions of collective positive freedoms" (Apple, 2001, p. 418). Countries with a strong history of practiced social democracy, such as Canada, Sweden, and Norway, are able to significantly mediate unintended neo-liberal effects (Apple, 2001).

In countries such as the United States, Britain, New Zealand, and Australia, neo-liberalism has been defined by government's penchant for overzealously turning to the free marketplace in an effort to manage funding shortfalls emanating from economic downturn. Specifically, greater support for private offerings is made possible through reduced barriers to entry (e.g. charter schools). Schools that perform better on system performance indicators may be rewarded more through performance funding levers than those requiring remediation (Apple, 2001; Ryan, 2012). The recent global recession "called into question whether [American] public schools will be funded at even the most basic level required for their functioning" (Russom, 2008, p.1).

In their extensive literature review on the marketization of education within the United States, Natale and Doran, (2012), suggest that marketization of post-secondary education cannot

work because "it views higher education as a product from a perspective of economic value" (p. 195). In their view, social outcomes become secondary to values associated with deregulation, lesser government funding, and entrepreneurship (Natale & Doran, 2012). Further, educators become devalued and their morale is negatively impacted by what they perceive to be a lessening of their role as educators in favor of skills training "with the sole purpose of transmitting knowledge to prepare students for employment" (p. 195).

Authors such as Marginson (2013) and Brown (2008) assert that despite government efforts around the world to move post-secondary systems toward becoming relatively free-market systems, such a condition will never completely eventuate. Both authors indicate that there are several simple reasons that institutions of higher education cannot be completely left to the market, including, but not limited to: the public good mission of education - ensuring that some subsidization is required to avoid circumstances of under-supply; and the need for barriers to entry vis-à-vis regulation - to ensure knowledge creation does not suffer from a lack of objectivity.

To understand the extent and nature of marketization in the Canadian post-secondary system, Kirby (2011) engaged in a policy research study that "involved the location, review, and systematic analysis of Canadian provincial and federal government policy documents pertaining to education and training" (p. 270). He employed a document content analysis approach guided by basic research questions aligned to the study's aim (Kirby, 2011). He found that governments across Canada share the goal of planned and progressive growth in educational supply. To this end, they employ market-type approaches: differential, targeted funding investments in programs of study that demonstrably show high labour-market and student demand opportunity; expansion of degree-granting capabilities amongst both universities and colleges (since the degree

credential is in high demand); and, reduced direct funding to institutions in favor of providing funding directly to students and their families vis-à-vis tuition rebate, non-repayable grants, increases to weekly borrowing limits for provincial loan programs, and targeted funding to non-traditional students (Kirby, 2011). What makes the Canadian post-secondary system a quasi-market is that governments moderate the unintended consequences of wholesale marketization through regulation and mandated performance relative to student access and quality (Kirby, 2011).

Employing a comparative, multiple, nested case study policy research approach at the provincial and federal levels of government, wherein relevant provincial and federal documents were analyzed, Fisher et al. (2009), concluded that the Canadian post-secondary system could be best characterized as a quasi-market system owing to a focus being placed amongst the federal government and provinces on a range of regulated and market-oriented themes. They report that "unprecedented demand has made education a viable industry, sustaining both a proliferation of private providers and a range of new entrepreneurial activities within public institutions" (p. 549). They note the trend to marketize has been most prevalent in Ontario and British Columbia where legislation has been used to challenge market primacy, deregulate, and even privatize college educational delivery (Fisher et al., 2009).

Other authors, when referring to the Ontario university system, have boldly referred to it as 'corporate' or adoptive of a 'corporate business model' (Marginson, 2013; Martin, 2009). According to Martin (2009), under the corporate model "students become consumers, academic institutions become producers, and faculty members become 'customer service representatives'" (p. 437). Marginson (2013) asserts that corporate models are evidenced in Ontario universities

by "CEO-style executive leadership; goal-driven production, output measurement and performance management … [and] customer focus and continuous self-evaluation" (p. 355).

Farnham (2016) advocates the need for Ontario university leadership to adopt corporate behaviours to help their institution thrive and survive against a backdrop of diminishing government funding and domestic and international competition. According to Farnham, Ontario university leaders can and ought to introduce market competitive tools. Farnham conducted a panel regression analysis for 19 of Ontario's 20 public universities wherein he evaluated the impact of several competitive tools to increase capacity filling ratios. Competitive tools included in the analysis were: awards – including investments in scholarships and bursaries; marketing – including investments in marketing, communications, and advertising; graduates – investments in research (research and teaching assistants and doctoral fellowships); and, professor investments. The study found that "capacity filling ratio is significantly related to awards and marketing when examining all publicly funded universities in Ontario as one market" (Farnham, 2016, p. 82). The study also found however that the effects of competitive variables (population; professors; graduates; marketing; awards) on capacity filling ratios were different for each university, suggesting that individual universities and their leaders ought to adopt and tailor competitive variables to their unique context. In summary, Farnham asserts that university leaders need to allocate funds and investments toward optimal variables while spending less on low effect variables.

In their published policy research study, Trick and Van Loon (2011) argue that academic reform of post-secondary education in Ontario is inevitable and necessitated by changing and dire economic circumstances faced by governments. They indicate that Ontario post-secondary costs "have been increasing at a rate substantially higher than the Consumer Price Index (CPI),

but government grants per student are not increasing at the same pace" (Trick & Van Loon, 2011, p. 2). They argue that post-secondary institutions and their leaders need to preserve quality in a cost-effective manner through a model of managerialism that is anchored around five key principles: "a) focusing on core functions, b) specialization and differentiation, c) market-sensitive compensation, d) performance measurement and management, and e) transparency and accountability" (Trick & Van Loon, 2011, p.4).

Quality and Access in Higher Education

Alongside the influence of marketization, "quality and equity discourses are capturing education policy agendas on a global scale" (Vidovich, 2013, p. 167). As OECD (2008) indicates, "most countries face the challenge of simultaneously raising tertiary education participation rates, improving quality and achieving a sustainable level of financial support" (p.3).

Quality. According to Vidovich (2013), the OECD suggest that there exists no single interpretation of quality but attempt to define it, in abstract terms, as "the distance between the objective and the result, with the implicit assumption that quality improves as this distance shrinks" (p. 169). Many authors feel that quality can be measured and compared (Harvey & Green, 1993; OECD, 2008; Vidovich, 2013). Primary methods of assuring quality are relatively consistently identified as being: "accreditation, assessment (evaluation), and audit (review)" (Vidovich, 2013, p. 169). Quality is generally thought of as being related to either accountability or improvement (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009) whereby:

"Quality assurance for the sake of improvement is often a process internal to an institution. Quality assurance for the purpose of accountability … examines 'what one

is doing in relation to goals that have been set' … and is usually linked to public information". (p. 9)

The demand for post-secondary quality within Ontario is generated by parents and students, governments and policymakers, and colleges and universities themselves. Each of these groups seeks comparative data for choosing amongst program alternatives (students and parents); making education and related policy (governments and policymakers); and, improving performance and marketing outcomes (institutions) (Educational Policy Institute, 2008). According to the Education Policy Institute (2008) writing almost a decade ago, the higher education community, although skeptical of how some aspects of quality were being measured, were accepting of the principle to collect, analyze, and interpret comparative data.

The Ontario college system, through agreement of the colleges' organizing body, Colleges Ontario (CO), and its Council of Presidents (COP), has adopted a quality regime focused upon quality assurance as opposed to assessment (Klassan, 2012). Where 'assessment' efforts look for the presence of quality, 'quality assurance' presumes that a level of quality already exists, and focus upon continuously raising the level of quality to higher standards (Klassan, 2012).

Unlike all other provinces, whose primary focus is on validating credentials, either through government led or arms-length bodies, the Ontario college quality system is much more robust. The Ontario system benefits from the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS), an arms-length body providing "quality assurance at the program-level through the Credentials Validation Service (CVS) and institutional-level quality assurance and continuous improvement through the Program Quality Assurance Process Audit (PQAPA) process" (Klaasen, 2012, p. 2).

The CVS began in 2005 and is intended to provide "reasonable assurance that all postsecondary programs of instruction, regardless of funding source, conform to the Credentials

Framework (Minister's Binding Policy Directive, 2003, Appendix A) and system-wide titling

principles while maintaining the integrity of College credentials province wide" (Klaasan, 2012,

p. 3). This approach corresponded with the Binding Policy Directive's assignment of oversight

for quality to each of the 24 public college's board of governors, necessitating the creation of 24

separate validation services aligning to one outcome-based standard (Klaasen, 2012). A second

aspect of Ontario quality assurance is the Program Quality Assurance Process Audit (PQAPA),

which is administered at the institution level. It is a self-regulatory mechanism built upon quality

criteria and characteristics drawn from the international quality assurance literature (Klaasen,

2012).

The Ontario college system also benefits from the services of two arms-length agents of

the Ontario government, the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) and

the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO). PEQAB advises the Minister of

Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) on colleges wanting to deliver degree

programming at their institution and makes recommendations accordingly, and HEQCO provides

outcome-based research and advice to the Ministry to inform policy development and planning

(Klaasen, 2012; PEQAB, 2016). Finally, MAESD engages all colleges in an annual exercise to

measure and benchmark themselves on a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) including:

student satisfaction; graduation rate; and, employment rate.

Access. The OECD connotes an economic imperative for equity policies by suggesting that

they ought to be focused upon 'leveling the playing field' with respect to labour market

opportunity (Vidovich, 2013). According to the OECD, "equitable tertiary systems are those that

ensure that access to, participation in, and outcomes of tertiary education are based only on

individual's innate abilities and study efforts" (2008, p.14).

Within Ontario, access to universities and colleges has increased over the past 10 years (Finnie & Pavlic, 2013). In fact, "colleges have an 'open access' mandate" (Klassan, 2012, p.1) and have led the pursuit of equity in Ontario, "acting as incubators for those who have historically been excluded, providing basic literacy and numeracy for those who did not finish high school, and providing exposure to the liberal arts and civics for those pursuing technical vocations and trades or transfer credit to universities" (Muzzin & Meaghan, 2014, p. 11).

Finnie and Pavlic (2013) indicate that relative to all other provinces in Canada, longitudinal data confirms that Ontario increases in access have been greatest. These authors note that persons less likely to participate in Ontario's higher education system are: first-generation students; students from lower income families (below $50,000); male; children of lone-parent families; students with disabilities; Indigenous; and, residents of small cities and rural areas. Finnie and Pavlic believe that access for these groups has been largely improving over the past 10 years owing to 'cultural' factors, "which include being exposed to the idea of PSE, being able to see PSE as a real option, and being adequately prepared for PSE – all starting at a relatively early age" (p. 61).

Other recent Ontario studies have expanded the understanding of post-secondary race representation beyond Indigenous identity. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) examined student graduation rates and found that "students who identified themselves as Black, Latin [American], Mixed, or Middle Eastern have lower graduation rates (64.5%, 69.9%, 73%, and 77.5% respectively) than students who identified themselves as East Asian, South Asian, South East Asian, and White (91.2%, 87%, 84.1% and 81.9% respectively)" (Doran, Khan, Ryu et al., 2015). Moreover, Doran, Khan, Ryu et al. (2015) found that the admissions to PSE were lowest

amongst students who identified as Black or Latin American. These findings were corroborated in the 2002 Ethnic Diversity Study (Abada & Tenkorang, 2009).

The Ontario government, beginning with the Harris Conservatives and later under the McGuinty and Wynne Liberals and through a range of recent policy papers, has defined participation targets in a relatively consistent way. The Rae Report (2005) suggested that these targets ought to be: "low income groups, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, some racial minorities and francophones" (Stonefish, O'Neil & Craig, 2016, p. 12). The former Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) described under-represented groups in the Differentiation Policy Framework for Post-Secondary Education as: "indigenous students, students with disabilities, first generation students [and] … Francophone students" (Stonefish et al., 2016, p. 12). Most recently, former Premier Kathleen Wynne, in her mandate letter to the Deputy Minister of MAESD, highlighted the imperative of "continuing to recognize and meet the needs of diverse groups of learners, including Franco-Ontarians, Indigenous Peoples, first-generation students, persons with disabilities and students with special needs through an equitable system of supports … as they transition from high school to post-secondary education and the workplace" (Stonefish et al., 2016, p. 12). According to Colleges Ontario (2012), transformation with respect to access in Ontario ought to involve improved funding from government to improve services to students and the introduction of an increasing number of pathways within and across institutions (e.g. college-university 2+2[1], recognition and transferability of completed post-secondary credits, flexible learning, etc.) to allow students to "move among programs, institutions, and career choices … without losing time or credit" (p. 8).

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[1] *Note.* The 2+2 model describes the process in which a student obtains a four-year degree by completing two years in an Ontario college and two years in a university degree program.

The Case for 'Market Culture' Leadership as Defined by the Competing Values Framework

The Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2006) is helpful for purposes of the current study because it suggests a range of leadership behaviours and actions most appropriately applied by senior leaders to effectively lead toward a specific cultural state.

Organizational culture is difficult to diagnose because the construct of culture is very broad in scope. As Cameron and Quinn (2006, p.32) note, "it comprises a complex, interrelated, comprehensive, and ambiguous set of factors". Culture diagnosis is critical, however, if a leader hopes to be able to adopt the right leadership style/s and strategies to manage and change culture effectively. Cameron and Quinn (2006) indicate that a framework, if based on empirical evidence, can validly comprise and organize most key dimensions for the construct of culture. To this end, they developed the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

The OCAI has been tested for its statistical reliability and validity across thousands of organizations, public and private (Belasan & Frank, 2010; Hoojberg & Petrock, 1993; McGraw, 1993; Panayotopoulou, Bourantas & Papalexandris, 2003). The instrument has strong reliability coefficients, defined as acceptable levels of reliability based on relevant information collected from similar research studies used to comprise a benchmark (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2012). For each of its four dimensions, coefficients match or exceed "those of the most commonly used instruments in the social and organizational sciences" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 155). The instrument also has been found to have strong concurrent, convergent, and discriminant validity (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

The OCAI has four quadrants, or core values, which represent opposite or competing assumptions: 'clan', 'adhocracy', 'hierarchy' and 'market' (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). When

assessed using the OCAI, all organizations receive a composite profile that shows them, to varying degrees, demonstrating features of all of the four core values in the Competing Values Framework. However, every organization has a dominant culture evidenced by higher scores in one or two value quadrants. When mapped, OCAI composite scores look like some variation on a traditional four-point kite (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

Organizations whose dominant culture is one of 'hierarchy' are formal, structured, efficiency (budget) oriented and procedures driven (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). The longer-term aim of such organizations is that they be stable, predictable, and extraordinarily efficient (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Evidence that a hierarchical organization was becoming less so, would include such things as: decision-making becoming more decentralized, fewer decision sign-offs, elimination of paperwork, and less micromanagement (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

Organizations, whose dominant culture is one of 'clan', are very friendly, supportive, loyal, and traditions-based. In clan dominant culture, leaders are very often thought of as mentors, coaches, and even as parent figures (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). In this form of organization, "success is defined in terms of internal climate and concern for people; the organization places a premium on teamwork, participation, and consensus" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 43).

The organization that tips most to 'adhocracy' is characterized by entrepreneurialism, creativity, and innovation; risk taking though regular experimentation is emphasized and rewarded. Leaders in this environment are typically deemed effective when they present a vision, innovative curiosity, and a healthy risk orientation (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Such an organization concerns itself with the acquisition of resources to rapidly produce innovative services and products (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

In a 'market' oriented organizational culture, the workplace is results-oriented. Processes, systems, and rules are typically much simplified to allow a more unfettered approach by constituents to achieve outcomes. In the long-term, such organizations compete to achieve stretch goals and targets. Market share and penetration, along with doing better than the competition, are what define success (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

Typically, organizations use the OCAI to assess their current state culture. They then ask the same raters to score the instrument based on the culture dimensions that would be most necessary for the organization to succeed in the future. This second rating is typically informed by a strong body of environmental scan information. It is not uncommon for organizational leaders to be alerted to an incongruence between the current state mapping and the ideal future state mapping of the organization. The delta between the repeated measures helps organizational leaders to action plan around leadership strategy, process, system, and structure changes that need occur to support the future viability and sustainability of their organization.

Cameron and Freeman validated the OCAI for U.S. institutions of higher education in 1991 (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 155). They included 334 institutions in a study that was representative of the entire United States college and university undergraduate institutional population. All colleges and universities in the study were characterized by more than one culture, and each had a dominant culture. The study determined that the dominant culture of most colleges and universities was 'hierarchy' or 'clan', and the least frequently dominant was a 'market culture' (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Institutions in the study that had a dominant market culture more capably acquired needed resources "such as revenues, good faculty, institutional visibility, and so forth" [while] "institutions with hierarchy cultures did not excel in any of the performance domains" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 156). Those institutions whose dominant

culture was 'adhocracy' performed better along performance domains associated with "adaptation, system openness, innovation, and cutting edge knowledge" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 156).

Strategic Leadership

Definition and higher education context. Strategic leadership is a term most often reserved to describe leadership that is provided "for the overall enterprise" and implies "substantive decision-making responsibilities beyond the interpersonal and relational aspects usually associated with leadership" (Finkelstein, Hambrick & Cannella, 2009, p. 4). Naturally then, attention in the study of strategic leadership focuses overwhelmingly on the leadership provided by an organization's CEO or President. Strategic leadership can and does also sometimes reference the very small group of leaders who comprise the top executive team (Finkelstein et al., 2009).

Within the higher education context, one for both North American universities and colleges where predominant outcomes include quality improvement, enrolment growth, and resource growth, Presidents need to be adoptive of a transformative as opposed to a traditional, transactional leadership style (Neumann & Neumann, 2000). According to Neumann and Neumann (2000), a President's transformational leadership style ought to incorporate 'visioning', 'focusing' and 'implementing'. Visioning is described by these authors as a leader's ability to "see the organization's future clearly and completely" (Neumann & Neumann, 2000, p. 98). It involves dissatisfaction with the status quo and the consequent identification of environmental opportunities and aligned goals that "set a long-term growth plan" for the organization (Neumann & Neumann, 2000, p. 98). Focusing involves leadership that enables the rank-and-file to adopt the vision. It requires the creation of a guiding coalition of committed and

enthusiastic organizational leaders, identification and attention paid to new niches and priority areas, and organization of teams needed to execute on the vision (Neumann & Neumann, 2000). Finally, implementation, from the President's perspective, involves encouragement of leaders and staff to participate in goal achievement, inspiration provided these groups to stretch themselves, influencing and removing barriers to goal achievement, and regular feedback (Neumann & Neumann, 2000).

Focusing on the Canadian higher education context, Paul (2011) tends to agree with the positions taken by Neumann and Neumann (2000) respecting effective strategic leadership amongst university and college presidents. He asserts that Presidents must "manage the 'big picture' – develop and communicate a mission, vision, and long-term objectives for the institution", and mobilize scarce resources accordingly (Paul, 2011, p. 72). In his view, Presidents should only have a few long-term objectives that become the lens through which the President's and the organization's success is measured (Paul, 2011). Woodworth (2013) concurs with Paul by stating that "as difficult as it might seem in an organization like a university, where the constituents exhibit more loyalty to their disciplines and departments than to the organization as a whole, it is important for the [President] to articulate a vision and, through his/her own commitment and passion, inspire the organization to pursue common goals" (p. 118). Moreover, Presidents ought to never miss a chance to re-iterate these priorities with constituents and look for ways to create local champions (Paul, 2011; Woodworth, 2013).

Several authors strongly suggest the need for Presidents of higher education institutions to assume a very broad-based collaborative approach in setting a vision and accompanying strategic focus areas (e.g., O'Connell, Hickerson & Pillutla, 2011; Morrill, 2007; Paul, 2011; Tegarden, Sarason & Childers, & Hatfield, 2005; Woodworth, 2013). O'Connell et al. (2011) describe the

emergence of a vision "as a dance among multiple partners with senior leaders playing a key role in the choreography" (p. 106). While these authors describe advantages for senior leaders creating the vision individually and communicating it directly to followers – namely, that they control the vision content and message, they describe many more advantages to vision co-creation. Collaborative, vision co-creation will more likely mitigate "the potential for follower inattention, misunderstanding, inaccurate interpretation, and incomplete memory" (O'Connell et al., 2011, p. 111). Tegarden et al. (2005) assert that follower assimilation of the vision and associated priorities requires "iterative" formulation "involving managers and employees in an ongoing dialogue" particularly when the external environment is relatively dynamic or turbulent (p. 11). Both Paul (2011) and Woodworth (2013) describe the importance of listening to stakeholders' views on vision and priorities to obtain buy-in and ensure that associated plans become appropriately robust and nuanced. Morrill (2007) asserts that a compelling vision is "the result of a collective process, open debate, and intense discussions, often over a long period of time" (p.7). The author further asserts that this process needs to apply additional analytical methods to assess the key products, services, and niches that the college or university ought to exploit (Morrill, 2007).

Paul (2011) suggests that Presidents need to focus on academic standards (aimed at incremental improvements in quality) and ensure that appropriate rigor exists with respect to the recruitment, selection and training of faculty. According to Paul (p. 81), "follow-through is equally important in building a culture that is never quite comfortable with the status quo, looks outward in establishing criteria for top performance, and builds on success to foster an atmosphere of achievement, teamwork, and celebration. Of such virtues are academic reputations made". Paul goes on to say that, "I do believe that institutions that seriously address

legitimate student concerns about quality and service may thereby enhance their own reputation and profile that branding and marketing campaigns could never achieve by themselves" (p. 241).

Despite assertions made that strategic leadership in the current context is more important than ever, several authors lament that a large proportion of Presidents and their most senior team members have difficulty differentiating strategy from tactics and spend too much of their time attending to short-term tactical questions (Paul, 2011). Paul (2011) laments that many Presidents are just not good at strategic planning, overseeing plans that may be non-collaborative, "strong on rhetoric [and] weak on establishing priorities", and which are "not much more than a compendium of all of the wish-lists on campus" (p. 75). Neumann and Neumann (2000) conducted a study of 279 American liberal arts college presidents randomly selected from 350 institutions wherein they found that only 35% were rated 'high' on visioning, only 43% demonstrated strong 'focusing' skills, and 56% demonstrated strength in 'implementation' (p. 99). They also found that Presidents who were weak on visioning, focusing, and implementing would only be successful in "relatively stable environments with no need for significant changes" (Neumann & Neumann, 2000, p. 100). Moreover, this group, which they labeled 'maintainers', were oft associated with very negative outcomes – 37% having been associated with significant declines and fully 93% having been associated with moderate declines in their institution's performance (p. 107).   In her longitudinal study, which involved interviews with 32 U.S. university and college Presidents participating in a national leadership project, Neumann (1989) found that Presidents who had been in their role longer (five to 22 years) were less complex, interpretive, and adaptive in their strategic behaviours and in turn, less effective strategically relative to newer presidents of one to three years (p. 142).

'Socialized charismatic leadership. The construct of 'charisma', and more specifically, 'charismatic leadership', is not universally defined. As a consequence, 'charismatic leadership' has been regarded by different authors as both good and bad (e.g., Babiak & Hare, 2006; Collins, 2001; House & Howell, 1992; Maxwell, 1999; Senge, 2006). Collins (2001) cites several examples where, in his opinion, charismatic leadership has been a key source of organizational decline for several large companies. Collins's assertions are well supported by a systematic, five-year research project he led wherein he first identified a large sample of companies that improved and sustained objective performance results, from 'good' to 'great', over at least a 15-year period. These companies were then contrasted to "a carefully selected set of comparison companies" to answer the research question, "what did the good-to-great companies share in common that distinguished them from the comparison companies" (Collins, 2001, p.7). Comparison companies included both "direct comparisons – companies that were in the same industry as the good-to-great companies" and which benefited from like resources and opportunities, but which did not move from good-to-great, and organizations termed "unsustained comparisons – companies that made a short-term shift from good to great but failed to maintain the trajectory" (Collins, 2001, p. 8). Although he does not come right out and define the construct, he strongly implies that charismatic leadership equals leaders having very strong-willed personalities, which at various times are characterized by self - aggrandizement, self-absorption, and even narcissistic motives and behaviours (Collins, 2001). As Collins (2001) suggests, charismatic leaders can lead with such force and fear that constituents worry more about the leader than the organization's position relative to external challenges and opportunities. As Collins indicates, the "strength of personality can sow the seeds of problems, when people filter the brutal facts from" the leader (p. 73). He also argues that constituents who are not

afforded the opportunity to share the brutal facts with their leader become de-motivated (Collins, 2001).

Some of the very recent literature associated with charismatic leadership has very clearly drawn it into a bad light. Case in point, Babiak and Hare (2006) have made an association between charisma and the organizational bogyman. In their book, *Snakes in Suits – When Psychopaths Go to Work*, the authors characterize charismatic leadership more as 'charm' that is used by organizational psychopaths in a very exploitative light (Babiak & Hare, 2006). Babiak and Hare (2006) base their assertions on several decades' worth of research contributions that they have both made to understanding psychopathy. Specifically, their book is based on an examination of "psychopathy and its correlates in a sample of 203 corporate professionals selected by their companies to participate in management development programs" (Babiak, Neumann & Hare, 2010) and psychometric validation of the most commonly used clinical assessment tool for identifying psychopathy in individuals, the Psychopathy Checklist (Hare, 1993, p. 174). Babiak and Hare (2006) suggest that "to coworkers and peers, [the psychopathic leader or team member] comes across as a likeable person, perhaps a bit narcissistic or manipulative, but friendly, open and honest nonetheless" (p. 123). In short, Babiak and Hare (2006) assert that followers can easily fall prey to such a leader or team member's charm as many followers may be more influenced "by style than substance" (p. 92).

