THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF ACADEMIC DEANS

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this causal-comparative study was to investigate the preparation of 310 academic deans at four-year public and private higher education institutions in the United States. The 21-item Professional Preparation of Academic Deans Questionnaire (PPADQ) was administered online and determined the types of preparation methods that academic deans experienced and which preparation methods they perceived to be the most beneficial. The study also investigated demographic differences (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, years as an academic dean) among academic deans and their perception of how each method contributed to their preparation and to the leadership dimensions essential to the academic dean position. Heck, Johnsrud, and Rosser (2000) provided the framework for defining the leadership dimensions. Of the 1,185 surveys distributed, 310 were submitted yielding a response rate of 26.2%. T-tests and ANOVAs revealed demographic group differences in preparation methods experienced and preparation methods contributing to the overall effectiveness as well as the seven leadership dimensions.

The conclusions from the study include: (1) informal methods such as on the job training and informal mentoring were the most common for an academic dean’s preparation, (2) female and non-White academic deans were more likely to participate in more formal preparation methods, and (3) more formal preparation methods were more beneficial to females, non-Whites, and academic deans with more years of experience. Findings present an understanding of how academic deans are prepared for their positions, which preparation methods are most beneficial
to their overall effectiveness, and which methods contribute most to the leadership dimensions of
the deanship. The results of this study may benefit higher education institutions as they seek to
increase the effectiveness and retention of academic deans. The researcher offers other
explanations and suggestions regarding the findings from this study that may be valuable in
better preparing and retaining academic deans in higher education.
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

An impending decline in the number of higher education administration candidates is predicted to occur within the next five to ten years (Gmelch, 2000, 2002; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Land, 2003; J. P. Murray & Murray, 2000). The decrease involves candidates for the upper levels of higher education administration. Furthermore, the decline in candidates may have the most impact on the position of the academic dean. Gmelch and Wolverton have estimated one in five higher education deans will leave each year. The departure from the academic deanship can be attributed to the high rate of retirements and burnout rate in middle and senior level higher education administrators and the reluctance of faculty to make the transition to an administrative position (Gmelch, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999).

The academic dean has an average age of 54 and an average tenure of 5.6 years (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996; J. Montez & Wolverton, 2000; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001). Less than 10% are under the age of 40 and less than 5% are over the age of 65 (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson; J. Montez & Wolverton). Once the deans have completed an average tenure, they are at or near retirement age. Furthermore, fewer than 20% of the deans report wanting to stay in their current position and slightly over 20% report the intent to pursue the next level of higher education leadership (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson; Land, 2003; J. Montez & Wolverton). Most deans indicate the desire to either return to the faculty ranks or retire (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; Land; J. Montez & Wolverton; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000).

The desire to return to faculty status and leave the increased financial benefits as well as power associated with higher education administration is most often a result of burnout due to
high stress levels (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; M. Wolverton, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 1998). Academic deans report long work days, limited vacations, working weekends and a lack of balance between private and professional lives as a major source of stress (Gmelch, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; Pence, 2003). Furthermore, Gmelch found the pressure for deans to resolve crises efficiently and effectively while maintaining the intellectual integrity of the institution to be overwhelming after years of service.

An academic dean has traditionally risen from the ranks of the faculty and values his or her role as the faculty caretaker (Dill, 1991; Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996; Reason & Gmelch, 2003). Gmelch cites one source of contention for the dean is dealing with the demands of the faculty without compromising the mission of the institution. Furthermore, leadership becomes increasingly complicated when academic deans have risen through the ranks and are now leading their colleagues (McArthur, 2002).

Some research suggests that not every faculty member possesses the ability to make the transition from faculty member to academic leader (Land, 2003; Pence, 2003; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003; Rowley, 1997). This lack of ability is another reason the pool of candidates for a strong and effective dean has become increasingly smaller in recent years. In addition, the role of academic dean has become more complex and demanding. Prior to the 1990’s, the dean’s role was to provide guidance and support for students and faculty alike (M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001). Presently, deans are responsible for all aspects of academic affairs including but not limited to budgeting, recruiting, curriculum development, and faculty development and retention (Fish, 2004; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch, 2000).
Whereas the president of a higher education institution creates the vision, the academic dean enables the vision to become a reality (Pence, 2003; Reason & Gmelch, 2003). Depending upon the institution’s administrative structure, the provost or the academic dean is the senior academic officer of a higher education institution and is continually charged with ever increasing and changing responsibilities and is at the forefront of institutional change (Del Favero, 2006). Because of the new challenges facing higher education institutions, the role of academic dean has been transformed over the past twenty years. Traditionally, the academic dean was considered a scholar and teacher first and an administrator second (M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001). However, in the present day, academic deans have assumed some of the responsibilities traditionally held only by the president of the institution such as external fund-raising and alumni relations. (Fish, 2004; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch, 2000). The academic dean position has a direct impact on the academic climate, productivity of the college, as well as the direction and viability of the institution (M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies).

Several studies reveal that it takes a tremendous amount of integrity, perseverance, patience, and drive to be a good administrator (Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Harkins, 1998; Hoppe, 2003; McDade, 1988). Furthermore, Heck, Johnsrud, & Rosser (2000) identified essential characteristics to the academic dean position as the seven dimensions, which include vision and goal setting; management of an academic affairs unit; interpersonal relationships; communication skills; research, professional, and campus endeavors; quality of education in the unit; and support for institutional diversity.