Senge (2006) laments that a stereotype of charismatic leadership may indeed exist in society of a leader who is "strong and forceful…someone who commands attention" (p. 339). Moreover, he suggests that such perceptions are often drawn or formulated as a result of "certain idiosyncratic features that make the person 'special,' like striking good looks and a deep voice" (Senge, 2006, p. 339). He aptly points out however, that the word charisma derives from the

Catholic Church's word *charism*, which means "one's distinctive personal gifts" (Senge, 2006, p. 339). He strongly suggests that charisma is learned because it evolves through the ongoing development of one's gifts. He points out that individual leaders will have different gifts, and focus differentially on the improvement of themselves. What all charismatic leaders share in common is their commitment to self-improve. He acknowledges that such leaders can be distinguished by "the clarity and persuasiveness of their ideas, the depth of their commitment and the extent of their openness to continually learn more" (Senge, 2006, p. 339). They are not 'know-it-alls.' To the contrary, they tend to ask many questions and offer regularly that they do not have the answer to many or most questions. Their vision, humility, and genuineness instill confidence in followers and a clear togetherness – "we can learn whatever we need to learn in order to achieve the results we truly desire" (p. 339). Contrary to Collin's (2001) position that charismatic leaders often fail to pay attention to and reflect upon their organization's current reality, Senge (2006) asserts that charismatic leaders earnestly reflect on their current reality whilst appreciating the trust and power placed in them to hold a vision for the organization.

Maxwell (1999) indicates that charismatic leadership is "the ability to draw people to you" (p.10). He suggests, rather positively, that charismatic leaders "are celebrators, not complainers" (Maxwell, 1999, p. 10). He indicates that they promote learning organizations insofar as they concern themselves with sharing their knowledge and wisdom and helping constituents to discover their own strengths. Maxwell asserts that "the bottom line is otherminded-ness; leaders who think about others and their concerns before thinking of themselves exhibit charisma" (Maxwell, 1999, p. 12).

House and Howell (1992) express their concern that charismatic leadership has been a broadly defined term "that does not distinguish between good or moral and evil or immoral

leadership" (p. 83). As a result, leaders from Hitler and Mussolini to Mahatma Ghandi and Nelson Mandela have been variously described as charismatic. House and Howell attempted to objectively describe these differences by introducing sub-types of charismatic leadership that could be validly measured. Through their extensive research, they were able to develop two, albeit not mutually exclusive typologies: 'socialized charismatic leadership' and 'personalized charismatic leadership.' What both typologies share in common is the fact that charismatic leadership requires that the leader have high self-confidence and moral conviction. They assert this to be so because in all cases, the leader's approach and view will be a departure from the status quo and resistance, often significant, can be expected of constituents at least initially (House & Howell, 1992). They also share in common leadership characterized by extraordinary persistence in the "face of high risks and major obstacles" and a proclivity to influence others (House & Howell, 1992, p. 87).

'Socialized charismatic leadership' is defined by House and Howell (1992) as being comprised of egalitarian behavior and a focus on developing others and empowering them to be the best that they can be. This form of leadership is not fueled by self-interest. To the contrary, the collective interests of the group or organization become the focus (House & Howell, 1992). House and Howell (1992) indicate that research suggests "socialized charismatic leaders tend to be altruistic, to work through legitimate established channels and systems of authority when such systems exist, and to be self-controlled and follower-oriented rather than narcissistic" (p. 84). Conversely, House and Howell (1992) describe 'personalized charismatic leadership' as leadership that focuses upon dominance of followers, which is authoritarian, and is characterized by the leaders who tend to be "narcissistic, impetuous and impulsively aggressive" (p. 84).

House and Howell (1992) conclude that the vast majority of leaders in complex, contemporary organizations tend to lean in the direction of socialized charismatic leadership. Interestingly, their definition and characterization of personalized charismatic leadership would seem to be relatively congruent with Collin's characterization of charismatic leaders generally. According to House and Howell, personalized charismatic leaders may create 'habituated followership', a condition where followers become loyally submissive and "embrace their subordinate status so completely that failure to comply with the leader's request is unthinkable" (p. 101). These are precisely the conditions that Collins (2001) describes when he constructs his thesis of the 'dark side' of charismatic leadership.

Conger et al. (2000) assert that followers, in complex, contemporary organizations attribute charismatic leadership to leaders who do three things capably. First, they indicate that charismatic leaders are perceived by followers as persons who have a strong desire to move beyond the status quo. They are people who regularly assess the external environment for opportunity and, based on their systematic assessment, act as agents of radical change. They are also persons who are perceived by followers to construct a shared, as opposed to independent idealized, future vision and capably articulate this vision in a very inspiring way (Conger et al., 2000). Consistent with House and Howell's (1992) characterization of 'socialized charismatic leadership', Conger et al. (2000) indicate that charismatic leaders are viewed by followers as empowering of them. They do not instill fear and lead by being unnecessarily authoritarian in their approach. To the contrary, they are conferred the status of charismatic leadership because they effectively and genuinely build trust and model humility (Conger et al., 2000). It is precisely because of these leader characteristics, that Conger et al. (2000) suggest followers choose to place their trust in charismatic leaders and change their attitudes and behaviours in

alignment with the shared vision. Their research, in contrast to that of Collins (2001), indicates that a key outcome of charismatic leadership is that it will influence follower task performance significantly for the better (Conger et al., 2000).

The research of Conger et al. (2000) is based on repeated, moderate to large sample administrations of their psychometrically validated 20-item *Conger-Kanungo Charismatic Leadership Scale*. These studies confirm that the instrument has "adequate reliability and convergent and discriminant validity coefficients" (Conger et al., 2000, p. 754). The sub-constructs of the measure include: 'reverence'; 'trust'; 'satisfaction with leader'; 'collective identity'; 'group performance'; and 'empowerment' (Conger et al., 2000). These sub-constructs and their associated items constellate to a definition and characterization of perceived charismatic leadership akin to the definition and characteristics of 'socialized charismatic leadership' identified by House and Howell (1992) in their research.

Fiol, Harris and House (1999) indicate that the construct of 'socialized charismatic leadership,' also labeled by them as 'neo-charismatic leadership', has been subjected to "more than 100 empirical tests" (p. 451). They indicate that the empirical findings consistently demonstrate that such leaders "cause followers to become highly committed to the leader's mission, make significant personal sacrifices in the interest of the mission, and perform above and beyond the call of duty" (Fiol et al., 1999, p. 451). The magnitude or size of statistical differences between socially charismatic leaders and non-charismatic leaders (in terms of impact on key criterion variables) is important. Effect sizes range from 0.35 to 0.50 (low-moderate to moderate) and 0.40 to 0.80 (low-moderate to high) for "effects on follower satisfaction and organizational identification and commitment" (Fiol et al., 1999, p. 451).

Fiol et al. (1999) also illustrate how socialized charismatic leaders engage in a series of deliberate and predictable linguistic techniques, over the course of their tenure, to enlist the support of their followers toward engagement in a shared vision and execution of change. Early in their tenure, such leaders engage in "frame breaking" or follower "unfreezing" by working with followers to challenge the value that they place upon convention norms (Fiol et al., 1999). According to the authors, "a leader can do this by convincing [followers] that conventional thinking is not fruitful, but rather dysfunctional" (Fiol et al., 1999, p. 459). Such leaders then engage in moving their follower's values frame ("frame moving") through a process of double negation: "non-desire for convention must be transformed into desire for non-convention, and non-fear of innovation into fear of non-innovation" (Fiol et al., 1999, p. 461). In the later stages of their tenure, 'socialized charismatic leaders' involve themselves in follower "frame re-alignment" or "re-freezing" characterized by efforts to have followers replace their now negated view of convention with a positive and inspiring alternative future, thereby mobilizing them to act (Fiol et al., 1999).

'Socialized charismatic leadership' very closely maps to the five practices of exemplary leadership identified by Kouzes and Posner (2012). Kouzes and Posner (2012) assert that leaders at their best: model the way for followers; inspire a shared vision; challenge the process; enable others to act; and encourage the heart.

Much as Fiol et al. (1999) describe a process that 'socialized charismatic leaders' engage in to examine their own values and make explicit how current organizational values may be in the way of organizational progress ("frame breaking"), Kouzes and Posner (2012) describe the importance of effective leaders clarifying their values and leadership philosophy for themselves, engaging followers to examine their own values, and then "building consensus around values,

principles and standards" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 69). Kouzes and Posner (2012) indicate very strongly the need for effective leaders to convey an inspiring view of the future and engage constituents in a shared approach to its creation in order that it will "have the magnetic power to sustain commitment over time" (p. 125). Conger et al. (2000) also strongly assert that 'socially charismatic leader' behavior is completely consistent with this approach.

Kouzes and Posner's (2012) notion of challenging the process begins with leaders who challenge the status quo, and innovate and take risks. They indicate that leaders need to constantly be asking themselves, "What's new? What's next? What's better?" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 183). House and Howell (1992) similarly indicate that 'socialized charismatic leaders' persist in the face of high risks. Conger et al. (2000) also assert that 'socialized charismatic leaders' are perceived by followers to move beyond the status quo.

Kouzes and Posner (2012) indicate that to enable others to act, an effective leader must support them to "feel powerful and in control of their circumstances" (p. 268). House and Howell (1992), Conger et al. (2000), and Fiol et al. (1999) all concur that 'socialized charismatic leaders' are very focused upon the development of their followers and their empowerment. Besides empowering by "articulating and championing an energizing cause", socialized charismatic leaders also "empower by providing followers with information about their personal efficacy" (i.e., verbalizing confidence in them, relieving them of red-tape, and developing meaningful, motivating goals; Conger et al., 2000, p.753).

To encourage the heart, Kouzes and Posner (2012) suggest that effective leaders "recognize [follower] contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence [and celebrating] the values and victories" (p. 274). Where evidence of such rewards is not made explicit by authors of 'socialized charismatic leadership' reviewed for this paper, it could be

inferred that some degree of confidence does occur based upon favorable effect sizes of follower's perceptions of socialized charismatic leaders on measures of follower satisfaction and organizational identification and commitment (Fiol et al., 1999).

Sinek (2009) is a strong proponent of charismatic leadership in the 'socialized charismatic' tradition. For Sinek, charisma is difficult to define and extremely difficult to replicate. From his perspective, however, charismatic leaders are those who have a clarity of 'why.' That is, they have a purpose, cause or belief, bigger than oneself that inspires their followers (Sinek, 2009). Using the example of Martin Luther King, Sinek describes how an inspiring leader, very much open to sharing his/her vision, wisdom, knowledge, and concern for others, capably builds trust with followers and enlists their support and commitment. As Sinek points out, "the details of HOW to achieve civil rights or WHAT needed to be done were debatable, and different groups tried different strategies. Violence was employed by some, appeasement by others. Regardless of HOW or WHAT was being done, there was one thing everyone had in common – WHY they were doing it" (p. 127).

Marquardt (2014) asserts that complex contemporary organizations, operating within a turbulent external context (as a given), require leaders to challenge the status quo, be visionary and inspiring, and engage followers by understanding their values, beliefs, concerns, hopes and dreams. He fervently argues against strong-willed, exploitative leadership, particularly since, as Collins (2001) asserts, it will create risks for the organization's success because the right questions will not be asked and the right decisions, in the best interests of all constituents, will not be taken (Marquardt, 2014). Just as Collins (2001) offers examples of censuring organizational cultures caused by strong-willed, authoritarian, and even exploitative leadership, such as demonstrated by Roy Ash and Lee Iacocca, Marquardt (2014) offers calamitous

examples such as the Titanic and the Challenger spacecraft. Marquardt (2014) endorses characteristics of 'socialized charismatic leadership', such as humility, vision, and empowerment of followers. Leaders with these sorts of characteristics are, in his opinion, inclined to lead through active inquiry. According to Marquardt (2014), "in answer driven organizations [as opposed to questioning organizations], curiosity, risk taking challenging the status quo, and even the willingness to be wrong all take a back seat" (p. 31).

Collins (2001) argues that the most effective leaders are those who reach Level Five on his self–developed, evidence-based Leadership Hierarchy. Levels One through Three of the Leadership Hierarchy focus upon achievement of personal accountability, team member contributions, and managerial capability (Collins, 2001). Levels Four and Five focus upon characteristics required of an effective leader and an effective executive (Collins, 2001). Ironically, these characteristics map very closely to characteristics of 'socialized charismatic leaders' defined in some detail earlier in this paper. Specifically, the key Level Four leader is one who "catalyzes commitment to and vigorous pursuit of a clear and compelling vision, stimulating higher performance standards" in others (Collins, 2001, p. 20). A Level Five leader "builds enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will" (Collins, 2001, p. 20).

Change management orientation. A review of the literature on strategic change leadership models and approaches is also instructive to the current study because much has been written in the literature about frameworks, processes, and strategies that leaders can and ought to adopt, regardless of their interpersonal leadership qualities, to effect change and transformation. The work of some of these authors suggests that in absence of some of the interpersonal strengths described earlier in the literature review, leaders can still effect change, albeit perhaps

with less impact. No single author's perspective is fully instructive, on its own, to leaders in post-secondary institutions struggling with how to move their culture from a dominant hierarchical state to an increasingly market oriented one. To begin to understand why, a sampling of the models and approaches is described here.

In 1996, Kotter published a seminal change leadership book titled *Leading Change*. Although the book is now 22 years old, its message is enduring. This is perhaps because at the time, many pundits were predicting that much of the significant change in organizations occurring over the previous two decades would disappear. To the contrary, Kotter argued that powerful macroeconomic effects were at work, which would persist, and indeed become increasingly complex and forceful thereby necessitating more and more organizations to "reduce costs, improve the quality of products and services, locate new opportunities for growth, and increase productivity" (p.3).

Kotter (1996) was concerned that much of the change activity that occurred in organizations in the decades preceding *Leading Change* had come at a great cost to constituents and the organizations themselves (i.e., wasted resources and avoidable staff mistreatment). He pinpointed the primary change failure in organizations to be one of complacency characterized by a tendency to rest on past laurels and be inactive with respect to assessing opportunities and challenges in the environment. He attributed organizational complacency to such factors as organizations experiencing "too much past success, a lack of visible crises, low performance standards, [and] insufficient feedback from external constituencies" (Kotter, 1996, p. 5). In Kotter's (1996) opinion, leaders and constituents, clinging to the status quo and lacking a sense of urgency, spelt the conditions for graduated organizational decline.

In addition to the primary change error of 'complacency' made by organizations during change, Kotter (1996) identified a further seven areas that would comprise the foundation for his change model. The errors included: failing to create a sufficiently powerful guiding coalition (i.e., a strong executive sponsor and engagement and alignment of key leaders throughout the organization); underestimating the power of vision (i.e., a statement or story that inspires, aligns, and focuses constituent effort); under-communicating the vision (i.e., communication of the vision must be organizationally wide and deep, consistent and persistent); failing to remove obstacles in the way of the vision (i.e., improving enabling systems, processes, and structures); failing to create short-term wins (i.e., completed change deliverables that excite and energize constituents); declaring victory too soon (i.e., change needs to be allowed to embed itself in the culture); and, failure to take the steps to firmly anchor the change in culture (i.e., teaching people in the new behaviours and managing succession carefully) (Kotter, 1996). Flipping each of these errors to the positive, Kotter identified an eight-step process framework through which leaders wishing to make a change of any magnitude, could and should adhere to. Although there is an aspect of sequencing to the model, it is also intended to be iterative (Kotter, 1996):

"The Eight-Stage Process for Creating Major Change

1. Establishing a sense of urgency – through examining the external environment and identifying challenges and opportunities.

2. Creating the guiding coalition – by bringing together the individuals with enough organizational power and influence to drive the change and then supporting them to function as an effective team.

3. Developing a vision and strategies to achieve it.

4. Communicating the change vision – leveraging all possible methods to constantly make constituents aware of the vision and its strategies and ensuring that all members of the guiding coalition consistently and deliberately model behaviours expected of employees.

5. Empowering broad-based action – involves leveraging the power and influence of leaders committed to the change to help remove obstacles; supporting the removal of processes and structures that act as a barrier to the change vision; and, inviting staff to take risks and to embrace new ideas and actions supportive of the change vision.

6. Generating short-term wins – involves identifying strategic activities in support of the vision that can be achieved most easily in the change process, implementing them successfully, and then broadly communicating the success and acknowledging and rewarding all persons responsible.

7. Consolidating gains and producing more change – involves leveraging early implementation wins to engender organizational support for more changes to systems, structures, and policies dis-aligned to the vision; ensuring human resource systems recruit for staff having the core competencies and aspirations aligned to vision transformation; and, keeping the process alive by introducing additional change agents and necessary projects.

8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture – involves proactively helping staff across the organization to recognize how their specific behaviours make a direct contribution to strategic success, and supporting managers and leaders through

training and development, mentorship, and formalized succession to be highly and

consistently effective" (Kotter, 1996, p.21).

Kotter (1996) rather astutely indicates that change neither comes easily or quickly. He

describes an imperative for individuals to engage in lifelong learning in both management

sciences and leadership. Kotter however stops short of recommending that organizations of the

present and future commit to the systematic learning of their employees in leadership and

management sciences. To the contrary, he implies that certain individuals will be more 'wired'

to engage in lifelong learning, and these are precisely the sorts of people that organizations need

to recruit, and identify for development, promotion and succession (Kotter, 1996).

The writing of Jim Collins in *Good to Great* complement the earlier work of Kotter (1996)

insofar as Collins (2000) starts from a similar premise - that organizations often settle for

mediocrity, and in so doing, threaten their future sustainability. Like Kotter, Collins also

suggests that organizational change for the better requires significant leadership discipline.

Finally, the two authors agree that change is slow and change leaders require significant patience

and perseverance.

Collins's (2000) model of change differs from Kotter's (1996) in several respects. Kotter's

model first assumes that change leaders are or ought already to be in place in the organization to

execute on his iterative step-wise process. Collins however is clear that this may not be the case

at all. In fact, he asserts that for change to occur effectively the senior-most leaders need to

possess qualities of what he describes as "Level Five" leadership. These qualities include being

visionary and capable of inspiring high performance of others through humility and

perseverance. Minimally leaders in the next level ranks should be highly accountable and

ideally, capable of becoming Level Five leaders themselves (Collins, 2000). Collins therefore

asserts that for organizations to optimally effect change, their first step must be to recruit for these qualities and further build them through training and development. Somewhat dramatically, he also suggests that organizations ought to engage in a systematic approach to removing leaders in key portfolios from the organization when they do not exhibit these qualities, through 'right-sizing' or re-assignment (Collins, 2000).

Once all of the Level 5 leaders are in place, Collins (2000) suggests that the organization ought not to launch into a dramatic change program, such as is prescribed by Kotter (1996). To the contrary, he suggests that the right leaders, installed in the right places, will naturally engage in objective assessments of the facts, confidently narrow a long list of priorities to a very few, and not be afraid to speak to one another with candor. Moreover, and once seized by the facts, this same group of leaders will thoughtfully take a long-term view as to what is needed, and plot an appropriately nuanced path forward that optimizes organizational performance whilst mitigating risk (Collins, 2000).

Collins (2000) uses the metaphor of a 'flywheel' to describe the daily, uphill, laborious effort required of leaders and constituents to move the organization in a single, purposeful way forward, building momentum slowly until a period of breakthrough. 'Breakthrough' is achieved when a cadence develops with the execution of the nuanced plan, such that leaders and staff across the organization fully understand their roles and the individual and group outcomes that they are to strive toward (Collins, 2000).

Fullan (2000) introduced the notion of five components of leadership representing "independent but mutual reinforcing forces for positive change" (p. 17). He is critical of Kotter (1996) because he believes that his eight change steps are overly general and unclear, even contradictory, and therefore, tipping toward non-actionable advice (Fullan, 2000). His model is

also different from that of Kotter (1996) and Collins (2000) insofar as it focuses on ways that leaders ought to anticipate, support and leverage the psycho-emotional responses of various constituents to organizational change. Specifically, the model urges change leaders to appeal to the moral interests of constituents, keep change in response to shifting environmental opportunity to a minimum, provide psycho-emotional support to staff through learning, development and strong communication, and respect and have strategies for managing resistors. Threaded through the whole of Fullan's (2000) model is the importance of constantly maintaining, building, respecting, and celebrating relationships shared throughout the organization. The five components of Fullan's (2000) framework are: "attending to a broader moral purpose, keeping on top of the change process, cultivating relationships, sharing knowledge, and setting a vision and context for creating coherence in organizations" (p. 3). Each of the components will be described separately.

Moral purpose involves demonstrable, deliberate steps taken by a leader to make an improvement in the lives of societal members, clients, or customers, and staff (Fullan, 2000). It is Fullan's (2000) belief that members of working cultures will increasingly look for meaning and passion in their work. He also believes that moral purpose and sustainable organizational effectiveness are mutually dependent (Fullan, 2000). Fullan (2000) cautions however, that "moral purpose without an understanding of change will lead to moral martyrdom" (p. 5).

According to Fullan (2000), it is difficult to understand the change process because change is incredibly complex. He offers six guidelines to help leaders think about change. First, he advises that the goal of change should not be one of being the most innovative (Fullan, 2000). Fullan clarifies what he means by 'most innovative' by indicating that an organization should not relentlessly take on innovation after innovation. Leaders who do so tend to constantly be out

ahead of constituents never allowing them to catch up. As a consequence, save for the leader's understanding, the change imperative rarely becomes fully understandable by constituents and ceases to be sustainable (Fullan, 2000). Second, "it is not enough to have the best ideas" (Fullan, 2000, p. 38). Fullan indicates that leadership style, adapted and tailored to context, is critical to promote and gain acceptance of the idea, otherwise it is often likely to fall flat. Third, Fullan indicates that leaders need to "appreciate the implementation dip" (p. 40). An implementation dip "is literally a dip in performance and confidence as one encounters an innovation that requires new skills and new understanding" (Fullan, 2000, p. 40).

An implementation dip amongst employees is often experienced with anxiety, fear, caution, and/or confusion. Unless a leader demonstrates empathy for persons undergoing implementation dips, they will be unlikely to embrace the change and may indeed set out to sabotage it (Fullan, 2000). Fourth, it is important to redefine resistance (Fullan, 2000). In short, the message here is that leader's need listen not only to people who are onboard but also intently to those who may not be. He argues that it is only then that a leader will be positioned to effectively help individuals move through an implementation dip. Also, knowing resistant positions helps leaders to "deliberately build in differences" to change strategies (Fullan, 2000, p. 43). Fifth, organizations during change need to reculture (Fullan, 2000). The type of reculturing that Fullan (2000) suggests optimizes change is one that "activates and deepens moral purpose through collaborative work cultures that respect differences and constantly build and test knowledge against measurable results – a culture within which one realizes that sometimes being off balance is a learning moment" (Fullan, 2000, p. 44). Finally, Fullan (2000) asserts that change cannot follow a checklist or step-by-step approach, however complex and sophisticated.

Fullan (2000) indicates that all successful change initiatives share one factor in common – relationships improve. According to Fullan (2000), "if relationships improve, things get better [but] if they remain the same or get worse, ground is lost" (p. 19). Relationship building is by no means easy – it is invariably complicated because it involves diverse people and groups. Fullan (2000) cautions that although consensus building is critical to relationship formation and development, leaders need to be wary when consensus seems to be arrived upon too easily.

Fullan (2000) argues the importance of good information sharing by leaders, particularly during change. He indicates that information is only useful within an organization "when is takes on a social life" (Fullan, 2000, p. 89). However, although organizations usually do a reasonably good job of identifying best practices, they struggle with knowledge transfer and application. Fullan (2000) goes so far as to suggest that organizations need identify knowledge sharing as a core value and "then establish mechanisms and procedures that embody the value in action" (p. 99). Here, some design criteria are helpful. First, information should be tailored to the audience or user-group (Fullan, 2000). Second, the information shared should, to the extent possible, be brief and to the point (Fullan, 2000). Third, the information shared should focus upon tacit knowledge, which then requires that personal interaction or exchange occur independent of or in addition to "dissemination of products or explicit knowledge" (Fullan, 2000, p. 90).

Coherence making necessitates a leader's ability to appreciate and respect that environments, particularly when they are changing, cannot be fully understood, but the messiness of their complexity can at least be "reigned in" (Fullan, 2000). The coherence-making role of the leader can be understood from two concepts of complexity science – 'self organizing' and 'strange attractors' (Fullan, 2000). Self-organizing through understanding change,

developing and nurturing relationships, and communicating effectively creates breakthroughs within the culture through which greater coherence can be achieved (Fullan, 2000). According to Fullan (2000), 'strange attractors' "involve experiences or forces that attract the energies and commitment of employees. They are strange because they are not predictable in a specific sense" (p. 115). "Visions, for example, can act as attractors, but only when they are shared at all levels of the organization, and only when they emerge through experience, thereby generating commitment" (Fullan, 2000, p. 115).

Senge (2006) is unique from the other change management authors insofar as he asserts that change should not be so much reacted and responded to but rather prepared for through the staff and organizational resiliencies that develop once traditional organizations commit to being 'learning organizations'. Senge presents an interesting case for constantly building up leadership capacities within an organization as the best way to deal with and manage any change that may come along. According to Senge (2006, p.3), a 'learning organization' is one where "people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together". He argues that no one person can be expected to be 'the grand strategist' in an organization with others following through on the direction. Rather, contemporary organizations need to learn to enlist the commitment of constituents, at all organizational levels, toward learning (Senge, 2003).

Senge (2006) describes five key components that in his opinion need to exist for a learning organization to build organizational resiliency to change. First, organizations need apply systems thinking – seeking to understand the interdependence, interrelatedness, and effects of different systems upon one another in order that whole patterns of change can be understood

(Senge, 2006). Second, organizations need to support their members to develop their own personal mastery. According to Senge (2006, p.7), "personal mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively". Third, organizations also need to support constituents to understand and address their mental models (Senge, 2006). Mental models are ingrained assumptions and generalizations that each person has which left unaddressed can constrain their thinking, choices, and behavior (Senge, 2006). Fourth, change requires a strong vision. As Senge (2006) notes, the vision need be genuine and a shared picture of the future. Finally, a learning organization requires teams across the organization to be constantly learning. As Senge (2006, p.9) indicates, "when teams are truly learning, not only are they producing extraordinary results, but the individual members are growing more rapidly than could have occurred otherwise".

It is important to note that the aforementioned five components of Senge's (2006) model cannot function wholly independent of one another. Moreover, attention cannot be paid exclusively to one or a few of the parts and not to one or two others if an organization is to optimize and sustain performance (Senge, 2006). Rather, as Senge (2006) asserts, the five components or 'disciplines' need to "develop as an ensemble" (p.11). Ultimately, and "at the heart of a learning organization, is a shift of mind – from seeing ourselves as separate from the world to connected to the world, from seeing problems as caused by someone or something 'out there' to seeing how our own actions create the problems we experience" (Senge, 2006, p. 12). It is also a place where constituents constantly experiment and take risks with how they have both created their current reality and how they can improve it (Senge, 2006).

Creating strategic alignment. Strategic alignment stated quite simply is "agreement on strategic priorities by decision-making groups, including those at the top, middle, and/or operational levels of their organizations" leading to enhanced cooperation and coordination in the execution of strategy (Walter, Kellermanns, Floyd, Veiga & Matherne, 2013, p. 304). Presidents and their most senior executive colleagues must provide significant leadership attention to ensuring that "intentional congruence" exists between "goals, functions and activities" within their organization (Vagdia, 2014, p. 117). Indeed, Kellermanns et al. (2011) determined through a meta-analysis of "23 independent samples reporting on the degree of consensus within 2089 management teams" that a positive relationship exists between consensus and organizational performance (p. 131).

Strategic alignment is "both a process and an outcome" (Vagdia, 2014, p. 117). The process is characterized by senior executive commitment to defining, executing upon, and sustaining strategic alignment; the introduction and maintenance of infrastructure supports within the organization (e.g. training and development, performance measurement, recruitment and retention, rewards, etc.); validly and consistently measuring what is strategically important; and, individual and group performance management against strategic priorities (Vagdia, 2014). The outcome is a high-performing organization characterized by customer satisfaction, limited wasted effort, and achievement of key organizational success items in the longer-term (Vagdia, 2014). In fact, "the ability of an organization to achieve alignment across a complex management function such as strategy, is a competence that is likely to be distinctive (that is, difficult to replicate and a source of enduring advantage)" (Andrews, Boyne, Meier, O'Toole & Walker, 2012, p. 92).   Lack of attention paid to strategic alignment may not only be the

difference between fair and excellent performance. Misalignment, and particularly serious misalignment, may actually damage organizational effectiveness (Andrews et al., 2012).

Based on their longitudinal panel study that surveyed 3,233 managers from 334 public British agencies delivering services in the areas of land use planning, education, public housing, waste management, welfare benefits, and social care, Andrews et al. (2012) demonstrated how strategic alignment was critical for public organizations that assume a 'prospector' as opposed to a 'defender' orientation. 'Prospector' organizations are forward-looking. They are prone to significant experimentation in response to environmental opportunity. Their strategy "would revolve around being more proactive than other agencies, innovating, and risk-taking. To the contrary, 'defender' organizations are not proactive and lack the boldness to innovate. Instead, they adopt innovations that have been proven elsewhere (Andrews et al., 2012). According to Andrews et al. (2012, p.81) "they emphasize core business, key services, and the costs of service delivery rather than new products and markets and devote primary attention to improving the efficiency of their existing operations". Andrews et al. (2012) assert that 'prospector' organizations benefit from strong strategic alignment to mitigate and manage differences in sub-unit views regarding where and how to innovate. To the contrary, and since the 'defender' organizations focused on efficiency and the status quo, the authors concluded that the need for strategic alignment was diminished with 'defender' organizations owing to the fact that "processes such as budgeting are a substitute for alignment" (Andrews et al., 2012, p. 91).

A common way that leaders and particularly senior leaders can advance strategic alignment within their organization is through the creation of a "line of sight." According to Boswell and Boudreau (2001, p. 851), line-of -sight (LOS) is defined most simply as "employee understanding of the organization's objectives and how to contribute to those objectives". It

involves both "employee depth (i.e. broad scope or detail), as well as direction (i.e. accuracy) of understanding" (Boswell & Boudreau, 2001, p. 851). It therefore goes well beyond understanding strategy to also include individual's ability to fully and accurately understand and operationalize the actions that need to be aligned to strategic execution. In effect, LOS helps to manage the organizational risk of employees pursuing conflicting goals that could interfere with the "organizations functioning and ultimately its strategic success" (Boswell, 2006, p. 1491).

For discretionary behavior to become normative amongst employees, organizations need to be able to support both 'action alignment' and 'interest alignment'. Action alignment refers to employees' ability to identify and perform desirable actions (Colvin & Boswell, 2007). Interest alignment refers to the willingness of employees to engage in aligned actions (Colvin & Boswell, 2007). Skilled and knowledgeable workers lacking motivation are less likely to exert discretionary effort. Conversely, motivated workers lacking appropriate skill and knowledge may find the outcomes of their discretionary effort are lacking (Colvin & Boswell, 2007).

Action alignment necessitates effective and regular communication from leaders about information critical to shaping an understanding amongst employees of strategic objectives (Colvin & Boswell, 2007). Employees need also to feel that they are empowered to influence key decisions related to their job, and because they do the work, they are in the best position to provide suggestions (Colvin & Boswell, 2007). Greater involvement "in decisions related to their job should promote action alignment by helping to connect employees with the broader functioning of the organization and helping to reconcile inconsistency" (Colvin & Boswell, 2007, p.43).

Relatively effective LOS implementation would see organizational leaders from the President on down committed to providing constituents with a range of formal and informal

opportunities to become educated about the organization's mission, goals, and outcomes. Typical methods to systematically communicate LOS effectively include: open book management and town hall meetings focused on the College's strategic plan; mass distribution and posting of the mission, goals and outcomes in multiple formats; and, standing items on team meetings – at all organizational levels – intended to generate discussions about the alignment of individual and group performance against goals and outcomes (Boswell & Boudreau, 2001).

Ideally, direct supervisors will prove the best conduit of LOS information to employees because it can generally be assumed that they have an ongoing relationship with their direct reports and are most likely to be the person charged with providing them the information and resources to be effective. Boswell and Boudreau (2001) indicate that supervisors play a crucial role in the communication of group, division, and organizational goals to their employees, as well as managing their performance toward those goals. "Thus it would seem that supervisor-subordinate relations have an influence in developing line of sight" (Boswell & Boudreau, 2001, p. 856).

The positive consequences for a college that employs systematic LOS are many and include: improvements in key business processes, advances in technology, an enthusiasm and discipline for new program and product development, increases to brand equity/reputation, enhanced and consistent quality, and improved agility (Boswell & Boudreau, 2001). While the positive consequences well outweigh the negative consequences, there can be some downsides to the systematic introduction of LOS. Some employees may feel that the organization now expects them to consistently make a visible difference, and as a consequence, there may be a concomitant increase in workload, perhaps at the expense of work-life balance. It may also be

the case that organizations in the midst of significant change may lack the discipline or capacity to implement LOS properly (Boswell & Boudreau, 2001).

Building upon the LOS construct developed by Boswell and her colleagues, Buller and McEvoy (2012) found the need to redefine LOS. While respecting the former work, Buller and McEvoy argued that Boswell and her colleagues only focused analysis at the individual level in their modeling. Boswell et al. (2006) also acknowledged a need to advance their work in future studies to "include group and organizational level factors to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms influencing LOS" (Buller & McEvoy, 2012, p.44). To this end, Buller and McEvoy (2012) developed a model that defines LOS as "the alignment of organizational capabilities and culture, group competencies and norms, and individual knowledge, skills and abilities, motivation, and opportunity with one another and with the organization's strategy" (p. 43). In their model, Buller and McEvoy (2012) assert the need for strong human resource management (HRM) practices in the organization since HRM is and ought to be central to developing and sustaining "organizational capabilities/culture, group competencies/norms, and individual KSAs/motivation/opportunity" (p. 47).

Buller and McEvoy (2012) assert that their model is particularly relevant in cases where organizations are pursuing a 'prospector' strategy. They argue that HRM practices, if routinely aligned to changes in the environment and consequent strategy, can be a source of competitive advantage. The competitive advantage that they speak of results from nuanced, flexible, multi-level HRM that is difficult to imitate and substitute. In short, HRM is particularly valuable when organizations "face competition based on possessing, communicating, and creating superior knowledge, human capital [i.e., individual and group KSAs], and social capital [i.e., internal and external people structures and processes] versus having superior land, capital or technology"

(Buller & McEvoy, 2012, p. 45). Ultimately, and for LOS to be optimized, senior executives would be working extremely closely with HR professionals within their organization as strategic partners.

Multi-level control systems, if operationalized effectively, have also been shown to embed strategic alignment. To illustrate, and building upon the work of Buller and McEvoy (2012), Lawrie, Abdullah, Bragg, and Varlet (2015) developed a multi-level organizational strategic alignment model, utilizing multiple balanced scorecards, to optimize organizational performance. Through their model, they sought to align the strategic aims of over 200 managers of multi-level business units within a large utilities company employing over 10,000 people (Lawrie et al., 2015). Beginning with the enterprise level, and in regular consultation with senior leaders, the organization developed a simple illustrative Balanced Scorecard containing both financial and non-financial data. More specifically, the enterprise Balanced Scorecard began with a destination statement – "a concise description of what the organization is expected to look like at some nominated future date, usually three to five years hence" (Lawrie et al. 2015, p. 893). The Scorecard also included a logic model that portrayed the high-level objectives and activities needing to occur in the short- and mid-term to achieve the "destination". Finally, carefully designed measures and targets were created to track ongoing progress against the objectives and activities described in the logic model (Lawrie et al., 2015). At the level directly below senior management, sub-unit leaders and their staff then created statements that described how their group would contribute to the enterprise "destination statement". Alongside this work, they created a companion strategic agenda and associated metrics to realize their contribution. Finally, the "design sequence [was] applied recursively down the organization hierarchy with the

contribution statements of parent units forming the starting point for contribution statements at lower levels (Lawrie et al., 2015).

The four - year case-study research of the aforementioned utilities company evidenced support for a Balanced Scorecard strategic control system in terms of its utility with respect to consensus forming across and down an organization and the "creation of locally relevant strategic agendas" (Lawrie et al., 2015, p. 889). Contribution statements at recursively lower levels of the organization were found to reduce the likelihood of task dissonance. Moreover, consensus and buy-in to the strategic imperatives of the enterprise were heightened as a result of the "emergent strategizing" in which sub-unit staff were able to engage. Such an approach, however, is not without its shortcomings - first and foremost, it is resource intensive to implement and sustain (Lawrie et al., 2015).

In summary, I have attempted, based upon my experience as a senior college leader and my extensive review of the literature related to theoretical constructs tied to my research question, to create a foundational understanding capable of informing a strong conceptual research framework. Doubtless, there are aspects of my own experience and the literature itself that will not fully inform a conceptual framework. With this in mind, a preliminary conceptual framework, which follows, has been created. I fully expected that with the benefit of participant interviews behind me, there would be new and critical pieces of information gathered that would be additive to the literature, my professional practice, and finalization of my conceptual framework. In fact, these additive elements will be more fully addressed within the Discussion section of this manuscript.

Preliminary Conceptual Framework

The phenomena that I am interested in understanding is "college senior leadership approaches that lead to joint outcomes of strong enrolment growth, high quality and accessibility." These joint outcomes comprise the quasi-market environment in which the Canadian post-secondary system currently operates and can expect to continue to operate for many years to come. A "quasi-market" refers to a more regulated neoliberal approach to post-secondary education, where free trade and competition are supported by government to a point, but not at the cost of student access and quality (Kirby, 2011).

Based on a review of past literature, the factors that I believe, in a mutually reinforcing way, comprise the quasi-market environment of Canadian post-secondary, are enrolment, quality and access. For each of these factors, several related variables need be attended to for organizations can be effective. With respect to enrolment, organizations must introduce and sustain academic programs having strong labour market and student demand. New program research and incubation needs to be regularized and systematic. Marketing of existing and new programs needs to focus on appropriate segments and be tailored to relevant persona composites. With respect to quality, quality assurance processes need to be in place, as does regularized program monitoring, with continuous changes made to constantly improve programs based on the results of program audits and monitoring. Finally, and with respect to access, Colleges within the Canadian system are strongly encouraged and incented by their funding government to enroll and retain under-represented groups, as well as to make access by all forms of students easier through flexible forms of delivery (e.g. hybrid, pure-online, extended and weekend hours, regional campuses, etc.) and pathways (e.g. credit transfer, bridging mechanisms, financial aid/bursaries, etc.).

It can be expected that if senior leaders remain attentive to the aforementioned factors, they will experience at least moderate success leading within a quasi-market environment. However, it is assumed through my conceptual model that leadership effectiveness will be enhanced further when senior leaders also seek to reinforce a 'market culture' within their organization, characterized by a focus on results, stretch goals and targets. More successful senior leaders might also be expected to have qualities associated with 'socially charismatic leadership' – vision, humility, and an empowerment focus. Moreover, more successful senior leaders, operating within a quasi-market environment, might be expected to operationalize elements of change leadership, engaging broad-based constituencies in the co-creation of strategic goals, and post – creation, helping create alignment of understanding and behaviours amongst employees. See Figure 1 for a visual representation.

It should be noted that I deliberately excluded several items from the existing theoretical models presented in the literature review. I did not, for instance, include a 'hierarchical leadership orientation' as being a key strategic input to my preliminary conceptual model because, as the research of Cameron and Freeman (1991), based on their validation of the OCAI with 334 U.S. colleges and universities illustrates, "institutions with hierarchy cultures did not excel in any of the performance domains" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 156). I also did not include an 'adhocracy leadership orientation' as a key strategic input because I assumed that Ontario colleges need only vigorously compete and conduct themselves in a more business-like fashion to be successful. In fact, I worried that by assuming too much risk to innovate and introduce cutting-edge knowledge, as would be the case with a predominant and even secondary 'adhocratic leadership orientation', college leaders might unduly hurt their ability to be competitive. I based this assumption on the fact that a series of high-cost experimental failures

could create a significant draw on resources, resources that might otherwise be more effectively used to support the key focus areas of the college. I also did not detail the necessarily distinct differences in the role of President and SVPA, identified as necessary by Sinek, 2009, to optimize impact, because, and until I conducted interviews, I did not appreciate how the discipline of 'why' and 'how' leadership could be so impactful. Finally, I did not include a focus on differentiation, so firmly described as important by Alfred, 2005, as a strategic input, because I struggled to appreciate how any college, amongst 24 public colleges sharing the same public mandate, could and ought to define itself uniquely.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Enrolment Focus	**Quality Focus**	**Access Factors**
- Sustainable, programs with strong labour market and student demand - Effective marketing - Regularized, systematic new program research and development	- Emphasis on quality assurance - Measurement of performance - Continuous improvement	- Emphasis on enrolling, supporting and retaining under-represented groups - Flexible delivery - Pathways

Integrating Factors

Effective College Senior Leadership in an Ontario Quasi-Market Environment

Inputs

Market Culture Orientation	**Strategic Leadership Orientation**
- Results-oriented workplace with stretch targets and goals	- 'Socially charismatic' leadership style - Collaborative visioning - Change management skills - Strategic alignment

Chapter 3

Methodology

Epistemological Paradigm

The choice of a design for the current study, qualitative or quantitative, was initially

somewhat challenging. On the one hand, I could have chosen to administer an existing

instrument, such as the Organizational Culture Assessment Inventory (OCAI), to all existing

Presidents and SVPAs as well as past Presidents and SVPAs from the Ontario public college

system, and then quantitatively analyzed the extent to which respondents mapped to the cultural

leadership quadrants of the instrument's overarching Competing Values Framework (Cameron &

Quinn, 2006). Moreover, and independent of, or concurrent to, such an administration, I might

have chosen to administer the psychometrically validated *Conger-Kanungo Charismatic*

Leadership Scale, 2000, with the same sample, to assess the extent to which respondents mapped

to the construct of 'socialized charismatic leadership'.

I chose not to do such a quantitative study for several reasons. First, a paucity of research

exists about Presidents and SVPAs generally speaking, and the situation is amplified much

further when the focus is the Ontario public college system. Second, and closely related, I was

interested in establishing a much deeper understanding of strategic leadership amongst Ontario

college senior leaders than such a quantitative study would have enabled. As my conceptual

model illustrates, I am also interested in understanding the change leadership approach/s that

effective Ontario leaders assume, the methods that they employ to introduce alignment amongst

the rank-and-file, and the specific actions that they take to create impact with each of enrolment,

quality, and access at their institution. Given these challenges and limitations, an exploratory,

qualitative design was merited. Future studies might then more appropriately quantitatively test

the strength of attribution between the strategic leadership of Ontario Presidents and SVPAs and a more comprehensive list of promising constructs and items identified first, through in-depth qualitative work.

The research question that I have chosen for my study is "how do Presidents and their Senior Vice-President Academic (SVPA) at high enrolment growth, high quality, Ontario access colleges, strategically lead toward these outcomes?" The question is explanatory in nature and therefore I appropriately investigated the research question using a qualitative, case study research design (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2012). The epistemological approach that I took in my research was therefore "interpretivist."

Interpretivism, unlike positivism, involves an integration of human interest into the research project. Interpretivist researchers "assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments" (Myers, 2008, p.38). With this approach, reality is treated as an intersubjective phenomenon, which is based on interpretations made of social and experiential narrative (Dudovskiy, 2015). The primary data generated from such an approach may be highly valid because of the honesty of participants who tell their story. It may however be difficult to generalize because it will be impacted by the personal viewpoint and values of study participants (Dudovskiy, 2015).

Case-Study Approach

This is a qualitative case study situating the researcher within the world of the subject of study, "attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Merriam, 2009, p.13). Moreover, the researcher is the direct conduit of data and information and the primary instrument of analysis. The research process is inductive – that is,

the researcher does not test a research hypothesis but rather gathers data to inform the development of concepts and theories (Merriam, 2009). The method is also richly descriptive (Merriam, 2009). Ideally, the design is "emergent and flexible, responsive to changing conditions of the study in progress" (Merriam, 2009, p. 16).

In multi-case study research, the individual cases are chosen because they share "a common characteristic or condition", features that "somehow categorically bound them together" (Stake, 2006, p.6). Each case, in its own way, constitutes an example of a broader phenomenon of study – what Stake (2006) refers to as the 'quintain.' According to Stake (2006), multi-case research starts with the quintain. He asserts that the quintain becomes better understood through the study of what is similar and different amongst the individual cases (Stake, 2006). According to Stake (2006), "the ultimate question shifts from 'What helps us understand the case?' toward 'What helps us understand the quintain?' It is a move away from holistic viewing of the case toward constrained viewing of the cases – a viewing constrained by the dominion of the quintain over the cases" (p.6).

To understand Stake's (2006) approach to multi-case analysis, it is important to first understand key constructs and how he defines them. First, he defines 'themes' as elements of the quintain, developed during the research planning phase and embodied within the research questions themselves. By way of example, and with reference to the current study, one theme would be the importance of access to Ontario colleges. Second, 'findings' are defined as key pieces of information found by the researcher studying an individual case that best help to explain a theme. According to Stake (2006, p. 40), "when the themes and findings meet, they appear to the Analyst as both consolidation and extension of understanding". 'Merged findings' are findings across cases that cluster naturally together because they address the same topic. He

notes that "even if findings are contradictory" but focused on the same topic, they are placed in "the same cluster" (Stake, 2006, p.60). Finally, Stake introduces a somewhat unique construct to his method in the way of 'assertions.' 'Assertions' are confident and forceful statements that the researcher makes relative to the quintain which are supported by merged findings (Stake, 2006).

According to Stake (2006), multi-case analysis begins with the researcher reviewing each of the cases independently and then together – highlighting key words and quotes and roughly writing out key findings in the margins. Drawing from the marginal comments and highlights, the researcher creates a case synopsis for each individual case. The synopsis for each case is meant to include: highlights of the story told by the interviewee/s; contextual information; key information sources; prominence of each theme in the case; prominence of each case for developing each theme; and, important supporting quotes (Stake, 2006). The researcher then returns to the rough notes and individual case synopses, and identifies five to ten preliminary findings for each that he/she believes best contribute to an explanation of the quintain. All case findings are then written on separate strips of paper and looked at alongside one another. The researcher commences a process of further categorizing the findings strips to more clearly describe the phenomena (Stake, 2006). This step of the multi-case analysis process is not unlike grounded theory wherein the data undergoes constant comparison, and where open coding and axial coding combine to break data down into further themes and categories and form higher-order categories through data combination and relabeling (Merriam, 2009).

Stake (2006) offers three separate cross-case procedural options for developing assertions. The first option maintains the case findings and situationality. The researcher selects approximately five findings for each theme that best create an understanding of the theme and the quintain taken together. The findings may have "little in common; they may even be

contradictory" (Stake, 2006, p. 55). The researcher then rakes through the findings to develop assertions. The assertions may speak to similarities across cases and/or differences. The final research report for such a study will also provide significant, identifying descriptive information about each of the cases (Stake, 2006). A second option, resembling Option One, focuses to a greater extent upon quantifying, albeit relatively subjectively, the strength of each of the merged findings toward understanding the quintain. Again, the assertions may speak to similarities across cases and/or differences. In this case, the final research report also may provide significant identifying descriptive information about each of the cases (Stake, 2006). A third option focuses exclusively upon understanding only those findings across cases that are similar and which best create an understanding of the quintain. Such an approach "reduces the number of findings to work with" and may be preferable when the researcher is most concerned about generalization across cases (Stake, 2006, p. 58). Little if any focus is placed in the final report upon describing the situational aspects of each case. For two reasons, it is this third option that is being adopted for the current study. First, the study is most concerned about generalization. Second, this option is preferred because, by focusing only very generally on aspects of situationality, anonymity of cases is most likely to be protected.

Case Selection

Cases were initially defined for my research as comprising a President and the SVPA who had worked collaboratively at the same college between 2011 and 2014. While at their institution, favorable results for three outcomes of interest – quality, access, and enrolment growth needed also to have been consistently achieved. Invitations to participate in my study were sent to all Presidents and SVPAs in the Ontario system meeting the aforementioned binding criteria. Of the Presidents and SVPAs that consented to participate in the study, three cases

comprised a President and SVPA who had worked together at the same college between 2011 and 2014. A further President and SVPA consented to participate in the study, who could not be paired with a consenting partner leader from the period 2011 and 2014. I chose to interview these subjects, and treat them as cases however, because I felt strongly that they might help to corroborate findings identified from interviews occurring with individuals in the other three cases. Having done so, I recognized that a 90-minute interview might not provide the depth of understanding typically associated with and expected of case-study research. Five cases could be practically examined within the time allowed to complete my dissertation and was a sufficient "number recommended to ensure an appropriate level of interactivity existed between cases and their situations" (Stake, 2006, p. 22).

The type of senior leaders chosen as cases for the study was quite deliberate. It was felt that the President and SVPA, more than any others within a college, are held most accountable by the funder, their Board of Governors (BoG), and students for the strategic leadership of their organization. In a period within Ontario higher education requiring an increased market culture focus, the funder and BoG would expect that these leaders exemplify and hold subordinates accountable for increased enrolment growth and market share, as well as diversification of alternative revenue streams. Students as consumers of educational services, as well as the funder and BoG, would also hold these two individuals most accountable for the ongoing development and introduction of desirable program offerings (aligned to student demand and labour market opportunity) and various forms of flexible delivery (the products). From an accountability perspective, the funder and the BoG would most expect of these individuals that their institution delivered sufficient quality and student access relative to other public college comparators within the Ontario post-secondary system. In short, these two leaders align most to my quasi-market

theoretical framework, which highlights the imperative of leadership which is market-oriented (Cameron & Quinn, 2006) but within the Canadian context of public accountability for outcomes of quality and student access.

Several strong, objective Ontario college system-level measures presently exist which were used to select Presidents and SVPAs from colleges having strong enrolment growth and high levels of quality and access within the Ontario college system. All of these measures were available publicly and accessible on the Internet. All of these measures are required to be shared annually to the public by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD). The specific documents that contained these measures were: Colleges Ontario Student and Graduate Profiles – 2011 to 2014 (each year reporting for the previous year's enrolment and market share information by Ontario public college); Colleges Ontario Key Performance Indicators – 2011 to 2014 (each year reporting for the previous year's standard key performance indicators by Ontario public college); and, 2011 through 2014 Multi-Year Accountability Agreements for all of the 24 public colleges. Colleges Ontario draws its enrolment data for its Student and Graduate Profile Report from the Ontario College Applicant Service (OCAS).

MAESD has assumed leadership of the Ontario college system quality measurement since 1998 (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013). The MAESD, as a condition of college funding, requires all colleges to administer its standardized KPI Student, Graduate and Employer Surveys, at the same time, several times per year. The surveys measure improvement on five key quality related indicators: Graduate Satisfaction; Graduation Employment Rate; Graduation Rate; Employer Satisfaction and Student Satisfaction (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013). Student Satisfaction measures an

existing student's satisfaction with "knowledge and skills for a future career, overall quality of learning experiences in their program, overall quality of college facilities/resources, and overall quality of college services" (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013, p.4). The Graduate Employment Rate measures whether a graduate is employed six months after graduation. Employer Satisfaction is a measure of an employer's satisfaction with the college graduate's educational preparation. Graduate Satisfaction measures the graduates' perception of the "usefulness of their college education in achieving post-graduation goals six months after graduation" (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013, p.4). Finally, the Graduation Rate is a calculation of "the percentage of eligible students who graduated from a program within twice the program duration" (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013, p.4). Colleges viewed through the MAESD KPI survey process to have a high level of quality tend to consistently rate around or above the provincial average on all or most of the five indicators (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2013).

The MAESD annual Multi-Year Accountability Agreement Report-Back was completed by all colleges in the Ontario college system as a further requirement of annualized funding between 2011 and 2014. Information which is gathered from the standardized reporting format summarizes individual college performance relative to principles of access and quality. 'Access' is measured in terms of the percentage and nature of under-represented students at the individual college, by the availability of credit transfer, and by the availability of flexible learning. 'Quality' is measured as the totality of: sustained or improved enrolment, demonstrable access, appropriate class sizes, evidence of efforts to create in-bound and out-bound internationalization opportunities for students, work-integrated learning initiatives, and applied research (Fanshawe College, 2014).

To assess KPI performance, I used the following dimension tables from the Colleges Ontario Key Performance Indicators Report for each of the years 2011 through 2014: "Graduate Employment Rate"; "Graduate Satisfaction Rate"; "Employer Satisfaction Rate"; "Student Satisfaction Rate"; and, "Graduation Rate." I created a new table, which showed each of the 24 public colleges' year-over-year performance on each dimension. The first inclusion hurdle for prospective Presidents and their SVPA in my study was that they needed to derive from a college having scores on at least four of five dimensions that approximated or exceeded the provincial colleges' average for the years 2011 and 2014. Moreover, their college needed to demonstrate year-over-year stability and ideally improvement in its own scores for these two years. See Table 1 below for information on Ontario colleges KPI performance during the study period.

Table 1

MAESD College Key Performance Indicators for the 2011/12 and 2014/15 Academic Years

College	Year	Graduate Employment Rate (%)	Graduate Satisfaction Rate (%)	Employer Satisfaction Rate (%)	Student Satisfaction Rate (%)
Algonquin	11/12:	84.8	78.9	94.1	81.5
	14/15:	84.8	78.9	92.0	80.4
Boreal	11/12:	84.3	87.7	85.7	83.4
	14/15:	89.4	89.8	93.8	87.4
Cambrian	11/12:	87.1	85.0	93.3	75.2
	14/15:	81.7	83.1	100.0	76.7
Canadore	11/12:	84.1	80.6	89.8	72.2
	14/15:	83.6	79.2	93.8	78.6
Centennial	11/12:	74.3	76.9	94.1	72.7
	14/15:	71.4	77.8	94.8	77.0
Conestoga	11/12:	88.9	83.0	92.1	76.7
	14/15:	86.9	81.4	90.8	74.1
Confederation	11/12:	88.9	85.5	97.5	79.4
	14/15:	84.6	86.9	92.6	79.3
Durham	11/12:	83.7	75.8	95.0	73.8
	14/15:	83.2	77.9	92.2	75.2
Fanshawe	11/12:	85.8	81.1	91.7	80.0
	14/15:	87.6	83.9	96.0	78.8
Fleming	11/12:	84.3	79.9	93.8	76.9
	14/15:	84.5	81.7	94.3	77.6
George Brown	11/12:	81.2	77.8	92.0	70.9
	14/15:	85.0	81.0	88.6	77.6
Georgian	11/12:	88.1	81.6	93.3	78.8
	14/15:	87.8	80.5	90.5	79.1
Humber	11/12:	82.8	79.4	94.3	74.9
	14/15:	82.4	77.2	88.2	74.2
La Cite	11/12:	83.5	83.7	87.5	85.3
	14/15:	unreported	unreported	unreported	unreported
Lambton	11/12:	86.3	81.3	96.3	77.2
	14/15:	85.8	80.8	92.0	77.7
Loyalist	11/12:	87.0	83.5	93.8	79.0
	14/15:	87.4	81.6	92.2	79.4
Mohawk	11/12:	83.4	80.8	94.3	78.0
	14/15:	85.5	81.3	88.4	77.4
Niagara	11/12:	85.2	81.1	92.3	85.4
	14/15:	84.4	80.4	94.3	81.1
Northern	11/12:	87.5	84.0	97.2	70.2
	14/15:	87.1	84.3	91.3	75.4

St. Clair	11/12:	81.1	80.3	91.0	79.4
	14/15:	85.8	81.8	92.2	80.5
St. Lawrence	11/12:	90.5	84.1	93.6	81.3
	14/15:	87.2	84.6	91.6	82.3
Sault	11/12:	84.5	80.8	89.4	83.8
	14/15:	82.6	86.4	95.5	85.4
Seneca	11/12:	79.0	78.7	94.7	74.3
	14/15:	78.8	76.7	92.1	70.1
Sheridan	11/12:	82.2	77.7	94.7	76.5
	14/15:	80.8	77.9	84.3	75.1
Province	11/12:	**83.6**	**80.0**	**93.4**	**77.1**
	14/15:	**83.6**	**80.3**	**91.4**	**76.8**

Note. Adapted from Colleges Ontario KPI Reports for 2011/12 and 2014/15. Satisfaction rates represent the percentage of respondents who stated that they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' on the Key Performance Indicators.

To assess year-over-year enrolment increases by colleges, I used a table in the Colleges Ontario Graduate and Student Profiles Report for each of the years 2011 through 2014, titled "Total funded college enrolment as Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) by college." This table listed each of the 24 Ontario public colleges and its associated FTE count for the year. I created a new table from these tables showing the year-over-year differences in FTE count by college for the years 2011 to 2014. Only Presidents and their SVPA from mid and large-size colleges having year-over-year FTE growth between 2011 and 2014 could be invited to participate in my study. This second hurdle left approximately 1/3 of public Ontario colleges from which I could draw my President and SVPA sample. See Table 2 for information on Ontario colleges student FTE count during the study period.

Table 2

Increases/Decreases to funded college enrolment as FTE by college, 2010/11 – 20113/14

College	2010/11 FTE	2013/14 FTE	Change (%)
Algonquin	16,666.6	19,490.4	+14.5
Boreal	1,566.8	1,675.4	+6.5
Cambrian	3,632.1	3,540.4	-2.6
Canadore	2,962.7	2707.2	-9.4
Centennial	11,013.5	11,290.1	+2.4
Confederation	3162.9	3,166.2	nil
Conestoga	9,150.9	11,002.5	+16.8
Durham	8,375.3	10,743.3	+22
Fanshawe	14,084.1	13,688.4	-2.9
Fleming	6,697.9	6,649.1	-1
Georgian	9,264.8	10,562.7	+12.3
George Brown	19,076.5	20,768.5	+8.1
Humber	19,935.6	22,274.2	+10.5
La Cite	4,545.9	4,769.1	+4.7
Lambton	2,674.4	2,816.0	+1
Loyalist	3,457.8	3,229.0	-1
Mohawk	11,422.8	12,495.3	+8.6
Niagara	7,922.2	8,855.9	+10.5
Northern	1,357.1	1,214.4	-11.8
Sault	2,266.8	2,425.6	+6.5
Seneca	21,018.4	22,028.4	+4.6
Sheridan	16,947.2	17,262.9	+1.8
St. Clair	8,891.0	8,445.3	-5.3
St. Lawrence	5,723.5	5,769.2	+1

Note. Adapted from the Colleges Ontario Environmental Scans, 2010/11 and 2013/14
FTE = Full-time equivalent enrolment numbers

Of the remaining colleges from which I could draw my study sample, I assessed access with reference to the following dimensions within their Multi-Year Accountability Agreement (MYAA) Report Backs between the years 2011 through 2014: under-represented students; expanding transfer pathways; and e-learning. Specifically, I was interested in confirming that each college experienced year-over-year increases in: the admission of at least one of three types of under-represented groups (students with disabilities; first-generation students; and indigenous students) and the number of registrations in hybrid and pure online learning programs and courses. Moreover, and more subjectively, I reviewed each of these college's narratives with respect to investments they were taking and strategies that they were continuously implementing and evaluating related to expanded transfer pathways (e.g. bilateral and multilateral articulation agreements, college-to-college or college-to-university pathways projects, etc.). From this analysis, I was able to confirm that all colleges meeting the first and second inclusion hurdles qualified to have Presidents and their SVPA from their institution invited to participate in my study.

Data Collection

I interviewed all SVPAs at their place of work. Two Presidents were interviewed at their place of work. Two Presidents were interviewed by phone as scheduling challenges made an in-person interview impractical. All interviews were conducted one-to-one. Individual interviews lasted at least 90 minutes and were concluded in no more than two hours. Interviews commenced in March, 2016 and were concluded by August, 2016.

Themes drawn from my literature review that helped me to frame questions of respondents included: enrolment growth focus; quality focus; access focus; and strategic leadership (Stake, 2006). Questions that were consistently asked of each respondent included:

1. What sets your institution apart from others in the Ontario colleges system?

2. How do you lead toward the outcome of enrolment growth at your College?

3. What does it mean to be a high quality institution?

4. How do you lead for high quality at your College?

5. What does access mean at your College?

6. How do you lead toward the outcome of access at your College?

7. What specific challenges do you encounter leading at your institution?

8. What are the key strengths of your institution?

9. What are the benefits and challenges to enrolment growth, quality, and access, based upon your college's geographic location?

Additional questions were sometimes improvised as new issues were identified by interviewees (Stake, 2006). It is noteworthy that the aforementioned question frame was distilled from a much broader set that was piloted with both my dissertation supervisor and a SVPA from the College where I work. In fact, a former set of 25 questions was reduced to the nine to so as to be respectful of respondents' time, make the study appropriately focused and manageable, and allow respondents to freely tell their story.

In addition to asking these questions, I created simple one-page reports that showed results in key areas of colleges performance (enrolment, quality, access) that were introduced to respondents as probes. See Tables 3 to 5 for the template used to create an institutional fact sheet for each interview.

Table 3

Institutional Fact Sheet – Key Performance Indicators

KPI Score	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Graduate satisfaction			
Graduation employment rate			
Graduation rate			
Employer satisfaction			
Student satisfaction			

Note. Institution was anonymized with case identifier. Student researcher to write a few lines on KPI scores of institution relative to provincial average, and small, mid and large sized Ontario public colleges' average.

Table 4

Institutional Fact Sheet – Access

Access Measures	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Percentage of underrepresented groups			
Strength of pathways/bridging options			

Note. Student researcher to write a few lines on access measures performance relative to other small, mid and large sized colleges in the Ontario public colleges system.

Table 5

Institutional Fact Sheet – Enrolment

Enrolment Growth between 2010/11 and 2011/12	Enrolment Growth between 2011/12 and 2012/13	Enrolment Growth Between 2012/13 and 2013/14
% Change in domestic and international students combined	% Change in domestic and international students combined	% Change in domestic and international students combined

According to Stake (2006, p.31), "some of the most effective interviewing is 'probe-based,' meaning that certain materials (texts, videos, or other artifacts) are used as probes to evoke interviewee comment or interpretation. The probe materials give focus and scope to topics of interest, as well as motivate participation".

Each interview was audio-recorded with the permission of the interviewee on a hand-held recording device. Audio-recording allowed me to be more attentive to interviewees, ask more questions, and improvise as new issues emerged. The device did not have embedded password encryption. It did, however, have an embedded flash-drive, which, directly following each interview, and before traveling, would be connected to my laptop computer so that the audio could be transferred from the recording device to two other encrypted flash drives (1 plus back-up). Once the audio was successfully transferred to the two encrypted flash-drives, the audio recording was immediately erased from the hand-held recording device.

I employed a professional transcriptionist to convert the individual audio files to typed, individual, electronic transcripts. A confidentiality agreement was signed between the researcher and transcriptionist wherein the transcriptionist was to hold any information confidential that could identify a research participant. The likelihood of this occurring was already minimized by virtue of the fact that the interviewees were asked by the researcher, prior to commencement of the audio-recording, not to identify themselves, their colleagues, or their institution by name during interview. I provided the transcriptionist, in-person, with the encrypted audio flash-drive. Concurrently, and verbally, I provided her with the encryption password. Once a series of interviews provided to the transcriptionist on the encrypted flash-drive were fully transcribed, the flash-drive was returned in-person from the transcriptionist to myself. The completed transcripts

were sent by the transcriptionist to the researcher via encrypted email. A secondary email from

the transcriptionist to myself provided me with an associated encryption password.

To ensure that an individual interviewee could validate the content of their interview

transcript (member-check), I forwarded the interviewee their transcript by encrypted email. A

secondary email or text was sent from me to the interviewee providing an associated encryption

password. The interviewee was asked to notify me within one month of receiving their transcript

as to whether they would like to discuss any potential revisions to their transcript. Two

interviewees responded back – one with modest revisions, which I accepted; and another,

indicating that the transcript accurately reflected the content of the interview.

Cross-Case Analysis

Initially, I reviewed each case transcript independently, highlighting key text and roughly

noting and writing in the margins findings that seemed to be emerging. Immediately following

review of a transcript, I would complete a case synopsis inclusive of: highlights of the story told

by the interviewee/s; contextual information; key information sources; prominence of each

theme in the case; prominence of each case for developing each theme; and, important

supporting quotes. See Table 6 below showing the template used to collect case data for each

case.

Table 6

Case Analysis Worksheet

The Case:	
Key Information and Context:	
Situational Constraints:	
Cross-Case Theme Prevalence:	
Findings:	
Commentary (quotes, impressions, incidents)	

Note. Adapted from *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, by Robert E. Stake. Copyright 2006 by the Guilford Press.

I then read all transcripts together in two sittings. The first sitting involved review of all President transcripts. The second sitting involved review of all SVPA transcripts. During each reading, I added to and revised marginal comments in transcripts, often going back and forth between them to determine whether I was identifying similar findings between them. I returned to the transcripts, rough notes, and individual case synopses and considered five and no more than 10 'findings' that appeared to surface within each one. I wrote all case findings (no more than a sentence each) on separate strips of paper and looked at them alongside one another. I then commenced a process of further categorizing and in some instances, re-labeling the findings strips to more clearly describe the phenomenon. This process yielded 36 findings across cases that I then documented in a form titled "Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Finding". Per finding documented on the form, I rated the extent to which each case was of 'high utility' to 'low utility' with respect to contributing to the findings. See Table 7 below for ratings of expected case utility.

Table 7

Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Finding

No.	Finding	Case				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	President leads vision for constructs investigated	H	H	H	H	L
2	President creates areas of strategic focus/priorities for college	H	H	H	H	L
3	Data/evidence drive decisions by co-leaders	H	H	H-M	H	H
4	Presidents lead formal staff engagement	H	H	H	H	L
5	President's create organizational focus on getting and retaining the right people	H	H	H	H	L
6	President's lead college's differentiation	H	H	H	H	L
7	President's create organizational focus on staff training and development	H	H	H	H	L
8	Co-leaders formally discuss organization culture with staff	M	H	M	M	L
9	Co-leaders model and communicate college risk appetite/tolerance	H	H	H	H	H
10	Co-leaders actively engage stakeholders – community, industry, government	H	H	H	H	H
11	Co-leaders focus on research	L	M	L	L	H
12	Co-leaders emphasize regular environmental scanning	M	H	M	M	M
13	Co-leaders focus on reputation-building	H	M	M	H	L
14	Co-leaders focus on budget efficiency	L	L	L	M	M
15	Presidents regularly formally recognize staff	H	H	H	H	L
16	Co-leaders focus on program development/renewal	H	H	H	L	H
17	Co-leaders obtain resources	H	H	H	H	H
18	Co-leaders engage in extensive business planning for enrolment	H	H	H	L	H
19	Co-leaders engage in extensive business planning for quality	H	H	H	L	H
20	Co-leaders engage in extensive business planning for access	H	H	H	L	H
21	SVPAs have oversight/leadership for enrolment processes and systems	H	H	H	L	H
22	SVPAs have oversight/leadership for quality processes and systems	H	H	H	L	H
23	SVPAs have oversight/leadership for access processes and systems	H	H	H	L	H
24	SVPAs are integrated academic planning lead (across divisions)	H	H	H	L	H

25	SVPAs lead communication/ planning with Deans	H	H	H	L	H
26	Co-leaders define quality as "student experience that leads to a job"	H	H	H	H	H
27	Co-leaders leaders define access a "multi-faceted student experience"	H	H	H	H	H
28	Co-leaders define quality as based on "reputation"	H	M	M	H	L
29	Co-leaders define quality as having a strong brand identity	H	L	L	H	L
30	Co-leaders define access as reducing barriers to entry and success	H	H	H	H	H
31	Co-leaders define access as creating pathways	H	H	H	H	H
32	Co-leaders emphasize "organic" leadership	L	M	H	L	L
33	Co-leaders emphasize "hierarchical" albeit collaborative leadership	H	M	L	M	M
34	Co-leaders create a 'burning platform' for enrolment growth	H	H	H	H	M
35	Co-leaders educate staff about equity	H	M	H	M	H
36	Co-leaders assess student sub-group needs and gaps	H	M	H	H	H

Note. Adapted from *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, by Robert E. Stake. Copyright 2006 by the Guilford Press. H = high utility; M = middling utility; L = low utility. High utility means that the Case appears to be one of the most useful for developing this Theme.

Reflecting on the fully populated form titled "Ratings of Expected Utility of Each Case for Each Finding", I began to rate the extent to which individual cases were of 'high utility', 'middling utility', or 'low utility' with respect to supporting the finding. I determined that an important cross-case finding would be one in which at least three and ideally more Cases shared a similar finding. Consequently, and following this further form of analysis, I determined that seven findings were not strong enough to be used in further analysis across the Cases. Reviewing the revised list of important findings, I determined that some important findings as listed were actually articulated as merged findings. Still others benefited from being collapsed and clustered together to form more clearly described merged findings. This analysis yielded 15 merged findings.   See Table 8 below – "A Matrix for Generating Theme-Based Assertions from Merged Findings Rated Important."

Table 8

A Matrix for Generating Theme-Based Assertions from Merged Findings Rated Important

Merged Findings	From which Cases?	Theme
Presidents and their SVPA regularly explained, to a far-ranging number of internal constituents, the consequences of not growing their college's enrolment.	1,2,3,4	Enrolment growth focus
Presidents and their SVPA introduced lean coordinating structures, targets, and performance measurement to increase enrolment.	1,2,3,4,5	Enrolment growth focus
Presidents and their SVPA vigorously applied business marketing methods, inclusive of product mix and product lifecycle strategies, to create a competitive advantage for their institution.	1,2,3,4,5	Enrolment growth focus
Quality planning begins with an understanding of the labour market	1,2,3,4,5	Quality focus
Several key dimensions of the student experience prepare students for a job	1,2,3,4,5	Quality focus
Presidents and their SVPA sustain quality at their institution through their hiring and training practices.	1.2.3.4	Quality focus
Program measures and quality assurance are systematically operationalized to facilitate a culture of continuous improvement.	1,2,3,4,5	Quality focus
Presidents and their SVPA consistently define access from the perspective of barriers to enrolment and the supports, bridging and pathways necessary to allow greater levels of college participation.	1,2,3,4,5	Access focus
Presidents and their SVPA actively engaged staff and faculty to help them understand the importance of equity.	1,3,5	Access focus
Presidents and their SVPA regularly undertook efforts to understand student sub-group needs and the delta existing between those needs and their college's access supports, programs and pathways.	1,4,5	Access focus
Presidents and their SVPA ensure that their college offers a continuum of support, bridging and pathways programs	1,2,3,4,5	Access focus
Presidents at high-performing colleges led development of an evidence-informed strategic direction for their college	1,2,3,4	Strategic leadership

Presidents of high-performing colleges pay considerable attention to formally engaging staff and faculty	1,2,3,4	Strategic leadership
SVPAs at high performing colleges translate their President's vision and strategic focus areas in practical ways.	1,2,3,5	Strategic leadership

Note. Adapted from *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, by Robert E. Stake. Copyright 2006 by Guilford Press.

Reflecting upon the merged findings, I contemplated the "tentative" assertions that might best help to understand or explain the quintain. As Stake (2006) indicates, "each assertion should have a single focus, an orientation for understanding the quintain, and evidence to support it" (p. 62). Utilizing this directive, I then went back and reviewed cases to confirm the strength of the evidence that they contributed to merged findings and in turn, tentative assertions, which then led to a further process of emphasizing some tentative assertions while subordinating others. Ultimately, I was left with five final assertions, each having corresponding, supporting merged findings (and associated evidence).

Table 9

Multi-Case Assertions for the Final Report

Assertions	Related to Which Themes?
Presidents and their SVPA at high-achieving colleges are systematically relentless in their pursuit of enrolment growth to sustain and ideally grow their system market share.	Enrolment growth focus
President and their SVPA at high-achieving colleges consistently described the key outcome of quality as being graduate employment, and defined quality, within the Ontario college context, as an optimal student experience that would lead to a job. Each President and their SVPA also described the importance of having a focused and robust approach at their institution to continuously sustain and improve quality.	Quality focus

Presidents and their SVPAs at high-achieving colleges consistently defined access in terms of the need to reduce barriers to post-secondary enrolment by under-represented groups and the provision of bridges and pathways allowing all students to achieve appropriate training that best supports their individual employment objective. Naturally, and following from this shared understanding, Presidents and their SVPA led toward access by conditioning staff to value equity; researching sub-group needs and service and pathway gaps; and offering a continuum of support, bridging and pathway programs for students at their colleges.	Access focus
Presidents and their SVPA at high-achieving Ontario colleges have clearly delineated albeit highly complementary strategic roles. Presidents are very much focused upon leading the development of the college vision, strategic priorities, and point/s of differentiation. Alongside imagining the college's destination, the President attempts to understand and influence the extent to which staff are engaged and committed to a shared future. SVPAs translate their President's vision and strategic focus areas in practical terms by stewarding business planning and the development, implementation, and maintenance of systems and processes intended to advance enrolment growth, quality and access.	Strategic leadership

Note. Adapted from *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, by Robert E. Stake. Copyright 2006 by Guilford Press.

Triangulation

Triangulation is important in qualitative research because it helps to provide assurance to the researcher about what he is seeing and hearing (Stake, 2006). Moreover, "each important interpretation needs assurance that is supported by the data gathered and not easily misinterpreted by readers of the report" (Stake, 2006, p. 33). "Within case" triangulation in my study was accomplished in several ways. I used multiple case perspectives at multiple sites – Presidents and Senior Vice-Presidents Academic. I corroborated each of the interviewee's reports with a document review, including: review of the Annual Report, Strategic Plan, Strategic Mandate Agreement, and Multi-Year Accountability Agreement with the Ontario government - for the college from which each case derives. Each interviewee's transcript was provided to the participants for their own review of accuracy and any misrepresentation. This

process provided me with new data for my study, as well as contributed "to the revision and improved interpretation of reporting" (Stake, 2006, p. 37).

My cross-case analytical procedure was reviewed by my dissertation supervisor, and she provided a critique of my interpretations. My manuscript was also fully reviewed by my supervisor and a second critical reader, and I urged them "to find fault, obligating them to say what the conclusions mean to them" (Stake, 2006, p. 77).

Summary of Methods for Analyzing and Reporting Findings in Later Chapters

The primary focus of the Findings Chapters that follow is to present the researcher's assertions. As discussed earlier in this chapter, an assertion in a cross-case report is a key finding about the phenomena of interest, referred to as the quintain (Stake, 2006). Cross-case findings, described by Stake (2006) as merged findings, are the evidence that form the basis of an assertion. Evidence for purposes of multi-case research is not "beyond dispute" and "will not win over every critic" (Stake, 2006, p. 41). It should however be logically persuasive (Stake, 2006). According to Stake, an assertion "should have evidence from more than one case to support it" (p. 56). In the current study, each merged finding that became foundational to an assertion had at least three cases providing supporting evidence. This standard of evidence was introduced by the researcher because it was felt that a majority of cases would more likely satisfy a critic's concerns about generalizability.

The quintain that the research seeks to understand is 'effective senior college leadership within a quasi-market environment'. Themes drawn from the literature review that closely relate to the quintain and became the basis for research questions include: enrolment growth focus; quality focus; access focus; and, strategic leadership behaviours and methods. Merged findings

and assertions were assembled, as they ought to be, in relation to these themes.   The assertions, taken together, create an understanding of the quintain.

In the Chapters that follow, I present findings for each of the focus areas that collectively form the quintain. Separating the focus areas into discrete chapters has been done to improve readability. Within each of these chapters, main headings represent key assertions and sub-headings, the merged findings in support of them.

As discussed in the Methods Chapter, the focus of this research is on generalizability with only very modest focus placed upon the situationality of cases. Where situationality is emphasized in the presentation of any of the merged findings, it has been done so with a view to not identify participants. Moreover, it is presented in the form of a contrast between two or more Cases with respect to the way in which they differentially illustrate the merged finding through practice.

Chapter 4

Enrolment Growth Findings

In this chapter and those that follow, I will present the findings from the interviews with participants. In this chapter, I address enrolment growth. In Chapters Five through Seven, I present findings related to growth, access and strategic leadership. In Chapter Eight, I will summarize these findings.

Relentless Pursuit of Enrolment Growth

Presidents and their SVPA at high-achieving colleges are systematically relentless in their pursuit of enrolment growth to sustain and ideally grow their system market-share. Presidents consistently created a burning platform for change – encouraging marked growth. They then collaborated with their SVPA to advance innovative program development and renewal vis-à-vis a disciplined business planning approach that involved lean, specialized planning structures and processes; product mix, marketing, and lifecycle strategies; and performance measurement.

Creating a 'burning platform'. Participants in this research regularly lamented that the Ontario college system was underfunded, relative to Ontario universities and colleges in other provinces. They also described how the Ontario funding model penalized colleges that did not grow by reducing, as opposed to supplementing, their out-years base operating grant and rewarded growth colleges, albeit with "a two-year slip" from the period of actual growth, with commensurate operational funding (Case Five).

Presidents and SVPAs in this study alike indicated how they would construct a "burning platform" – directed to a broad base of internal constituents on the need to grow enrolment to ensure that their college survived and indeed would thrive, in short - minimally maintaining its system market share but ideally, growing it. One President asserted the imperative for a college

President to promote enrolment growth by stating, "there have to be times when the President has some passion about some things and is prepared to take some actions … [on] some big ideas, the big strategic ones – like we need to grow (Case Three). As one President indicated, he would let every "single manager" know that if "you don't grow, you die" and that "the only way we're going to counter [funding challenges] was through maintaining our market share of enrolment" (Case One). Another President indicated that he would educate staff across the college, from cleaning and security through to senior leadership, that "like it or not, the funding formula that was currently in play was one in which dropping enrolments was much more than just dropping a few dollars. It became a spiral issue if you didn't keep your enrolments up" (Case Two).   Still another President indicated, "It was an effort to maximize revenues through new growth. And of course, first of all, you have to create understanding with people in leadership roles in the college and through the institution itself, right through from support staff to faculty to understand why this growth was necessary" (Case Four). An SVPA, illustrating how to effectively create commitment by staff to the need to grow indicated:

> In terms of the leadership, you really have to hit the hearts and minds piece and really have people understand and participate as to why this is happening. So it's those assurances that we're not lowering standards just to fill classes, and [faculty] want the programs to be successful and to have enough enrolment to carry on because they're very committed to those programs and they're very committed to their industry. So we bring it all back to fulfilling an industry need (Case Five).

All Presidents and their SVPA would engage cross-college staff several times per year in all staff meetings to advise them of budget pressures, the impacts of demography on enrolment, college progress with respect to growing enrolment, and the role that all staff could and ought to

play as student recruitment ambassadors. Less formally, and during campus tours and divisional

meetings, Presidents and SVPAs would re-iterate messaging surrounding the enrolment growth

imperative. One President also described having a well formulated strategic communications

plan created and implemented with respect to growth, as well as providing "ongoing messages in

our business plans, in our strategic plans – why this growth was necessary – to bring in

additional students … to help us raise the revenues that we needed to invest in student teaching

or learning classrooms, facilities, and staff" (Case Four). As one President indicated, he would

"stress and re-stress the importance of this [enrolment growth] so people heard it directly" (Case

One). Another President indicated that when it came to the enrolment growth imperative, his

communication with broad-based staff constituencies was "deliberate and repetitive and

consistent" (Case Two).

SVPAs and Presidents acknowledged the importance of keeping their Board of Governors

engaged around enrolment growth and in understanding its relationship to the funding model.

They suggested that in so doing, they were more successful having them understand and be less

resistant to risk and innovation necessary to sustain and increase enrolment. A strong illustrative

example shared by one President was of a Board meeting where he had the CEO for Colleges

Ontario present a colleges' system environmental scan. He advised that:

> It was a very, almost, provocative presentation that we knew would get our Board
>
> members anxious about the fact that provincial money is declining and costs are rising …
>
> and there are a lot of people that would be hesitant to do that, but we followed that
>
> presentation with our own assessment of where the college is on enrolment and what
>
> happens is we get seventeen champions (Case Two).

Another President described how he persisted in efforts to have his Board support necessary investments in growth against the advice of his own finance team and Board treasurer. As the President indicated "there was tension … a lot of tension! I had to just speak to the chair of the Board and say 'look, I believe this could happen. I think we can do it.'" He lamented, "it doesn't help when your finance guy tells you that it is irresponsible with the confidence of [expletive] Moses" (Case Three).

Lean coordinating structures, targets, and performance measurement. Presidents and their SVPA indicated that they had introduced a formal, lean committee structure at their college to coordinate and manage enrolment growth, oft referred to as the Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Committee. Such committees tended to be led by the SVPA and have members who would most intuitively have a direct accountability to the recruitment, conversion and student success processes of the college (i.e. SVPA, Deans, Registrar, Marketing and Recruitment, International Office, and Institutional Research). As one President indicated, without an enrolment strategy, "the budget leads and that's the worst kind of planning." He goes on to say that the "most important committee in the institution was [therefore] the SEM committee" (Case One). Another President indicated, "we really talked about Strategic Enrolment Management – sort of being *the* committee of the college, and that it had prominence" (Case Two). Another, President indicated "we have a strategic enrolment management committee that was very active right across the institution and of course they helped sort of move … you know … engage other groups like the Academic Council" (Case Four). In the one case where a formal SEM Committee had not been formed, the President advised that "every new program comes to senior management – every new program. And it's not just – what's the cost

and how many people do you need to hire? It's what is the substance of the program?" (Case Three).

The SEM committee was consistently described as working toward finding the "appropriate program mix" for the college – one that was most likely to align to "labour market needs" and "student demand" and identifying strategies to generate "interest", "leads and conversion" amongst prospective students in programs. SEM committees were advisory to the Executive Leadership Team (President and Vice Presidents) and instrumental in "identifying human and capital requirements" and models to support new program implementation. One SEM committees' mandate was more encompassing of the student lifecycle. The following quote from an SVPA illustrates the lifecycle approach:

> The SEM committee looks at everything from identification of prospects and leads all the way to when they become an alumni and how do we continue to work with them to have them come back as a returned student or for them to continue to act as an ambassador and an agent for us? So it completes the circle (Case One).

All Presidents and SVPAs in the study indicated having introduced stretch enrolment targets at their institution for each of the years between 2011 and 2014. Targets were consistently described as having been developed based upon extensive analysis of: "market conditions", "competitor performance", the college's own "historical performance", and its "expected enrolment yields" from new program offerings. One President, citing the imperative to get the target setting research right, indicated that he was "talking about thousands and thousands of first year students - that if you were off one to two percent in enrolment projections, [this] could have a significantly positive or negative impact on the financial bottom-line" (Case One). An SVPA, referring to the importance of targets and the data informing them, indicated

that it was incumbent on senior leaders to "continue to try [with faculty and staff] to say 'where can we generate appropriate evidence and talk about why it's important and how it affects decision-making?'" and in turn, "positively reward [faculty and staff] when [they] come in and say 'look, I've got the evidence and this is the right solution'" (Case Two).

Amongst the institutions where the Presidents and SVPAs worked, there were some differences in the way that enrolment targets were operationalized. At one end of the continuum, an "organic approach" was promoted by a President and SVPA - "Deans of faculties set targets for their schools" and programs in collaboration "with their staff and Institutional Research" (Case Three). The targets helped structure a performance discourse with staff and senior management. Senior management was described as "advising" and respectfully "challenging" the Dean's assumptions in creating the targets but not overruling them (Case Three). Both the President and SVPA from this institution described such an approach as consistent with their strong belief in "collaborative" as opposed to "positional power" (Case Three).

Other Presidents and SVPAs described more formal systems where ultimately, the enrolment targets were set from "the top" albeit based on "sound research" and "collaboration with Deans". In all cases, enrolment planning was multi-year, and strong measurement systems were in place to assess enrolment performance to target, on a continuous basis, enabling course corrections to strategies and initiatives intended to increase enrolment yields. A quote from a President and an SVPA at separate colleges helps to illustrate the strategic and systematic nature of the planning process. The President indicated "we set up a variety of analytics regarding enrolment; establishing and implementing a very comprehensive Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System; doing a lot of measurement in different schools, departments, programs, all the way down [to] analyzing data related to which faculty members had a higher

rate of attrition and completion within their programs" (Case One). The SVPA from another

College advised:

> Like everybody [referring to many other colleges], we do our three-year rolling enrolment
>
> plans and there's also a seven-year enrolment plan. On top of that, there was a piece where
>
> everybody [is] given strong enrolment targets for each of the divisions. We are measuring
>
> it. There are metrics that come out against it. Some of the Deans had [also] actually
>
> started doing some financial modeling on this [enrolment] because if you don't grow your
>
> enrolment wisely you can actually end up losing money (Case Five).

The Presidents and SVPAs who described a more "top-down" approach to their college's

enrolment target setting, also described further mechanisms through which they held staff

accountable for enrolment yields. In one case, a President indicated that "people had annual

[performance] reviews" to assess "their contributions to [enrolment] targets." This same

President indicated having revised his college's budget system to reward individuals whose areas

grew … "and those who didn't had their budgets adjusted accordingly." This President indicated

staff needed "to know what was important from those people in charge…they acted

differently…it changed their behaviours" (Case One). An SVPA from another college indicated

that Academic divisions were incentivized to grow enrolment based upon their "Contribution-to-

Overhead" model of the budgeting system – "which encouraged revenue generation" (Case

Five).

Business product development and marketing methods. In business, the term 'product

mix' has been in vogue for decades. The term is simply defined as the total number and variety

of products that a company offers to a consumer/s (Boyd & Walker, 1996). To be competitive

and control expenses and optimize revenue, effective companies constantly assess the impact of

the product assortment in terms of its ability to meet customer wants and needs (Boyd & Walker, 1996). This term and its associated methodology have been adopted by colleges and universities across North America, with varying success, for the past decade – although the word 'product' is most often replaced by the word 'program' (Wilkinson, 2007).

In the current study, all Presidents and SVPAs discussed their ruminations and focus upon getting their program mix right. In all cases, they conducted ongoing primary and secondary research, through their Institutional Research departments, focusing upon the "performance" and behaviour "of competitors", "student demand", and "labour market need". As one SVPA indicated, "the product mix has to be first. What do employers need? What does the audience need? And then we work back to create the right product mix" (Case One). Another SVPA indicated, "part of my role is helping [Deans] review the information that shows the good, the bad and the indifferent in terms of programming areas …having the discussion, I guess, about – well, is this the right program for the institution? Should we continue with it? Is there any other area? And having our institutional research people look into what areas that we are losing students in and that they are actually in our catchment area" (Case Three). One SVPA described program mix akin to an investment portfolio where diversification is used to mitigate risk against variability in the regional or national economy. "We picked a very diverse portfolio so that if one thing went down – so let's say construction – we still had another area that could carry the enrolment forward" (Case Five). Finally, another SVPA highlighted the important role for the SVPA in shepherding a college's program mix by suggesting his role to be one of "working with the deans to try to put the framework in place to develop a strong suite of programs" (Case Two).

Presidents and SVPAs described a number of different methods they applied to enhance and differentiate their program mix to prospective students. One SVPA described his college's efforts to differentiate offerings through a specific credential and flexible delivery:

So for us, what has worked well is developing more graduate certificates offered online. So that is addressing a need for that already working professional – that is a person who is unlikely to come back here full-time because of other obligations, but has a need for continued specialization. And so it's an indirect market and you need to address it and market it differently (Case One).

Another President and SVPA spoke about the importance at their institution of introducing a number of niche program areas – programs having an appeal to a particular market sub-group. According to the President, "we worked at certain niches of expertise. So whether it's in the food and beverage area or advanced manufacturing, when we looked at prioritizing and developing issues, we looked at strengths in those areas and tried to play to those strengths" (Case Two). Still another President and SVPA described focusing upon science, technological, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) programs. As the President indicated, we determined "that if we focused on STEM, with the top universities having cut-offs of 90-something percent, that there will be a demand for Indian and Chinese students for STEM courses" (Case Three).

Consistent amongst Presidents and SVPAs interviewed for this study was the fact that at their institution, they subscribed to a philosophy and proactive approach relative to 'product lifecycle'. Product lifecycle, a term customarily applied in business, refers to four stages of a product's life – associated with its promotion and sales. The stages include: introduction; growth; maturity; and, decline (Boyd & Walker, 1996). In introduction and growth stages, a business often entertains considerable financial risk as ongoing and continued investment is often

required, and the likelihood and strength of positive financial returns is not fully understood. In

maturity, a product consistently yields a positive return-on-investment. Some products will stay

in a maturity state for a prolonged period of time, with little need for additional investment.

Many products, however, eventually cease to meet the needs and wants of customers causing a

company to assess the cost of continuing to carry the product versus retiring it from the product

portfolio (Boyd & Walker, 1996).

All Presidents and SVPAs interviewed described an extremely active new program

development process existing at their college. In fact, all respondents described having a large

number of programs in the "introduction" and "growth" lifecycle stages annually - during the

period 2011 to 2014. As one President indicated, "I'd say that it was a very innovative

institution and that some of the employees and faculty were encouraged or took liberty in terms

of creating new programs at a very consistent rate, so that new program offerings of all different

types of credentials were being brought to market in a very timely basis. I haven't looked at the

data, but I'm guessing there would be somewhere in the range of ten to a dozen a year" (Case

One). Another President shared "we developed new programming in the context of a rapidly

emerging economy… I think we have developed [many more times] new programming than any

other college in the system" (Case Three). A further President advised, "we launched [several

dozen] new programs in six years [where] there [was] proof that there is going to be opportunity

for students" (Case Four). Describing the risk and trade-offs of vigorous program development,

one President offered:

> People were saying, 'my gosh, you're cutting [programs]. You're hiring people to do new
>
> program development. What are you doing?!' So we were anticipating the environment of

the future and that to me is an important lesson for colleges because we have to be nimble

and flexible and understand the marketplace of the future (Case Two).

Presidents and SVPAs in the study also consistently shared that it was incumbent upon

them to create the conditions for program innovation at their institution by "taking some risk"

(Case Three). One President used a metaphor to illustrate the point by stating, "the analogy I

would be using was – look, you want to land a rocket on the moon – it's not the last, you know,

50 miles, it's getting out of the atmosphere and that's what we're trying to do" (Case Three).

Speaking to the importance of acting boldly and encouraging others to do so, one President

asserted, "in an environment that you want to be innovative and growth-oriented, you need to

have a leadership style that liberates people to act, to innovate and stumble and fall once in a

while" (Case One). Another President illustrated the leadership imperative to inculcate a culture

of risk-taking when he stated, "we just bought a [multi-million dollar] building with no

government funding and raised millions of dollars in the community to do that. So I think risk is

extremely important. I learned from it. You grow from it. And you innovate from it. And you

make mistakes from it. Some are costly; some are not. But that's just part of developing a

strong team. We're building a culture that others will take risks too. If you have a population

that's so risk averse that you don't move forward, then you will never move forward. You have

to take risks" (Case Four). An SVPA, acknowledging the importance of risk taking, particularly

to advance entrepreneurialism, described how his college effectively advanced risk taking

through their "own risk management framework used across the college." He elaborated upon

his college having three risk lenses - finance, people and reputation. To quote the SVPA, "…and

those are the lenses that we tend to look at any risky behaviour [with]. In terms of

entrepreneurial activities, that's where the finance may not be that great, but it's really good for

reputation or it's really good as a part of our human resources development or a student's development, that may outweigh some of the financial risks, if I can put it that way" (Case Two).

Presidents and SVPAs interviewed described several instances where they had the courage and indeed took the steps to retire programs from their College's portfolio that ceased to be relevant from a student demand and/or labour market perspective. As one President indicated, and citing ill-conceived admission standards and content of some of his college's programs, "it sounds counterintuitive, and it was very upsetting to the people when I got here. I said 'look, we're going to get better before we grow and that means we're going to get smaller' " (Case Three). An SVPA described his college's program lifecycle review process in the following way. "We have [a couple hundred] programs of study and every program goes through [a Program Quality Review] every five years. We review five years' worth of enrolment, retention, all the KPIs. Anything that smells wrong, we address. So again, just to make sure that the program is where it needs to be." When asked about the willingness of the college to cut a program that was assessed poorly, the SVPA asserted, "no hesitation. We have a process for that. We have a policy for that" (Case One). Another SVPA provided a very strong example of the resistance that often accompanies a decision to discontinue a program. It was "a program where they had been facing some challenges and needed to restructure the program, and it was around a work experience that the faculty dearly loved, but the environment had changed and there just was not enough work experiences like that in the region anymore. And so working with the Dean, going through a program review, which we had a very significant focus on here … getting the Program Advisory Committee involved in having to let go of something that was really … you know, for the faculty would have been teaching it for 15 or 20 years and who loved

that part of the program, it was a real … it was a challenge to get them to look past the past successes and look at the future challenges more" (Case Two).

Summary

The data collected related to the enrolment growth theme helps to build a composite of common behavior amongst Presidents and SVPAs at colleges included in my study. In each case, a President defines and treats enrolment growth as a key area of focus, and commitment of staff effort, across the college. The President inculcates a strong sense of urgency amongst staff, using multiple methods and platforms, and consistent and repetitive messaging tied to college sustainability. Collectively, the President and SVPA collaborate to remove internal barriers to enrolment growth and, led by the SVPA, design and introduce a few specific processes and systems, inclusive of a strategic enrolment management committee, multi-year enrolment plan, targets and measures, and new program development and retirement programs. In these ways, the Presidents and SVPAs demonstrated 'market leadership' characterized by a competitive, results orientation, enabled by systems, processes and rules that are much simplified, to allow a more unfettered approach by constituents to achieve outcomes (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

Recognizing that many staff may be disinclined to take risks, particularly as it relates to new program development, the President and SVPA help staff to take risks by regularly verbalizing that it is okay to do so, investing appropriately in program development, and celebrating failure. This finding was not captured as a theoretical construct within my preliminary Conceptual Framework, but ought to have been. Specifically, these behaviours are indicative of 'adhocratic leadership' which is characterized by innovation and regular risk-taking through innovation (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Where optimized colleges in the U.S. were found by Cameron and Quinn, 2006 to be predominantly 'market', and secondarily 'clan'-driven,

optimized colleges in Ontario may be predominantly market-driven, but have near equally

secondary cultural features of 'clan' and 'adhocracy'.

Chapter 5

Quality Findings

Optimal Student Experience Leading to a Job

Presidents and their SVPAs consistently described the key outcome of quality as being

graduate employment, and defined quality, within the Ontario college context, as an optimal

student experience that would lead to a job. Each President and SVPA also described the

importance of having a focused and robust approach at their institutions to continuously sustain

and improve quality.

Labour market understanding drives student planning. Presidents and SVPAs very

consistently and without hesitation, indicated that the key outcome for graduates from college

ought to be "to secure employment" (e.g., Case Two). As an SPVA asserted, it is incumbent on

leaders to constantly ask the question, "are our graduates getting jobs once they leave? (Case

Five)." Given that employment was the key outcome, participants indicated that colleges needed

to be firmly abreast of labour market conditions. As one President stated, "certainly, I think the

students come here and I think they expect to find a job. So we try to work on that, and that's

not a simple thing. You've got to understand what the job market is" (Case Three).

Presidents and SVPAs consistently described many methods that they engaged in to

understand their local, regional, and provincial labour market conditions and opportunities.

Participants consistently developed "strong relationships with employers" in order that they

could better understand labour market needs. As one President indicated, "we can pick up the

phone and call anybody. We know everybody. We're embedded with employers" (Case Three).

Another President offered, "We find processes that engage us with employers [so] that we hear

and know what is needed" (Case Two). Presidents and SVPAs also encouraged their leaders to

spend time in the community to develop important relationships. As one President indicated, "we have a strong culture at this institution that encourages, particularly senior leaders, to populate Chambers of Commerce; economic development agencies – to really engage in the community – to feed the labour market intelligence" (Case Two).   Participants also described creating and utilizing program advisory groups, comprised of industry leaders aligned to program areas, for intelligence about the sustainability of program offerings from a labour market perspective. As one SVPA indicated and referencing a case of a program offering that was seen to be misaligned to labour market needs, "the PAC [Program Advisory Committee] is brought on board [and] made aware that this program is on lifeline here. We need to do something. Can you help us as an employee group? What suggestions do you have?" (Case One). Also, and with respects to PACs, another President advised that he made "Program Advisory Committees truly robust" (Case Two). Additionally, participants described how they utilized traditional strategic planning methodologies to assess labour market conditions. As one President indicated, "we would do a lot of SWOT [strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats] analysis; we would bring people in on a regular basis to give us a scan of our particular economic circumstances that we find in our community" (Case Two). Another President added that "evidence of today but also some projections into the future" was constantly sought to assess whether there was "support for students as far as placements, co-ops, and jobs" (Case Four).

Elements of the optimal student experience. Presidents and SVPAs were consistent in the view that the most important aspect of the student experience was the classroom experience - in particular, the relationship shared between the student and faculty. For the relationship to be optimized, it was critical that faculty "treated students fairly" (Case Two). As one SVPA indicated, "it is about instructors who are respectful, [and] understand the differences in students

today" (Case Three). Another SVPA added, that students "want to know that someone cares about them, … and particularly in the large institutions, that they're not just a number" (Case Five). A President offered, "We make statements about the outcomes of our curriculum. You deliver on what you promise [in terms of] academic delivery and supporting students" (Case Four). Participants also oft described the importance of having faculty who were engaging of their students through clarity of expectations – "do they understand what is expected of them [and] what material they're going to cover" (Case Three). Moreover, engagement was described in terms of the provision of regular "feedback" and "hands-on, applied learning". With respect to applied learning, one SVPA suggested that students ought to be helped "to understand not just their narrow professions but how it interacts into the larger scope of whatever area – whether it is engineering or healthcare – what the people around them are likely going to be doing, what their roles are, how they fit into the team" (Case Two).

Participants in the study were clear that staff and students needed to be supported appropriately through technology in the classroom labs. The technology was viewed to include, but not to be limited to, "e-learning", mobile enablement, and the most "up-to-date equipment" used by industry to perform key activities for which the student was being trained within their program. As one SVPA indicated, "you want functioning classrooms. You want functioning labs. You want the right technology to help students, whether it's using the LMS [Learning Management System] right through to what we put on mobile right now, right through to the flexibility that they need" (Case Five).

All participants in the study fully acknowledged that resources were limited to fund capitalization and were only likely to become increasingly limited in the future. However, they all indicated that for a college to be of high quality, and in addition to the classroom experience,

a "self-contained community" that "created an entire experience for the student," (Case One) it

needed to be built around students where they could also receive: student support – such as

counselling, assessment, upgrading, social activities, nourishment, and so on. One SVPA,

speaking to such an eco-system, described it in the following way:

> [It] doesn't just include a classroom. It includes the student support services. It includes
>
> the … it's like being a mini-city or a mini-town. So providing the opportunities for
>
> students to be able to come in, eat, go to class, go and get some support because they are
>
> not doing very well on something, get some English language tutoring or something. They
>
> have a medical issue – they are able to go to the health clinic. That is … that we are able to
>
> provide for our students of today, which is a very, very mixed bag (Case Three).

Underpinning the key dimensions of student success, is the need to resource them

effectively. Presidents and SVPAs consistently described a strategic orientation to resourcing

where they would hold themselves and their subordinates accountable for resource decisions and

budgets that could demonstrably be linked to high-priority student success items. As one SVPA

indicated, quality leadership involves "laying out and obtaining the resources to allow [faculty]

to effectively integrate students from different backgrounds into the programs effectively and [to

support] the students in success" (Case Five). In terms of linking resources, participants oft

described using KPIs related to student satisfaction to prioritize. As one President indicated, "we

invest in equipment. We get a lot of equipment donations. We pay attention to … we don't lie

awake about the student satisfaction but we look at what it's saying and we try to invest

appropriately" (Case Three). Another President added that the student satisfaction KPIs were

particularly useful for establishing college priorities because colleges can objectively "compare

[themselves] with one another" (Case Five). Several participants, while acknowledging that

buildings are important and create a level of "curb appeal", asserted that the most strategic use of resources was toward the learning experience and student services. As one President indicated, "too often I see people really getting confused with building, buildings … buying the latest technology or putting on certain events and not putting those dollars where it matters – and that's into the classroom to support faculty in a very, very complex job" (Case Two). Another President advised, "probably compared to some people, our buildings, now they're starting to get better, but we always thought the classroom was the heart of the institution" (Case Three).

Hiring and training practices. Given that the highest priority for Presidents and SVPAs to sustain and indeed grow quality was to ensure that faculty were fair, responsive, clear, hands-on, and competent, it is little surprise that they rated hiring and training of faculty as a key role for Presidents and SVPAs. In addition to the aforementioned qualities sought, participants also described being interested in hiring faculty who would "attract gifts", "donations", and "bursaries" and who were motivated to "develop programs to win awards." One President summarized the hiring process most effectively when he stated, "hiring is one of the most … it is the most important decision you'd ever make. It's increasingly becoming more costly, more time consuming" (Case Four). Another President offered that college leaders need to constantly ask themselves "what type of selection process do you have in place and how do you know you are attracting the right people?" (Case One)

While all Presidents and SVPAs clearly took hiring extremely seriously, one President and SVPA team described a set of additional, unique practices which they undertook at their institution to ensure that they had the right candidate. First, the President meets each potential hire before they are hired. In his words, "I know everyone's C.V. I've seen it. I wouldn't remember everything but I'd know something about it" (Case Three). Second, and in concert

with their HR department, they have poured considerable effort into creating a "realistic preview" for faculty candidates. According to the SVPA, the "realistic preview" helps to avoid having faculty quit after "the first few weeks of classes because they didn't know it was so much work." Moreover, the SVPA indicated that the "realistic preview" also stresses that "you have students with mental health issues, you have students with disabilities, and instructors have to know that they need to be responsive to these areas" (Case Three).

Presidents and their SVPAs alike described an imperative to train and develop staff, particularly faculty "to be successful in the classroom" (Case Four). One President described the leadership imperative to constantly question "what professional development are you offering and are faculty participating? Does your institution have a centre for professional development?" (Case One)

Training and development for all staff very much focused on helping "people understand how their work is changing" (Case Four). Specifically, participants described the importance of training and developing staff in a way that would allow them to be optimally responsive toward a changing student demographic. As one President indicated, development ought to help staff "buy into and understand their role in helping unprepared or different abilities of students and helping them succeed" (Case Four). In this vein, another President asserted that leaders ought to be constantly asking themselves, "are you preparing [faculty] for a more diverse classroom" (Case Three). Training and development also very much recognized the importance of technological understanding - as an enabler, as something that was always morphing, and indeed, as something that specific sub-populations – that is, millennials - expected to be current. As one President indicated, leaders ought to be asking themselves, "are you offering [faculty] the right support and training every time you launch a new software" and "do [they] know how to use

technology more than just flipping through a PowerPoint presentation" (Case One)? Finally, and

in terms of being committed to "hand-on-learning", participants acknowledged the need to train

"subject matter experts" who had "never gone to college." To illustrate, a President asserted the

need for colleges to "do a better job of orienting professors to their craft because typically they

are not teachers, they are subject matter experts, but they need to know how to apply that in a

practical setting" (Case One).

Systematic, continuous quality assurance. As the literature confirmed, quality is a

strong area of focus for the Ontario colleges system. The Ontario system benefits from the

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS), an arms-length body providing "quality

assurance at the program-level through the Credentials Validation Service (CVS) and

institutional-level quality assurance and continuous improvement through the Program Quality

Assurance Process Audit (PQAPA) process" (Klaasan, 2012, p.2). The first process provides

considerable guidance to college faculty and administrators on key features that need to exist

with a newly developed program before it can be recommended to the Ministry for approval by

OCQAS. The second process, adopted by all colleges through agreement of the colleges'

organizing body, Colleges Ontario and its Committee of Presidents (COP), sees individual

colleges externally audited every five years on a common measurement scheme (Klaasan, 2012).

All Presidents and SVPAs in the study, anchored by their understanding of OCQAS

standards, described specific ways that they assured quality on an ongoing basis –ways that

became "supported [and] "accepted" [by staff] (Case Four). By way of example, one SVPA

described an ongoing, institutionally developed and delivered metrics-driven approach and

accompanying review process. "We have five indicators – as long as all those indicators are

positive and trending well, the program is good. As the program starts to trend differently, we start to do a remediation plan on it" (Case One).

Some colleges in this study also described having utilized external assessors on an ongoing basis to continuously evaluate programs, engaged a broad constituency for advice, and adopted advanced forms of reporting. As an SVPA indicated, "what we have morphed into is a program evaluation process which tries to be very strongly evidence-based. We bring in external assessors from around the country. We do self-studies that are evaluated by the assessors. We involve program advisory committee members, students and others. And we do have a whole set of, kind of, standard reports and dashboards that we build around programs to try to understand how well they're doing or how … where the challenges are" (Case One). A President from another college added, "we have a quality assurance group that is very professional and disciplined and we build in external assessors to come in. I think we're early adopters of that. That takes a lot of work. Then [we] bring in employers separately and say, 'is this reflective of what they're [the evaluators] saying … and there is the whole discipline around being comfortable with sharing the data and feeding it back". This President's SVPA added, "we do a whole set of standard reports and dashboards that we build around programs to try to understand how well they're doing or how … where the challenges are … and those are absolutely key elements of engaging faculty" (Case Two).

Summary

I discovered several commonalities across Presidents and SVPAs in my study relative to the theme of quality. With unanimity, participants described the key outcome of quality as being graduate employment, and defined quality, within the Ontario college context, as an optimal student experience that would lead to a job. In order that program offerings aligned to labour

market need and opportunity, Presidents and SVPAs described being engaged in regular and

systematic outreach to employers to understand labour market trends, through for instance, the

creation and use of employer program advisory committees and membership with Chambers of

Commerce. While participants described investments in buildings as helpful, they indicated that

the key underpinning of quality was the strength of the classroom experience. In this sense,

appropriately recruited and trained faculty, having strong practical and experiential teaching

capabilities and a deep sense of fairness and respect toward their students, were at the heart. In

order for faculty to optimize and further make their teaching relevant, Presidents and SVPAs

recognized an important role for themselves in terms of seeking resources to fund technology,

labs, flexible learning spaces, and a range of student services and supports. Finally, all

participants acknowledged that their institution's quality framework was anchored by common

standards and processes jointly endorsed by the Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and

Skills Development, Colleges Ontario, and Ontario's Committee of Presidents, which included

the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS), and the Program Quality Assurance

Process Audit (PQAPA). In several cases, Presidents and SVPAs described introducing and

sustaining parallel internal quality processes intended to re-inforce and sustain advancements to,

and improvements in, quality at their institution.

Chapter 6

Access Findings

Reducing Barriers and Increasing Pathways for All Prospective Students

Presidents and their SVPAs consistently defined access in terms of the need to reduce barriers to post-secondary enrolment by under-represented groups and the provision of bridges and pathways allowing all students to achieve appropriate training that best supports their individual employment objective. Following from this shared understanding, Presidents and SVPAs lead toward access by conditioning staff to value equity; researching sub-group needs and service and pathway gaps; and offering a continuum of support, bridging and pathway programs for students at their college.

Access defined. Presidents and SVPAs consistently indicated that access was core to the Ontario colleges' mission. As one President aptly indicated, "colleges were established to democratize post-secondary education" (Case One). Another President added, access "has anchored our almost 50 years of bridging opportunities for people, particularly that haven't had opportunities" (Case Two). It is not unusual, l therefore, that Presidents and SVPAs would describe access in very similar terms.

Access was consistently described from the perspective of a college's duty to assist any and "all students" and prospective students, regardless of aptitude, "socio-economic" circumstance, "special needs", "gender", and cultural background, to receive a college education leading to employment. As one President stated, "access means to me that those who pursue, desire, want a postsecondary education – that we have a doorstep to enter the college" (Case Four). Another President indicated, "so from our point of view, we are prepared to work with anyone that can sort of stand up and take their place" (Case Three). An SVPA added, "so access

for us is that if you need … if you want a postsecondary education, there is a way for you to get one" (Case Three). Another SVPA added that access means, "if you don't meet the admission criteria, you still have the ability to come to college" (Case Five). Still another SVPA asserted, "access to me means an ability to get into a program where interested, and you're likely to be successful" (Case Two).

Presidents and SVPAs consistently asserted that the provision of access necessitated an understanding by colleges of the barriers faced by students to participate, particularly under-represented groups. As an SVPA aptly indicated, barrier recognition involves, "looking at the audiences and [asking whether we are] either preventing or creating barriers to some group, whether it's inevitable or by design?" (Case One) Participants also consistently described access as providing multiple upgrading pathways to students to qualify for college, to acquire a credential, and to seamlessly build upon a post-secondary credential with a further credential/s. A strong illustration of this concept is provided in the following quote by a President. "I'll give you an example. So, you could have an upgrading program that would help someone do a GED [General Educational Development]. That person could go into a pre-health certificate, and perhaps they'll be on to one-year PSW [Personal Support Worker program], maybe they are [on that track]; maybe they're not. Then you have a bridge to two-year RPN [Registered Practical Nurse] and a bridge to BScN [Bachelor of Science in Nursing]. So that's real access" (Case Three). The quote demonstrates how an individual, who might otherwise have been considered a weak student prior to post-secondary, can be on-ramped to post-secondary in a non-traditional way, and with the benefit of progressive experience, confidence and mastery, go on to become a nurse – if that is what he or she chooses.

Engagement of faculty and staff around equity. Presidents and SVPAs consistently described regular efforts to inculcate a value of equity within their college. These leaders very intentionally wove messaging about equity into formal and informal staff meetings and gatherings and at community events. As one President indicated – "democratizing postsecondary education – if you said that in [my city], I'd say most people who worked at the college would know who you were speaking of, because I said that hundreds of times." He went on to describe elements of the equity narrative that he consistently shared including, "it's not just the middle class Caucasians or people who come from wealth. It's not just men who are going to go into the trades or women to health studies College is] to provide access to anyone who wants to improve their life" (Case One). Another President regularly communicated to staff the "social and moral imperative to do better [in terms of access]." The President went on to describe the importance of "having faculty buy into it [access] and understand their role in helping unprepared or different ability students and helping them succeed." Describing the systematic nature of communicating the equity message, this President asserted, "it's about messaging; it's about investing in messaging; it's about consistency; it's about persistence" (Case Four). Another President described how he oft reminds staff and faculty that "we need to be a continuum of learning" and that "the need in the community is not for another elite institution who wants to prove how good they are because they can be exclusive." To the contrary, this President asserts that he tells staff and faculty that "we need to educate everyone in society [and] we need to take pride in that" (Case Three).

The messaging of the importance of equity was also evidenced through this study in creative, non-traditional ways. By way of example, one SVPA described how she modeled the importance of equity by first learning how to sign and then signing with hearing impaired

students as they received their credential at convocation. She advised that she first confirmed with faculty "as to whether that would be an inclusive thing to do." She advised that "they were all really happy that [she] did it, that [she] made the effort…and they took it in the spirit with which it was intended – for inclusion" (Case Five).

While Presidents were most often sharing their equity message to large groups, in formal settings, the SVPAs most often and informally, took conversations with their staff, and particularly their Deans, about how the President's message could be operationalized. As one SVPA indicated, his role was to continuously meet with his Deans and lead discussions on "what can we do to remove barriers to allow further access" (Case Two). Another SVPA reiterated, "it's conversations with areas and support to the areas that provide [the impetus to develop] the different types of access." Moreover, this SVPA described regularly meeting with and leading discussions with her Deans with respect to "a focus on all populations" (Case Five). Finally, another SVPA emphasized that her role was one of having "conversations with the areas and providing support to [those] areas that provide the different types of access [and] ensuring that important messages from the academic upgrading area are carried forth to the schools" (Case Three).

Researching and remediating access gaps. Presidents and SVPAs consistently described efforts that they undertook to understand the needs of a far-ranging number of existing and potential student sub-groups, as well as the impacts of strategies that they put in place to address the needs. Participants described doing formal studies and data analysis projects to understand needs more effectively. As one SVPA indicated, and referencing his college's research efforts, "as we do more work, more studies; we start to peel the layers of the onion, we start to understand it [student needs] a bit … even within the students with disabilities, there are so many

variances, so many sub-categories – people with physical disabilities, people with mental challenge spectrum, whether its autism or others" (Case One). Another President, again describing the use of research to understand need, indicated that his college "looked at all this data, you're aware of, in terms of low participation rates of Indigenous Canadians and African Canadians, and their persistence rates are not where they should be. People with disabilities, in particular, hearing and visual, have had major barriers in front of them; physical disabilities as well" (Case One). A further President recounted how his college paired with a university to assess the impact of college to university pathways for several disciplines finding that students starting at college as opposed to university to complete a "2 plus 2 degree program[2], were more successful than those that started at university" (Case Four). Participants also described understanding the needs of under-represented sub-groups through consistent focus group and key informant outreach to communities. As a President indicated, "working with community is very important as we deal with various sectorial groups whether its people with disabilities or different sorts of minority groups. It's reaching out and also working with those groups and trying to understand what they perceive as the barrier to the college" (Case Four).

Having some sense of a certain sub-group's needs, participants described a process of doing gap analysis relative to the need. An SVPA illustrated such a process in the following way, "so we've looked at everything from where students are not successful and trying to back-analyze into what should be added as a pre-program or as an entry requirement, all the way to the other way of removing program requirements or admission requirements where there was shown to be no validity...so, either or both" (Case Two).

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[2] The 2+2 model describes the process in which a student obtains a four-year degree by completing two years in an Ontario college and two years in a university degree program.

Bringing the whole process to life, from sub-group identification and analysis through to service or program gap analysis, through to remediation, a President and an SVPA at two separate institutions offered strong examples. The President began, "as an institution we really had no Centre for indigenous students. We talked to the community and we talked to various First Nations communities and we talked to elders and we had roundtables and brought the community to us, and we listened to them to understand the needs of indigenous students." Following on this needs assessment, the President indicated that his college was emboldened to take action and indeed, to bridge the gap. He advised:

> In time we realized that we really needed to make an investment. We needed to create a Centre where those students could find the social and academic support they need to be successful. We established a Centre with staff and resources that was there to celebrate culture; to have various ceremonial aspects of their culture and its paid dividends as far as learning and success of the students, but also the community itself, seeing in fact that we listened, and we implemented, and we now have a very successful Centre for indigenous students to find the support that they need to be successful (Case Four).

The SVPA described a strong example of sub-group identification through to remediation but in his case, involving the area of student mental health. He advised that "there's certainly a lot of documentation [on student mental health], and we had a very large faculty-led group that looked at it, and their analysis was that colleges that had a fall break had a much better retention into term two or at least a statistically significant retention." He asserted that "the literature" was clear that the fall break "gave students a time to re-group and catch up and catch their mental breath … and was probably as important, or even more important, for some students than the break in the spring," [since by then] "they may have come to terms with what the post-secondary

life and work experience was like." Speaking more specifically to remediation, the SVPA

advised, "for us, we've actually overhauled a lot of our processes to try to build in social

engagement and academic engagement very early in the term as part of the student experience

and to try to figure out very quickly whether or not we've connected with the student" (Case

Two).

Continuum of support, bridging and pathways programs. Presidents and SVPAs

consistently confirmed that access efforts begin early in the academic trajectory of prospective

post-secondary students. Respondents frequently described having strong engagement "with

local and regional school boards to bridge students" more successfully to the college

environment. By way of example, respondents described introducing and partnering with high

schools to offer "dual credit programs" and "high skills majors". Dual credit programs, which

are approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education, allow students to take college or

apprenticeship courses while in high school that can be counted toward completion of their

Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), as well as toward a future college degree, diploma,

or Certificate of Apprenticeship (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). High skills majors, also

Ontario Ministry of Education approved, allow high school students to focus their learning

around a specific economic sector which "assists with their transition after graduation to

apprenticeship training, college, university, or workplace" (Durham District School Board,

2016). Embedded within the High Skills Major curriculum is a requirement for participants to

attend several college or apprentice classes related to their career aspiration and interview

students currently enrolled in the post-secondary program to better enable time to take informed

decisions about their post-secondary education and career path (Ontario Ministry of Education,

2016).

A quote helps illustrate the focus placed by Presidents and their SVPA on dual credit and High Skills Major programs. As one SVPA indicated:

We try to cater to an audience that has not completed their Ontario Secondary School Diploma. There has been a very strong participation with our school boards in that School-to College-to Work Initiative. Again, to help students who are at-risk of either not completing or not having post-secondary on their mind as potentially meeting their future career. So, we have done a lot of work to … and I've tasked people specifically with growing dual credit as much as they can (Case One).

Presidents and their SVPAs also described several programs, structures, and processes that they have in place at their colleges to assist young and mature adults who may have discontinued their education trajectory following completion of their OSSD or absent one or several credits toward OSSD completion. As one President clearly stated, "if you are going to increase access, then you have to have foundational programming and laddering [because] the truth of the matter is if you don't have strong literacy and numeracy skills, and basic technical skills, you're not going to be successful" (Case Three). Consistent across all respondents was that their colleges offered an array of foundation, techniques, and remediation programming. As one SVPA indicated, "we have a lot of pre-programming or fundamental programming or whatever you want to call it. And we do a lot of remediation work as well, particularly math and communications, as does every college" (Case Five). Somewhat unique across the participants, however, was the extent to which they seemed to emphasize certain processes. As one SVPA indicated, that in addition to foundation, techniques and remediation programs, her college chose to focus on the financial impediments to college attendance. "So we just upgraded our financial aid package. So we can get students their money when they need it, not take weeks to process.

So there is the financial side, which the government is really pushing right now – that net tuition

piece" (Case Five).

　　All respondents described significant attention being paid at their institutions toward

embedding, sustaining, and often bolstering success supports and processes for under-

represented groups, particularly "new immigrants", "mentally" and "physically challenged"

students, and "indigenous" groups.　These efforts are consistent with former Ontario Premier

Kathleen Wynne's mandate letter direction to the Deputy Minister of MTCU, highlighting the

imperative of "continuing to recognize and meet the needs of diverse groups of learners

including Indigenous Peoples, first-generation students, persons with disabilities, and students

with special needs, through a system of equitable supports (Stonefish, O'Neil & Craig, 2016, p.

12).　As one President indicated, "we have a series of support services that try to ensure that all

students have equitable opportunities to take advantage of what we have to offer; especially to

prevent some students from not being able to attend because of physical barriers and mental

barriers."　The President offered a specific illustration of such a program by indicating his

college had been "re-organizing its general arts and science programs to be more sensitive to

mental health issues, to disabilities [where] we're going to be launching [a work-integrated

learning program for students experiencing chronic mental health issues] and that's brought a lot

of questions about how we manage and provide proper counselling" (Case Two).　Another

President described efforts that they were undertaking to improve services and supports to the

sensory impaired.　Referencing students experiencing visual impairment, he described how his

college committed to expediting brail conversions of textbooks.　In his words, "we put through a

whole review that students who had visual impairments – they were waiting 3/4/5 weeks to get

their books converted – until we said, are we serious about it or not?"　The President advised that

the process was later converted "into a couple of days when we analyzed and said, 'what is it that we have to do differently here?'" (Case One). Finally, an SVPA described a community partnerships office at her college that was responsible for systematic outreach to marginalized, under-represented community groups with a view to bridging many of their members to college through evidence-based, culturally-responsive bridging programs. She advised that the service "is not profitable [and] actually uses resources, in some cases, a lot of resources but, we [the college] still have that commitment, and we balance it off with other things in the portfolio, because we realize the importance to the community" (Case Five).

With respect to serving Indigenous communities, A President offered a strong illustration of how his college set up an Indigenous Student Centre. It began with assessment. "Indigenous Canadians, how are we doing? Well we weren't doing a great job." He engaged the college community in discussions and advocated with them that "they get more serious around Indigenous Canadians." Very purposefully, the college went about putting "in resources; we put in recruiting and admissions processes and supports; we put in student success supports. So, it was purposely thought about – how do you make indigenous students feel more welcome and supported from food and how you treat and counsel and all of those things" (Case One).

In addition to ensuring programs, services and supports existed to bridge high-risk secondary school students to post-secondary, and support under-represented groups to be successful, Presidents and SVPAs provided ample examples of how their institution enabled students with prior post-secondary credentials to seamlessly "transfer into their institution". Moreover, they described processes that they had developed to enable their own graduates to pathway to other institutions of higher learning. As one President indicated:

A very pronounced and specific outbound effort regarding credential recognition was put in place, so that anyone who had previously studied at a college or university in Canada, who were employed, particularly in the public sector – credit recognition efforts were put in place for those individuals." The President indicated that "hundreds of people" benefited annually and that employers were also engaged "to help underwrite the cost of tuition (Case One).

Another President indicated offering a number of "2 plus 2" programs with universities, most often related to "business, healthcare, and engineering", where they learn in "different educational models throughout their four years of study" (Case Three). Presidents also described introducing a range of "articulation arrangements" with other colleges and universities, including international agreements such as "where students out of [a] three-year diploma can go to Ireland for one year and achieve an honors degree in their discipline" (Case Four).

Summary

Presidents and SVPAs were extremely consistent in the way that they both defined access and operationalized the construct within their college. They described access as being a range of efforts intended to reduce barriers and increase pathways for any existing or prospective student. Common barriers noted were aptitude, socio-economic disadvantage, and disability. Common pathways described by participants included, partnerships with school boards to offer dual-credential programs and high skills majors, literacy/numeracy/basic technical skills bridging for students absent one or several credits toward OSSD completion, and specialized student support services. Presidents and SVPAs also inculcated a culture of access at their institution by conditioning staff to value equity, through repetitive messaging about its importance and modeling simple ways that students of any background could feel welcomed and supported.

Moreover, they constantly sought out subjective and objective forms of services gap data and information within their institution to inform related planning.

Chapter 7

Strategic Leadership Findings

Delineated and Complementary Strategic Roles

Presidents and their SVPAs at high-achieving Ontario colleges have clearly delineated albeit highly complementary strategic roles. Presidents are very much focused upon leading the development of the college vision, strategic priorities, and a point/s of differentiation. Alongside imagining the college's destination, the President attempts to understand and influence the extent to which staff are engaged and committed to a shared future. SVPAs translate the President's vision and focus areas in practical terms by providing strong line-of-sight communication and direction to the Deans, and through stewarding business planning and the development, implementation, and maintenance of systems and processes intended to advance enrolment growth, quality, and access.

Presidents' lead the creation of the vision and key focus areas. As Kouzes and Posner (2007) assert, high-performing senior leaders of organizations are those who "imagine an exciting, highly attractive future for their organization" (p.7). In fact, they "live their lives backward. They see pictures in their mind's eye of what the results will look like even before they've started their project, much as an architect draws a blue-print or an engineer builds a model" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 7). Presidents in this study consistently considered it their role, and one they took very seriously, to develop a strong vision for their organization.

One President indicated that the role "takes a lot of followers. So in order to get followers you really do have to have a … you have to know where you are going, a vision" (Case Four). Another President indicated that the organization's success "started with a vision", the President's vision, that pre-dated the period under examination (2011-2014). He shared the

notion that "people think lots of it is pure luck" but that his vision helped his organization "to find [its] place" by "marrying the terms excellence and equity" (Case Three). Another President characterized the principle role of President in the following terms, "the CEO role is to keep an eye on the future and feet on the ground. So we want to be visionary" (Case Two). Finally, another President stated, "people need to know what's important from those people who are in charge … if we're going north, say we're going north" (Case One).

All Presidents in the study felt that the vision need not only be compelling and exciting, but also "practical". When pushed to define "practical", Presidents consistently described the need to create "focus" for constituents in their communication of the vision to them. As one President offered, "I think inherent in the role of the President is their ability to communicate key strategic items that will help drive the institution to excellence. I always talk about being in the top tier in the college system whether we measure employment of our students, student satisfaction, retention" (Case Two). The same President added that "if the institution and culture sees that you're constantly striving at the right issues and not getting bogged down by cynicism or 'I don't know what's going on here', that people feel like we're on the right direction" (Case Two). Another President asserted "that by having a singular focus on an item you harness the energies of really smart people, and by not being distracted by a lot of other things you can actually move forward. And I would say that most people knew that the enrolment and retention of students was a primary focus as a President when I was there" (Case One). Another President asserted, "I think it is important as far as success – you have to be focused, I mean, it's just, you know, from a leadership point of view, I think the leader has to be focused. We just have three things; just very simple – we're going to build capacity; we're going to focus on quality; and fiscal responsibility" (Case Three).

Alongside determining and communicating long-term focus areas for the college, Presidents also asserted that they had a critical role in defining one or two areas that from a marketing perspective, could be used to distinguish their college from competitor organizations. Leading differentiation efforts is consistent with the writing of Alfred (2005), who stated that President's need always ruminate about and attempt to address the question, "what is your institution's unique 'signature', and how does it differ from competitors in the minds of stakeholders?" (p. xiv). In the current study, one President challenged his college to "spend a lot of time about differentiation – what does that really mean in a postsecondary environment" (Case Two)? He went on to say, "we spent a lot of time as we started to build our Strategic Mandate Agreement to try to capture our environment and what was special and unique about our institution that would attract people to [it]". Another President talked about differentiating based on programming that aligned with technology. In the President's words, we "felt our strengths were [technology]" (Case Three). Another President, again described the choice of his institution to differentiate based upon "niche type of programming." He indicated that this choice was calculated and made because "most colleges, particularly the larger colleges, are offering many of the same programs" and that his college's niche programs "served a bit of a halo for the other programs – the less distinct programs" (Case One).

All Presidents interviewed for this study described their strong tendency to seek out data and research to inform their strategic direction, both its development and its execution. As one President indicated, "the institution that wins the battle on data analytics is going to be the successful one. And so that has become a real area that I am … where I am now manically obsessed about it". This President, describing how his use of data is transforming cultural behaviour stated, "When I arrived, around enrolment and data, I was receiving a one-page

document every couple of weeks. Now I get across my desk a 23/24 - page document every two weeks with very, very deep data and analytics and I'm just … not just passive about it. I think it's the only way we're going to survive" (Case One). Another President offered, "there's no way … no other way to really make decisions. Guts are great; emotions are great, but they've got to be supported by some evidence" (Case Four). Another President asserted his view that President's need to be "comfortable with data and feeding it back." He added, "I think the President has to role model that" (Case Two).

Engagement of faculty and staff. Presidents interviewed for this study oft described the need to continuously seek and foster "buy-in" of staff to their college's strategic direction, otherwise execution would be flawed or worse, altogether unsuccessful. To poignantly illustrate, one President asserted that "in order to keep [the] culture alive and basically, ask people to do a lot more, you really have to have buy-in" (Case Four).

Presidents of colleges in the study were very consistent that their role ought to and indeed did involve multiple methods to "assess" the level of "understanding and commitment" of staff toward delivering the college's vision and mission with distinction. One common method of measuring staff understanding and commitment involved the administration, by an outside research consultant, of an "all staff culture survey". Such a survey essentially acted as a "gauge of the [cultural] temperature" by asking "how are things going around here? Are you satisfied with your job? Do you think [the] institution recognizes your performance?" (Case Two) As one President indicated, "we did some engagement surveys. It measured the level of engagement; level of understanding of the vision" (Case Three). Such surveys were particularly helpful because they had also been administered to many other comparator organizations thereby allowing for benchmarking of results. As one President indicated, "we compared [our results] to

a national level; it was above the national level. So we did see that our communication was working" (Case Four). Such surveys were also very useful to assess units within the organization where lesser levels of engagement existed, necessitating support and additional attention. This same President offered, "I mean, we saw pockets where it wasn't [working], so basically developed a strategy to deal with those pockets."   Another President added, "when we get these variances in areas, we try to celebrate where things are going well and where areas aren't going so well, and we use the data to inform us to change" (Case Two).

All Presidents interviewed saw it as their role to inculcate a 'pride of place' feeling amongst their staff. As one President aptly suggested, it was important to "celebrate both the successes and failure" (Case One). Common methods used to do so involved "all-staff meetings" led by the President a couple to few times per year. Reflecting on the impact of such a meeting, one President described a time where he led an all-staff meeting to address "a feeling that we were less than the other institutions." At this particular event, the President described his role in providing clarity and motivation to staff by communicating a message of "no, no … we're not less than; we're different than." The outcome of the meeting, according to the President, was that the college "started with a bit of pride in that – we're here; we're actually saving souls; we're actually trying to help people be the best they can be. And wow! Look at us" (Case Three). Another President described how he used "two all-staff meetings" per year to inculcate staff pride. According to the President, the first is "a welcome back event every September. It sets the stage for the semester … and in there, we always include reference to celebrating some of the successes that resonate beyond a particular discipline." Bookending the year, the President described an end-of year "Day of Reflection" where he led constituents to appreciate "what went well in the institution; what didn't" (Case Two).

Another way that President's helped infuse a sense of pride amongst staff was by leading celebrations of "milestone" achievements related to the college's "strategic plan". These sorts of celebrations were viewed to be very important because they "celebrate and acknowledge those who have contributed to help again." Moreover, such celebrations create a deeper level of commitment amongst staff because they help them "to understand what they've done to accomplish" the milestone (Case Four).

Practical translation of the vision and strategic focus areas. SVPAs interviewed for this study advised that they were principle leads within their organization for translating the enterprise vision and focus areas. As one SVPA asserted, the role of the SVPA is "to really continue [the] vision and to understand that vision and to understand why the President sees it as such a compelling vision and something that [the organization] must do" (Case Three). Another SVPA asserted, "in terms of leadership, you really have to hit the hearts and minds piece and really help people participate and understand as to why this is happening" (Case Five).

One of the ways that SVPA consistently identified leading was by stewarding business planning activity associated with enrolment growth, quality, and access. As one SVPA indicated, SVPAs "make annual business plans that align with overall strategic plans [including] metrics and targets" (Case One). Within these business plans, SVPAs described the importance of leveraging and understanding "contribution margins" (Cases One, Three and Five), "KPI data" (All Cases), "market demand" (All Cases), and "labour demand" (All Cases).

SVPAs also played a critical role in transmitting and operationalizing the President's vision and strategic focus areas by facilitating communication, understanding, and collaboration amongst the Deans. One SVPA clearly articulated this role in terms of "creating a line-of-sight" (Case Three). In terms of creating line-of-sight, SVPAs described themselves as "the 'bringer'

together of people" to engage in "fruitful discussions" so that "everyone understands their role in the organization" (Case Three) or "providing a focus and bringing it together … focusing on moving together as a team and bringing to bear all of the pieces" (Case Five). Building on this, another SVPA offered that his role was one of "laying out the vision [in terms of] building some cohesion in the [academic] team around what we want to deliver and what we value" (Case Two). Highlighting the role as different from a Dean role, the same SVPA elaborated that "the Dean's job first is to balance across either his school or his or her division. My job is to try to balance across the college" (Case Two).

SVPAs clearly described a role for themselves of acknowledging staff, consistently and very often informally, for their alignment with strategic priorities. By way of example, one SVPA described emailing a Dean to ask if he would present to the college community on advances he had led with respect to online learning and saying "hey, how would you like to talk about what you're doing because I think it's fantastic?" (Case Five) Another SVPA advised that he "makes a constant connection with the faculty because they have to know in the end, and need to know from my view, that it is their work that fundamentally makes us successful" (Case Two). Another SVPA, acknowledged how he motivated Deans and faculty to do "the important work." In his words, "I provide recognition when they do good work – provide the credits and the accolades." In his view, "people need that – to be recognized. It's empowering; it's motivating" (Case One).

Summary

In summary, Presidents and SVPAs in this study had clearly defined, and different roles from one another, that were highly complementary. The President in each case demonstrated an ongoing practice and passion toward imagining an exciting future for his/her organization and

leading the development of a concomitant vision. Each President asserted a need to also practically anchor the vision, through the development and communication of no more that a few priority focus areas. Focus areas included such things as enrolment, quality, access, retention, building capacity, and fiscal responsibility. Presidents also led the development of one to two areas of differentiation (e.g. niche programs, etc.), that could be used from a marketing perspective, to attract students, engage industry partners, and more effectively cultivate donors.

Presidents constantly assessed the level of cultural buy-in to the vision, by the rank-and-file, by utilizing multiple methods including: all-staff meetings; culture surveys and benchmarking; informal one-to-one and small group conversations, and so on. Presidents in the study, based on their systematic and ongoing assessment of buy-in, identified most "pockets" of staff-group understanding and commitment to the vision and focus areas. They also described a role for themselves of developing and tailoring strategies differentially, toward these "pockets", to both build overall commitment, and manage resistance. To maintain inertia, Presidents also very actively led all-college celebrations acknowledging the commitment of staff toward tangible strategic achievements.

SVPAs provided their college's "strategic glue". Specifically, they were responsible for and very effectively translated the college's vision, focus areas, and differentiation points, in concrete terms, amongst their Deans and to some extent, to other enabling leaders. They performed this function by actively bringing academic and enabling leaders together to develop mutual understandings, clarify information, and clearly define roles. Moreover, they led the development and optimal functioning of numerous structures, processes, and measures intended to advance enrolment, quality and access. Finally, and not unlike the President, they oft engaged in efforts to acknowledge efforts by individuals and groups, that were clearly viewed as being

aligned to the advancement of strategic priorities, albeit much more regularly and informally

than the President.

Chapter 8

Summary of Findings

The merged findings and associated assertions, taken together, help to create a picture of

Presidents and their SVPA partner at high-performing Ontario colleges, where 'high-performing'

is defined in terms of the ability to lead toward joint outcomes of enrolment growth, access and

quality. As a team, the Presidents and SVPA in the current study were very committed toward

and focused upon the achievement of access and high levels of quality. Doubtless, this focus

was driven in large part by an access and quality ethos that had been emerging and thriving, in

the Ontario colleges system, over the course of at least the past decade. Therefore, it is plausible

that Presidents and their Senior Vice-President Academic partners, located in institutions that

were not selected to participate in this study manifest similar characteristics to those same types

of leaders included in the study.

In this study, leaders consistently defined access in terms of the need to reduce barriers to

post-secondary enrolment by under-represented groups and the provision of bridges and

pathways allowing all students to achieve appropriate training that best supports their individual

employment objective. Naturally, and following from this shared understanding, they actively

promoted access by conditioning staff to value equity; researching sub-group needs and service

and pathways gaps; and offering a continuum of support, bridging, and pathway programs for

students at their colleges. In terms of quality, these same leaders described the key outcome as

being graduate employment, and defined the construct within the Ontario colleges context, as an

optimal student experience that would lead to a job. Each President and SVPA also described

the importance of having a focused and robust approach at their institution to continuously

sustain and improve quality, inclusive of extensive labour market research and planning; hiring

for the right faculty and training and developing them to be successful; adequately and appropriately investing in capital, technology, equipment, and student support services; and, assessing and auditing quality using best practice measures, tools and processes.

What made the participants selected for this study unique from their peers at other colleges was that, in addition to leading effectively toward quality and access, as measured by objective Ministry measures for each construct, they also lead their organizations toward relatively significant enrolment growth as measured by consistent year-over-year enrolment growth statistics provided by Colleges Ontario through the Ontario Colleges Application Service. Their technical approach to enrolment growth was relatively formulaic and involved offering a sizeable number of new program offerings (year in and out), differentiating the college somehow, diversifying their student recruitment markets, and offering various forms of flexible delivery.

Culturally speaking, the magnitude shifts in the thinking and behaviour of administration, faculty, and staff toward engaging in enrolment growth efforts was recognized consistently by participants in the current study to be significant. Their perceptions are consistent with the literature regarding change management and leadership in higher education, particularly as it pertains to the issue of colleges and universities needing to become increasingly self-sustaining from a revenue perspective. Natalie and Doran (2012), for instance, expressing the views of many staff and faculty, indicate that with less government funding and heightened entrepreneurship can come a perceived de-emphasis on social outcomes. Alongside these beliefs, quantitative validation research by Cameron and Freeman (1991) on the Organizational Cultural Assessment Instrument (OCAI) involving a large, statistical sampling of U.S. undergraduate colleges and universities, confirmed that the vast majority of such institutional cultures were dominated by 'hierarchical' and 'clan' features. Hierarchically dominant cultures

tend to be formal, structured, efficient and procedurally driven, where dominant clan-type cultures are characterized by friendliness, loyalty, and tradition. While many of these features are important in an organization at any given time, according to Cameron and Freeman (1991) and Cameron and Quinn (2006), they need to be strongly supplemented by an agile, competitive, results-based cultural orientation in times of lessened traditional funding.

Recognizing the strong potential for resistance by staff and faculty toward many of the structural, process and behaviour changes required to grow enrolment at their college, Presidents and their SVPAs in this study courageously engaged in far-ranging change leadership strategies intended to grow support and in many cases enthusiasm for enrolment growth. Presidents of these teams, in particular, created a "burning platform" for change by educating staff and faculty about limitations and challenges with the funding model, and the concurrent impact of the core student prospect feeder group - aged 17 to 24 - beginning a slow and steady demographic decline. They amplified this message by describing the negative impact that would result with respect to teaching and learning and the student and staff experience, absent appropriate and sustained levels of investment. They repeated their messages consistently and frequently in business and strategic plans, at all-staff retreats in team meetings, and in informal conversations. Alongside this information, they also communicated a compelling, exciting, alternative future involving creative program development, inter-cultural diversity (through recruitment), and sustained investments in teaching and learning that would allow their organization to thrive and continue to be relevant.   In short, these leader teams developed what many of them described in interview as "buy-in" for change.

President and SVPA teams in this study also were very systematic and deliberate in terms of changes that they made to existing processes and systems to enable enrolment growth.

Consistent among all was the development and implementation of a strategic enrolment committee in their institution, that was conferred a level of prominence greater than all other committees save for the college's senior executive management team. These committees shared in common a mandate to identify new program opportunities and develop and oversee college strategies to generate interest, leads, and conversions amongst prospective students. These leader teams also boldly and creatively adapted traditional business marketing methods, inclusive of product mix and lifecycle strategies, to increase the odds of new programs generating sufficient student and labour market demand and increase capacity by their organization to take on new offerings – through criteria-based retirement of programs that did not generate sufficient demand and in turn, revenue. Consistent across all leadership teams interviewed was a focus placed on developing, operationalizing, and maturing data collection and measurement approaches capable of providing current planning and decision-making information about enrolment performance relative to targets and competitors – by program, recruitment segment, delivery method, and so on. Finally, and quite importantly, Presidents and their SVPA colleague in this study modeled and encouraged risk-taking through innovation. In short, data provided strong evidence that subordinates felt liberated to take calculated risks and not to be penalized or chastised later for doing so. To the contrary, failure was more likely something to be learned from and even celebrated.

Presidents and their Senior Vice-President Academic colleagues in this study clearly understood their unique role and how and when their roles ought to come together to complement one another to optimize impact. Borrowing from the work of Sinek (2009), Presidents identified as being responsible for the "WHY" of the organization – its "purpose" or "cause" (p. 39). In short, they had a "clarity of WHY; an undying belief in a purpose or cause

that was greater than themselves" (Sinek, 2009, p. 134). SVPAs did not try to wrestle away

ultimate responsibility for inspiring the rank-and-file from the President. To the contrary, they

operated in the shadows and knew "HOW to take the vision and make it a reality" (Sinek, 2009,

p. 139). More specifically, Presidents in this study developed an organizational vision and key

areas of strategic focus and differentiation. They were all demonstrably informed in the shaping

of these elements by data, research, and information provided by constituents. They paid

considerable attention to reaching out to broad-based constituencies in an effort to energize and

inspire them, both around their vision and priorities and relative to the contributions that staff

and faculty made - to the benefit of students and communities - on a daily basis. SVPAs

translated their President's vision and strategic focus areas in a practical way. In this regard,

they functioned as principle organizational leads – stewarding associated business planning

activity associated with enrolment growth, quality and access. SVPAs also performed a critical

role with respect to creating a line-of-sight from the President to academic Deans by facilitating

communication, understanding and collaboration.

Where this study is primarily focused upon culling out similarities between President and

SVPA teams at high-performing Ontario colleges, it would be remiss to not acknowledge that

there were many interesting differences in the way that these same teams embraced the joint

outcomes of enrolment growth, access, and quality. First, there was evidence that leadership

varied from a relatively "top-down" style to a more organic or collaborative approach. By way

of example, and reflecting a more organic approach, Deans of faculties led by one President and

SVPA set enrolment targets for their schools and programs in collaboration with staff and

Institutional Research, where at the more extreme end of the leadership continuum, enrolment

targets were ultimately set by the Executive Committee (President and Vice-Presidents), albeit

based on sound research and some collaboration with the Deans. The Presidents and SVPAs, who described a more "top-down" approach to their college's enrolment target setting, also described further mechanisms through which they held staff accountable for enrolment yields such as annual performance reviews based on enrolment target achievement and favorable Contribution-to-Overhead. One President indicated having revised his college's budget system to reward individuals whose areas grew… "and those who didn't had their budgets adjusted accordingly" (Case One). In terms of the program mix described by Presidents and SVPAs to grow their enrolment, differences were evident. Differentiated forms of program mix ranged from a focus placed on specific credentials and flexible forms of delivery to niche programs appealing to a particular market sub-group to STEM programs.

A couple of key differences were noted amongst Presidents and their SVPAs in terms of their advancement of quality at their college. Where all leaders in the study took hiring and development of faculty very seriously, there were clearly situations identified with respect to these processes that could be described as unique. Perhaps most unique was the practice of one President and SVPA colleague to have the President review every single Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) of every prospective faculty hire and for the SVPA, to create a realistic preview for every prospective faculty hire "to help avoid having faculty quit after the first few weeks of classes because they didn't know how much work it was" (Case Three). Moreover, and with respect to quality assurance, differences were present amongst leadership pairings in terms of the extent to which they built and operationalized internal capacity to audit academic quality at their college versus co-opting the support of outside experts.

Finally, and with respect to access, Presidents and their SVPAs differed somewhat with respect to the processes and target groups that they emphasized. For example, and different from

other pairings, one placed significant emphasis on fixing and enhancing their financial aid processes. Another pairing described a particular emphasis being placed upon improving processes, programs, and opportunities associated with creating pathways for high school students such as dual credentialing and high-skills majors. Where all leader pairings described a focus with respect to access being placed on groups such as indigenous and adult learners, heightened emphasis was placed by some individual leader teams on one more other groups such as those presenting with mental health, sensory, or learning impairments.

Summary

When the results of all thematic areas studied are take into account – enrolment growth, quality, access, and strategic leadership - a preliminary working model of effective leadership amongst Presidents and their SVPA emerges. In all cases, Presidents and their SVPA are focused upon the achievement of high levels of access and quality. Consistent amongst them, in terms of leadership relative to access, is a focus placed upon the remediation of barriers to under-represented groups, by conditioning staff to value equity; researching sub-group needs and service and pathways gaps; and offering a continuum of support, bridging, and pathways programs to students. Consistent amongst them, in terms of quality, is a leadership focus on the provision of an optimal student experience leading to a job, achieved through extensive labour market research and planning; hiring for the right faculty; training and development; adequate and appropriate investment in capital, technology, equipment, and student support services; and, the assessment and audit of quality, using best practice measures, tools, and processes.

Where the leadership differences amongst Presidents and SVPAs in this study and Presidents and SVPAs excluded from participating may not be remarkably different with respect outcomes of access and quality, the same likely cannot be said with respect to the outcome of

enrolment growth.   Leaders in this study were unique, insofar as they led institutions that consistently grew their enrolment and market share. To do so, Presidents and their SVPA in the study very systematically and deliberately made changes to existing processes and systems to enable enrolment growth. All introduced some form of strategic enrolment committee, focusing on, identification and development of new program opportunities; systematic lead generation and conversion amongst prospective students; and criteria-based retirement of under-performing programs. All very deliberately and systematically informed planning and decision-making through matured data collection and measurement approaches. Each also actively modeled and encouraged risk-taking through innovation.

Presidents and their Senior Vice-President Academic colleagues in this study clearly understood their unique role and how and when their roles ought to come together to complement one another to optimize impact. Presidents actively led the development of an enterprise vision, related key focus areas, and differentiation points intended to engender strong student demand and industry engagement. SVPAs acted as effective strategic implementers, translating these pieces with Deans and enabling leaders through active communication, and by leading the development and effective functioning of several key enabling structures and processes.

Chapter 9

Discussion

Using a qualitative multi-case study approach, I attempted to understand the similarities, as opposed to the differences, amongst Presidents and SVPAs, with respect to strategic leadership behaviours intended to introduce the concurrent outcomes of enrolment growth, quality and access at Ontario colleges. Such a study is important for several reasons. First, to my knowledge, very little research has been conducted globally, and in particular within the Ontario college context, to examine such a phenomenon. Second, although all Ontario colleges have a rich history and mandate to provide access, and also enjoy a comprehensive, consistent approach and regime to measure and improve quality - leading to relatively consistent overall performance on these two dimensions - enrolment growth has been highly variable between them. It can be argued that Presidents and SVPAs have some role to play with respect to enrolment growth. Moreover, it is quite plausible that the role of these leaders would focus upon the provision of effective, strategic leadership. Were this to be the case, it is useful to understand what Presidents and SVPAs at high enrolment growth colleges do consistently to influence this outcome alongside quality and access. Ideally, findings could help inform a working model for strategic leadership in Ontario colleges that could be further tested, refined, and possibly generalized across the province and perhaps the rest of the country.

Leadership Attributes Tied to Enrolment Growth

The current research came very much alive for me when I was able to fully collate and analyze the data related to President and SVPA leadership relative to enrolment growth. All of these leaders confirmed that their primary method of experiencing year-over-year, substantive enrolment growth, was through the development and implementation of sizeable numbers of

new, innovative programs annually. I compared individual participant accounts against objective

data, such as institutional strategic plans and annual reports, and confirmed this to be the case.

Moreover, and after reviewing the same objective documents from institutions whose leaders did

not qualify for this study, I found that in all cases, their institutions had engaged in quite

unremarkable levels of new program development and implementation between 2011 and 2014.

To introduce new programming year-over-year, at the quality level and volume as occurred

at the institutions of participant leaders, several leadership qualities needed to occur, many of

which arguably would not have existed as strongly amongst senior leaders at institutions whose

enrolment did not consistently grow, and in many instances declined. Presidents and SVPAs

who participated in my study exhibited tremendous, calculated foresight with respect to how the

funding landscape would change and demography would become the enemy during the period

2011 to 2014. Consequently, they led a pre-emptive campaign focusing on their institution

developing the necessary resiliencies to be self-sustaining. Presidents were relentless in their

effort to share a carefully constructed 'burning platform' for faculty and staff, one that would

ignite their collective efforts toward tireless pursuit of program innovation. These same

Presidents encouraged staff and faculty to take risks to innovate, gave them permission to fail,

took the appropriate investments in them along the way, and in fact celebrated failure alongside

successes with them. Likely recognizing that business methods and competition may have

seemed antithetical to the traditional thinking and behaviours of the "academy", Presidents in my

study, enabled by their SVPAs, demonstrated the courage to introduce enrolment targets;

performance measures and associated incentives; lean processes; and product development,

marketing, and life-cycle strategies. All the while, Presidents and their SVPAs never "took their

feet off of the pedal" when it came to also performing well with respect to quality and access.

To heighten their enrolment success through innovative program development, the Presidents and SVPAs in my study clearly identified a further measure that they introduced to enable success. Specifically, they identified an evidence-informed way or ways that their college differentiated itself programmatically. Commitment to some level of differentiation allowed their college to identify and build new programs having strong demand features and alignment to labour market need. All leaders' descriptions of how they differentiated their organizations were verified through my review of their colleges' strategic and annual plans – both in the way that they strategically described differentiation in their case, and regarding the actions they undertook vis-à-vis aligned, innovative programs.

It would also be remiss not to add that consistent across all participants in my study was a clear and purposeful delineation of responsibility between the President and SVPA when it came to growing enrolment. The President was the accepted and respected visionary, brimming with ideas and optimism. The SVPA, on the other hand, and behaving much more in the "here and now", had a lead accountability for translating that vision very practically amongst the operational leaders. They did so by bringing operational academic leaders together to engage in focused, respectful discussion intended to clarify understandings and roles. They also dutifully introduced and oversaw many of the growth related business processes and structures – both their development and execution. Absent this sort of coordinated effort, with the actors being so effectively in character, it is questionable that growth could have occurred as effectively as it did. Such behaviour amongst co-leaders is very much in keeping with the type of effective coupled-leadership so strongly endorsed by Sinek (2009). As Sinek asserts, and with respect to the most effective coupled-leadership, there can only be one "why" figure and one "what" figure. The "why" figure, in this case the President, needs to stand for the organization's "purpose" or

"cause", while the "what" figure, in this case the SVPA, needs to respond as a primary support, operating in an often unassuming and disarming and always practical way, to create the implementation path (Sinek, 2009).

Over the course of my own work life, I have experienced numerous cases where a President and Senior Vice-President were both focused upon the "how" to the exclusion of the vision. Most often this seemed to be a result of the President feeling more comfortable in the role of "doer." Moreover, another internal leader would emerge to try to salvage and advance the necessary visioning and focus for the organization. Understandably, these efforts prove both confusing to the rank-and-file and questionably impactful. Presidents who assume a "doer" position, are described as "hierarchical" leaders by Cameron and Quinn, 2006. According to Cameron and Quinn, 2006, "hierarchical" leadership by a President is antithetical to success in a market environment, characterized by competition, because the "hierarchical" leader behaves like a coordinator in search of "stability, predictability, and efficiency" (p. 44), when he/she should instead be attentive and responsive to externalities, through inspiring, focused, results-based leadership.

My own experience aside, and based on the literature, it is important to also acknowledge that the degree of strategic behaviour and collaboration evidenced within my cases may have been exceptional for college leaders. According to several authors, a large proportion of Presidents lack strategic interest, wherewithal and courage, and are more comfortable adopting a transactional and tactical response to environmental change – a posture that they argue creates little positive organizational impact (Neumann & Neumann, 2000; Paul, 2011; Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Finkelstein, Hambrick & Cannella, 2009). More specifically, Paul (2011) laments that many Presidents are just not good at strategic planning, overseeing plans that may be non-

collaborative, "strong on rhetoric [and] weak on establishing priorities" and which are "not much more than a compendium of all of the wish-lists on campus" (p.75). Neumann and Neumann (2000) having conducted a study of 279 American liberal arts college presidents, randomly selected from 350 institutions, found that only 35% were rated 'high' on visioning, only 43% demonstrated strong 'focusing' skills, and 56% demonstrated strength in 'implementation'. Moreover, 93% of presidents who were found to be weak in all of these areas, were associated with at least moderate declines in their institution's performance.

Alignment to the Strategic Leadership Literature

There is much in the findings that appear consistent with the literature on strategic leadership generally. In particular, clear alignment in the behaviours of Presidents and SVPAs in this study appear to exist with respect to the Cameron and Quinn's (2006) definitions of 'market culture' leadership; socially charismatic leadership as defined and articulated by such authors as Conger et al. (2000) and House and Howell (1992); and change leadership as articulated by myriad authors including, but not limited to, Boswell and Boudreau (2001), Collins (2000), Fullan (2000) and Kotter (1996). Moreover, but appreciating that research on higher education strategic leadership, particularly within Canada and Ontario, is extremely limited, findings for Presidents in this study were well aligned to the presidential strategic behaviours viewed to be necessary by such authors as Alfred (2005), Ross (2011) and Woodsworth (2013), and findings for SVPAs were reasonably well aligned to many of the strategic leadership behaviours required of departmental leaders as identified by Bryman (2007). I will elucidate upon these various forms of alignment, in the paragraphs that follow.

Presidents and SVPAs in this study were predominantly adoptive of 'market' leadership behaviours, and closely, secondarily adoptive of 'clan' behaviours as defined by Cameron and

Quinn (2006). In a 'market' oriented organizational culture, the workplace is results-oriented. Processes, systems, and rules are typically much simplified to allow a more unfettered approach by constituents to achieve outcomes. In the long-term, such organizations compete to achieve stretch goals and targets. Market share and penetration, along with doing better than the competition, are what define success (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). In terms of a 'market' orientation, both leaders understood the imperative to compete, in this context through enrolment growth. Neither appeared to place a high level of import upon introducing efficiency for efficiencies' sake or introducing cumbersome processes and structures. To the contrary, Presidents introduced a small frame of organizational focus so that scarce resources could be marshalled through key conduits such as SVPAs to deliver with distinction on differentiation, program development, quality, and access. Moreover, both parties were passionate and engaged in thoughtful and continuous performance measurement relative to enrolment growth, quality and access with a view to course correcting performance that was incongruent with goal achievement.

Organizations whose dominant culture is one of 'clan', are very friendly, supportive, loyal, and traditions-based. In clan-dominant culture, leaders are very often thought of as mentors, coaches, and even as parent figures. In this form of organization, "success is defined in terms of internal climate and concern for people; the organization places a premium on teamwork, participation, and consensus" (Cameron & Quinn, 2006, p. 43). With respect to a 'clan' orientation, both parties consistently described persistent and coordinated efforts that they took to create a sense of teamwork, pride and engagement amongst their subordinates and the broader rank-and-file. Consistent with Cameron and Quinn's (2006) research into U.S. higher education institutions adoptive of a pre-dominant market orientation and secondary clan orientation, leaders

in this study "capably acquired needed resources "such as revenues, good faculty, [and] institutional visibility" (p. 156).

Presidents interviewed for this study impressed as having qualities underpinning 'socially charismatic leadership'. Conger et al. (2000) assert that followers, in complex, contemporary organizations, attribute charismatic leadership to leaders who do three things capably: act as informed agents of radical change, develop and articulate an inspiring vision, and empower a broad-based constituency. Presidents in my study developed a compelling vision and attempted to communicate it broadly across their organization. They were also very people focused, going to great lengths to empower college constituents through: personal development; investments in enabling systems, supports, infrastructure and technologies; encouragement; information-sharing; and group reflective exercises and celebrations. In-person, each impressed as very caring and genuine. Presidents, particularly with respect to enrolment growth, also repeatedly described for their constituents how the status quo – reduced funding now and in the foreseeable future – was untenable and necessitated bold action in terms of vigorous program design and renewal and differentiation.

Presidents and SVPAs interviewed for this study presented as change leaders as defined by Kotter (1996) including, conducting environmental assessment and identifying challenges and opportunities; establishing a sense of urgency for change amongst a broad-based constituency; leading the creation of a inspiring vision and the related focus areas necessitating attention; and, empowering action by inviting calculated risk by staff, engaging and actively communicating with lower-level leaders, and remediating process and structural barriers to change. Presidents, consistent with Kotter's model for change, created a sense of urgency, were visionary, and actively removed barriers. They consistently and repeatedly emphasized the urgency amongst

their internal constituents to actively counteract the impacts of lesser funding on quality and advance access to more adequately democratize labour market opportunities for all. They by no means underestimated their power of vision but rather communicated it widely and deeply within their organization – consistently and persistently. SVPAs, in turn, removed obstacles in the way of vision, by inserting effective processes and structures to concurrently advance enrolment growth, quality and access at their institution. Additionally, all Presidents demonstrated Collin's (2005) relentless discipline to say 'no' too many opportunities, in order that they could create a small number of important focus areas for their college. Finally, and consistent with Fullan's, (2000) and Boswell and Boudreau's (2001) assertion that during change, leaders ought to communicate and transfer knowledge systematically, Presidents engaged all staff in town-halls to inspire and educate them, as well as understand their concerns about change. A further goal was to empower staff through building understanding and competencies relative to change. Strong investments in professional development facilitated this change. SVPAs also consistently and more succinctly transferred knowledge to their Deans and across departments.

With respect to alignment of study findings with research on key behaviours of effective strategic leadership within higher education environments, Presidents in this study, not unlike more successful Ontario university presidents described by Ross (2011), managed the 'big picture', and created and broadly communicated key focus areas to constituents. Alfred (2005) asserts that strategic leadership, which is fundamental to the presidency, requires presidents to actively work toward differentiating their college from competitors in a way that creates a sustainable advantage. Consistent with Alfred's view on the key strategic role of U.S. college and university Presidents, the counterparts in this study all focused upon the importance of differentiating their institution amongst current and prospective students. Finally, many of the

attributes of effective departmental leadership, as identified by Bryman (2007), were evident

amongst SVPAs in this study. These included, ensuring Deans and cross-department staff were

ready to undertake the organization's vision – including initiating structures to 'get things done';

engaging teams to participate in decisions that affect them; engaging them in open

communication; and, providing resources.

A couple of important strategic leadership focus areas identified in the literature were not

evidenced nearly as strongly as the aforementioned areas, if at all. In my study, although

Presidents and their SVPAs often indicated that the President was responsible for creating the

vision, neither party was clear on how that vision was created. In the absence of engaging in

more substantive probing on this item, I was left to interpret that Presidents in my study might

have created a vision and key priorities for their organization relatively independently with the

view, that they could control the content and messaging. Ideally however, and as the research

points out, a more optimal leadership approach would see the President engaging multiple

constituents in a broad-based collaborative approach to ensure that these same constituents

would be more likely to assimilate the vision and its associated priorities (O'Connell, Hickerson

& Pillutla, 2011; Morril, 2007; Paul, 2011; Woodworth, 2013). More specifically, O'Connell et

al. (2000) describe the emergence of a vision "as a dance among multiple partners with senior

leaders playing a key role in the choreography" (p. 106). Both Paul (2011) and Woodsworth

(2013) describe the importance of listening to stakeholders views on vision and priorities to

obtain buy-in and ensure that associated plans become appropriately robust and nuanced. Morril

(2007) further asserts that a compelling vision is "the result of a collective process, open debate,

and intense discussions, often over a long period of time" (p. 7).

With respect to efforts to create strategic alignment, participants in my study presented evidence of strong line-of-sight activities and initiatives and multi-level control systems existing within their organizations. They did not however appear to manifest the human resource management (HRM) practices advocated by Buller and McEvoy, 2012 for organizations pursuing a 'prospector' strategy. Had this been a priority, alignment would undoubtedly have been optimized particularly given that nuanced, flexible, multi-level HRM – that is difficult to imitate and substitute for – would be in place (Buller & McEvoy, 2012). My own experience as a senior leader, with respect to optimizing multi-level HRM, would suggest that it can indeed introduce a competitive advantage, but that it may not be operationalized in a proactive way. In instances where I have engaged human resources professionals at the outset of strategic planning, they have been more inclined to see themselves as a partner and to provide advice and assistance that best enables and supports strategic efforts. More often however, I have been guilty of advancing strategic initiatives alongside academic leaders and process owners, only thinking to engage HRM professionals when I had well advanced strategic models and required rather immediate support for the development of positions and their classifications, hirings, and development. In these instances, HRM professionals can often frustrate me and other strategic initiative leaders because they are inserted at a point when they have more questions than advice, and may be disinclined to advance initiatives as planned because they feel that personnel risks have neither been appropriately considered or managed (e.g. Collective Bargaining rights, labour relations impacts, etc.).

Unexpected Results and Observations

I was surprised by several aspects of the current study, both in terms of results and the demeanour of participants. With respect to results, at the outset of the research I strongly

suspected that study participants would assume a predominant 'market-oriented' leadership

approach strongly supported by 'clan' leadership features described in Cameron and Quinn's,

2006, Competing Values Framework. Although, as mentioned earlier in this study, this

assumption proved true, I was quite surprised to see how the features of 'adhocratic' culture

leadership were also very much present in the leader behaviours of participants. Specifically,

leaders in the high-performing organizations studied - alongside being focused, goal oriented,

competitive, and empowering - also engaged constituents in regular process innovation and

thoughtful risk-taking and exhibited high tolerance for first-time mistakes. These finding

suggests to me that my initial conceptual model ought to be revised to speak to this trifecta of

culture leadership approaches (market, innovation and clan) rather than just 'market-oriented'

leadership. I now believe that the process and new program innovations that were so prominent

at the institutions from which cases derived are in fact an important resiliency factor for Ontario

colleges. A case in point is that rather than actively developing new programs to attract students,

many Ontario colleges have merely focused their sustainability efforts on recruiting foreign

students through public-private partnerships. These practices have recently become the subject

of significant government scrutiny in terms of risks posed to quality, so much so that public

colleges have been directed by the government to wind them down (Chiose, 2018).

I found it very interesting that Presidents and their SVPA partners varied in terms of the

"organic" versus "top-down" leadership approach taken to set enrolment targets and hold Deans

and their subordinates accountable for enrolment growth. As identified in the "Findings" section

of this paper, one President and SVPA colleague allowed Deans of faculties to set enrolment

targets for their schools and programs where at the more extreme end of the leadership

continuum, a President and SVPA colleague set the enrolment targets, albeit based on sound

research and some collaboration with Deans. The Presidents and SVPAs who described a more "top-down" approach, also described further mechanisms through which they held staff accountable for enrolment yields such as annual performance reviews based on enrolment target achievement and favorable contributions-to-overhead. This was interesting because the two different approaches suggested alternate forms of governance and control could be introduced that were capable of achieving similar outcomes.

In terms of participant demeanor, I was struck by two things. First, Presidents, despite their limited availability, were extremely gracious and generous in making themselves available for interview. Moreover, they were extremely forthcoming in their sharing of information, exuded great passion for the access and quality mission of their organization, and very respectfully and genuinely acknowledged the important contribution of their people, particularly faculty, to the success of their institution.   Second, Presidents appeared almost starved of an opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions in an unfettered way. I was in fact left with an impression that their existence as a leader was very likely quite lonely, and, absent of an opportunity to confidentially share their story, as was the case in the current study, they might otherwise see themselves as somewhat misunderstood. In fact, and as Paul (2015) points out, "the position of [Canadian university] president can be a lonely one, and this underlines the critical importance of the personal support of family, mentors, and friends, many of them from outside of the university environment" (p. 163). Paul asserts that these sorts of supports are necessary because colleagues, working to close to the issues, may lack "objectivity, levity, and humour" (p. 166). There is a clear need for Presidents to be connected.

Strengths of My Study Design

Strengths of the design for this study included the selection of cases, (Presidents and SVPAs), bound by the same time period of service (2011 – 2014) – one in which their institutions performed favorably on objective measures for each of the concurrent outcomes. The study also benefited from several forms of triangulation that enabled the researcher to have reasonable confidence in what he was seeing and hearing. "Within case" triangulation was accomplished in several ways. I used multiple perspectives, from multiple sites, and corroborated each of the interviewees reports with a full document review including: review of the Annual Report, Strategic Plan, Strategic Mandate Agreement, and Multi-Year Accountability Agreement with the Ontario government – for the college from which each President and SVPA derived. Each interviewee's transcript was provided to them for their own review of accuracy and any misrepresentation. The cross-case analytical procedure was also reviewed and critiqued by a dissertation supervisor, and the full draft manuscript was then fully reviewed and critiqued by the dissertation supervisor and a second critical reader. Full review by the two parties was useful and necessary for several reasons. First, they were able to provide different perspectives on the extent to which I had prepared a case for defense, and offered numerous helpful suggestions regarding how the document could, and in some cases must, be improved. Second, they both proved to be excellent editors from a grammatical, sentence structure, and American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual perspective.

Limitations of My Study

The study is acknowledged to have several limitations. Although, intuitively, strategic leadership could be expected to contribute to enrolment growth, alongside quality and access, it is impossible to know from this study, because of its design, the extent to which strategic

leadership by Presidents and SVPAs at high enrolment growth colleges influenced these

outcomes. By way of example, Farnham (2016), in his panel regression study of market tools

used by public Ontario universities to increase enrolment, identified that across all universities,

enrolment growth was significantly related to awards and marketing. Moreover, he found that

the effects of competitive variables (population; professors; graduates; marketing; awards) on

enrolment were different for each university, suggesting that individual universities and their

leaders ought to adopt and tailor competitive variables to their unique context.

In the current study, I also did not examine the strategic leadership approach of Presidents

and SVPAs who oversaw Ontario colleges having favorable quality and access, but fair to poor

enrolment outcomes, to determine how they were similar and how they differed in their approach

to Presidents and SVPAs meeting study inclusionary criteria. Absent this understanding, it is

difficult to say with utmost confidence that differences may or may not have existed in the

leadership of high-performing Ontario colleges relative to lesser performing colleges, on the

joint outcomes of enrolment, quality, and access. Moreover, a more inclusive sample would lend

itself to the identification of the extent of leadership differences and similarities amongst

variably performing colleges.   It also is worth noting that the time period of study, 2011 to 2014

was contextually different - from an environmental perspective - to the Ontario colleges system

today. Absent in the study period was the heightened emphasis being placed today by society on

precarious work and by unions on the need for co-leadership (administration and faculty) in the

day-to-day affairs of college operations. One or both of these developments could place

pressures on college leaders to slow their efforts with respect to enrolment growth and for the

Ontario government to increase its funding. Finally, geography of an institution, uncontrolled

for in the current study, was identified by all Presidents and SVPAs as a factor that could greatly

enable the three outcomes under study, or conversely, hinder them. By way of example, institutions outside of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) area were described as disadvantaged by a year-over-year reduction in the size of the 17-18-year-old birth cohort in their region, whereas institutions in the GTA continue to experience growth in this cohort owing to immigration. Moreover, respondents felt that international students were more likely to study in the GTA because they would find it easier to culturally immerse themselves there.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

Out of this study, a preliminary working model of strategic leadership has emerged which ought to be further tested and refined. Presidents and their SVPAs need to have a results orientation and feel comfortable and confident engaging their constituents in the development and operationalization of stretch enrolment goals and targets. They can mediate resistance and create enthusiasm and excitement around this effort by creating a 'burning platform' for change (i.e. the Ontario colleges funding formula) and illustrating a future characterized by self-sufficiency, innovation, and student diversity. In terms of inspiring innovation, they can and ought to model risk-taking (particularly as it relates to new program development) and reward - as opposed to consequence or chastise - calculated risk-taking. Throughout, and this cannot be understated, they will need to focus on their people. They will need to carefully and methodically hire for the best and invest appropriately in their ongoing training and development, particularly with respect to experiential and applied learning. They will need to genuinely and repeatedly acknowledge the contributions of staff and faculty, formally and informally. Finally, they will need to constantly be mindful of the need to over communicate with their staff and faculty through multiple methods and media, defined in the literature as

creating 'line-of-sight', so that all are engaged around the vision and can see themselves in it in terms of their daily contributions.

Fully acknowledging the limitations presented, future studies are recommended that quantitatively test the strength of attribution between the strategic leadership of Ontario Presidents and SVPAs (inclusive of: vision; enterprise focus areas; differentiation; staff recruitment, development and engagement; business planning; processes and structures; and communication) and the concurrent outcomes of enrolment growth, quality and access at Ontario colleges. An appropriate multivariate quantitative design, would benefit from sampling all of the 24 Ontario public colleges and need to consider additional factors including, but not limited to, a college's geography and competitive variables (e.g. marketing; awards, and so forth).

In summary, I would like my study to act as a platform for future examinations of senior leadership effectiveness within the Ontario public college sector. I feel very strongly that the Ontario public college system may be a beacon for leadership best practice. However, and in order to demonstrate that this is the case, much more evidence needs to be produced and shared. Students of today and tomorrow ought to benefit from consistently high levels of strategic senior leadership, wherever they attend college, so that they may more readily obtain and succeed at employment that excites and rewards them. Likewise, industry ought to know that they can count on consistently remarkable leadership of colleges, leading to optimally prepared graduates, who are more likely to drive economic performance in increasingly complicated times.

This study will inform my future work in several ways. Most importantly, it will provide me the courage to lead with conviction, defy the status quo, constantly imagine and re-imagine exciting possibilities, and create the conditions for others to take risks. It will also serve as a strong reminder to me that people, working effectively together, can and will achieve great

things together. As a senior leader therefore, it is incumbent on me to lead with humility,

engender trust, and empower other leaders, faculty and staff. I can do so through focusing on the

breadth and depth of my communications, positive acknowledgement of effort, contributions,

and failure, and support for equipment and staff development that optimizes teaching and

learning in the classroom.

I truly hope that when the participants of my study read this manuscript, they are overcome

by the stories they see documented across the pages. I hope and trust that they will also feel their

stories, as documented, honor the very difficult and challenging work, and big outcomes, that

they are responsible for contributing to, every single day.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Recruitment Email and Letter of Information

Email Script for Recruitment

From: _____

To: [name of prospective participant]

Subject: Invitation to participate in research

You are being invited to participate in a study that we, Professor Melody Viczko, principal investigator and Jeff Wright, student researcher, are conducting. Briefly, the study examines the senior leadership behaviours and actions that are most effective to lead a college toward high levels of achievement relative to access, quality and enrolment growth. The study would require you to participate in an interview of no more than two hours. You will also be invited to review a transcript of your interview for accuracy. There is no compensation for participation. Interviews will be arranged at a mutually convenient date, time and place between May 1st, 2016 and June 15th, 2016.

I will send a follow-up email to participate, if I have not heard from you, in a week's time.

If you would like more information on this study, please contact:

_____, student researcher

Email: _____

or,

_____, principal investigator

Email: _____

Attached for your review is a letter of information. Also attached, should you wish to participate, is a consent form to be reviewed, signed, and returned to me. Once I receive the signed consent, I will sign and witness it, and forward you a copy for your records. Alternatively, we can agree to jointly sign the consent form when we meet in person for a scheduled interview.

I truly hope that we are able to collaborate together on this important study!

Sincerely,

_____

Western

June 30, 2016

Participant

Address

Re: Participation in a study titled "How do Presidents and Senior Vice-Presidents Academic – at high enrolment growth, high quality, Ontario access colleges – strategically lead toward these joint outcomes?"

Principal Investigator: _____   Student Investigator: _____

Assistant Professor   _____

Western University   _____

_____

_____

Dear [Participant Name]:

　　You are being invited to participate in a multi-case study research project which focuses on how Presidents and Senior Vice-Presidents at public Ontario colleges effectively lead their institution toward joint outcomes of student access, quality, and enrolment growth. You are being approached to participate because you were either a President or Senior Vice-President Academic at an Ontario public college, during the period 2011 to 2014 (inclusive), that had demonstrably high performance relative to enrolment growth, quality and access (taken together), as measured by Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) Key Performance Indicators, Ontario College Applicant Service (OCAS) data, and the MTCU Multi-Year Accountability Report Back.

This study is important because effective college senior leadership in Ontario is being challenged as never before by a concurrent demographic decline in 17 and 18 year old students and daunting economic challenges faced by the provincial government to fund the higher education sector. These coupled factors can be expected to make continued enrolment growth, access and quality increasingly difficult to sustain at individual colleges. Results from the study will be of benefit to senior leaders of public colleges across Ontario and indeed Canada because it will reinforce for them many of the things that they may already be doing well, cause them to reflect on leadership actions and behaviours that can and possibly should be de-emphasized, and possibly even cause them to question the effectiveness of some of their existing practices altogether.

It is expected that you will be involved in one interview of no more than two hours in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location. Your interview will be scheduled at your convenience, between December 1st, 2015 and February 15th, 2016. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. You may decline to be audio-recorded and still participate in the study. Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity confirm the accuracy of our conversation, and to add or clarify any points that you wish. The questions that will be asked during the interview include:

1. What set your institution apart from others in the Ontario colleges system between 2011 and 2014?
2. How did you lead toward the outcome of enrolment growth at your college between 2011 and 2014?
3. What does it mean to be a high quality institution?
4. How did you lead for high quality at your institution between 2011 and 2014?
5. What does access mean to you?
6. How did you lead toward the outcome of access at your college between 2011 and 2014?
7. What specific challenges did you encounter leading at your institution between 2011 and 2014?
8. What were the strengths of your institution between 2011 and 2014?
9. What were the benefits and challenges to enrolment growth, quality, and access, based upon your college's geographic location, between 2011 and 2014?

There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study. If you decide to withdraw from the study the information gathered to that point will be destroyed. No new information will be collected without your permission.

All information that you provide is considered completely confidential. However, and because of the fact that the participants are high profile in their sector and also because the sample size for the study is relatively small (n=8), the researcher cannot guarantee that a participant will not be identified. This risk will be mitigated in several ways. Your name will not appear in any dissertation or report resulting from this study, however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Your participation will be further disguised by not presenting narratives in the final research report in their complete form, that is, one narrative for

each participant. Instead, data from all interviews will be organized into theme/pattern sections created from cross-case analysis, with quotes from participants intermixed which support and breathe life to the theme/pattern.

Textual data collected during this study will be retained for five years in a locked filing cabinet, in my locked work office at Fanshawe College. Electronic data collected during this study will be retained for five years on an encrypted flash-drive that will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, in my locked work office at Fanshawe College. Textual data will be shredded, using a professional shredding machine, by myself. The encryption key for electronic data will be changed after five years rendering the data inaccessible and thereby achieving 100% data erasure. Only myself, and the principal investigator, Professor Melody Viczko, will have access to the data. Both Professor Viczko and I will have access to anonymized participant transcripts and audio-recordings. Only I will have access to personal information linking individuals to specific transcripts and audio-recordings. I will keep the list linking your study number with your name in a secure cabinet, separate from your study file.

Participants will not incur any expenses as a result of their participation in this study. You will not be compensated for your participation in this research.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to be in this study. Even if you consent to participate you have the right to not answer individual questions or to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose not to participate or to leave the study at any time it will have no effect upon you. You do not waive any legal right by signing this consent form.

If you have any questions regarding the study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at _____ or by email at _____. You may also contact the principal investigator, _____ at _____ or email at _____. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact the Office of Research Ethics for Western University at, email: _____ and/or the _____.

Sincerely,

_____

Student Investigator

CONSENT FORM

By signing this consent form you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

    I have read the letter of information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Participant's Name: _____ (Please print)

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness Name: _____(Please print)

Witness Signature: _____Date:_____

Appendix B: Curriculum Vitae

Name:	Jeffrey D. Wright

Post-Secondary Education and Degrees:

Western University
London, Ontario, Canada
2018, Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership (pending exam)

Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
2008, Executive Program Certificate

Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University
Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom
2007, Post-Graduate Diploma in Business Administration

University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1993, Master of Social Work (Concentration: Administration)
Quantitative Thesis: *A comparison of HIV education, knowledge and drug related behaviour amongst incarcerate, mid-urban, and small rural school students*

King's College, Western University
London, Ontario, Canada
1987, Bachelor of Social Work

Honours and Awards:

Recipient, as a leader or team member, of 4 separate National Quality Institute (NQI) awards for excellence in research and innovation. *Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

Recipient, as a leader or team member, of 9 separate National Quality Institute (NQI) Awards for excellence in research and innovation. *Ontario Ministry of Public Safety and Correctional Services, North Bay, Ontario, Canada*

Related Work Experience:

Vice-President, Corporate Strategy and Business Development
Fanshawe College
London, Ontario
August 2016 - Present

Associate Vice-President, Strategy
Fanshawe College
London, Ontario
April 2015 – July 2016

Executive Director, Strategy and Planning

Fanshawe College
London, Ontario
July 2009 – March 2015

Director, Research and Outcome Measurement
Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Toronto, Ontario
September 2004 – July 2009

Manager, Program Effectiveness, Statistics, and Applied Research
Ontario Ministry of Public Safety and Correctional Services
North Bay, Ontario
May 1998 – September 2004

Teaching Experience:

Sessional Lecturer (Courses: BUSI – Marketing Research Methods II – 40LC; BUSI – Leading Teams – 40LC)
Fanshawe College
London, Ontario
May 2013 – November 2014

Sessional Lecturer (Courses: Advanced Criminology-SOCI4476EA; Program and Policy Evaluation-SOCI4466EA)
Nipissing University
North Bay, Ontario
May 2002 – May 2004