Despite the research identifying the traits essential for success as an academic dean, many researchers believe the inability to become a successful academic leader is primarily due to a
lack of preparation among college and university faculty members (Land, 2003; McDade; J. P. Murray & Murray, 2000; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000). Deans usually arrive at their positions without leadership training and with limited administrative experience (Gmelch, 2000). Without adequate preparation, academic deans rarely have the time to develop a philosophy of their role and goals (Raines & Squires Alberg).

*Traditional Preparation Methods of Academic Deans*

Traditionally, the preparation for an academic leadership position, particularly an academic dean, has relied on three training methods: past administrative posts, mentoring, and on the job training (Del Favero, 2006; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996; Nies & Wolverton, 2000). The typical dean has been a faculty member for at least ten years having survived the tenure review process by demonstrating scholarship and teaching effectiveness in his or her academic discipline as well as service to the institution (Allen & Cherrey, 2000; Cejda, McKenney, & Burley, 2000; Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson; Harkins, 1998; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000).

*Past administrative posts.* Approximately 56% of female deans and 66% of male deans have served in the capacity of a department chair (M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000). In addition, Gmelch reported less than 40% had previously held the position of associate dean and 18% possessed administrative experience outside the realm of higher education. Through their research, M. Wolverton and Gonzales also concluded that academic deans have had limited administrative experience prior to appointment. Most academic deans are usually promoted within the same institution limiting the diversity of their experiences (M. Wolverton & Gonzales). According to M. Wolverton and Gonzales, the most important criterion for reaching the position of academic dean is simply being in the right place at the right time. Therefore, the
preparation of the senior academic officer is often left to chance (McDade, 1988). This lack of professional preparation in the development of an academic dean is the most common practice and is widely accepted at all higher education institutions regardless of their Carnegie classification (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996).

**Mentoring.** Mentoring has been a very effective form of helping deans prepare and make a successful transition into their new administrative role. However, only 55% of deans report having a mentor (Nies & Wolverton, 2000). Nies and Wolverton contended that the process of cultivating mentoring relationships appears to have a positive impact on the career advancement of academic leaders. Specifically, mentorship is one factor that facilitates women’s climb up the administrative ladder in higher education and for increasing the number of female academic deans (M. Wolverton, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 1998). The mentoring process reduces role ambiguity and burnout. Mentors help deans understand and comprehend their roles by assisting them in defining their responsibilities, setting goals, prioritizing tasks, managing time, and using their authority properly (M. Wolverton, Wolverton, & Gmelch).

The mentoring practice can be either informal or formal. Most of the mentoring that occurs in higher education consists of informal practice (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Nies & Wolverton, 2000). Informal mentoring varies greatly among higher education leaders. It may be a concerted, conscious effort of a more experienced academic leader providing guidance to a less experienced dean or the effort may be a subconscious act where the new dean simply observed a previous administrator and learned from his or her successes and mistakes (Nies & Wolverton, 2000). The mentor may have never been aware of his or her role in the preparation of the new dean. Formal mentoring does occur in higher education but happens far less often than the informal model (Allen & Cherrey, 2000). The most common mechanism for
formal mentoring is through a form of a mentor-matching program (Gmelch, 2000; Nies & Wolverton, 2000). Murray (1991) and Nies and Wolverton concluded the mentor-matching program can be very successful and have a positive impact on the academic administrator as well as the institution. However, Zey (1984) reported little evidence to support that assigning mentors is effective. The research to date on the success of formal and informal mentoring practices in higher education is confounding and inconclusive at best. Similar to the traditional career trajectory of academic deans, relying on mentoring as a primary method of preparation for the role of the senior academic officer in a higher education institution is also often left to chance.

**On the job training.** On the job training is another common informal training method for academic deans. Many researchers believe that at the beginning of their tenure, most new administrators lack the skills necessary to effectively lead their constituents (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; Land, 2003; J. Montez & Wolverton, 2000; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch, 2000). Often, Deans enter into their role with minimal understanding of the responsibilities it entails (Gmelch; Gmelch & Wolverton; Land; J. Montez & Wolverton; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies; M. Wolverton & Gonzales; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch). Many fail to recognize that the position consists primarily of administrative tasks leaving little time for scholarship or teaching (Gmelch; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch). Over time, the dean position has become more managerial in nature (M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies). The dean is now expected to be not only the intellectual leader of a college or university but also a fiscal expert, fundraiser, politician, and diplomat (M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001). The ability to learn the
mechanics of each of the aforementioned roles is overwhelming even for the most brilliant and astute faculty member.

Additional Preparation Methods of Academic Deans

The aforementioned traditional preparation methods of academic deans are more often informal practices and typically occur by happenstance. However, additional preparation methods that are more formal exist for academic deans. These methods include post-appointment professional conferences and/or seminars (Carr, 1999; Fogg, 2005), professional training programs (McDade, 1988), and holding an advanced degree in higher education or a related field (Development, 2006; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gonzales, Stewart, & Robinson, 2003).

*Post-appointment professional conferences and/or seminars.* A more formal preparation method of an academic dean includes post-appointment professional development in the form of conferences or seminars (Carr, 1999; Fogg, 2005). Professional training programs and graduate programs do exist for future and current higher education administrators. Higher education institutions may utilize these programs to provide guidance, training, and support systems for academic leaders who are embarking upon, perhaps, the most prominent transition period in higher education (Carr, Fogg). Students and parents expect more from higher education than in previous generations. Academic leaders should have an understanding of this transition sweeping across college campuses. With higher than ever tuition costs, parents and students alike are demanding more from higher education than previous generations. Both are very aware of the rising cost of tuition and the financial burden that will ensue. The two most important qualities prospective students look for in a college are the programs of study available and the quality of teaching at the institution. In addition, the institution’s ability to provide career planning and an affordable financial aid package are also important considerations when deciding upon a college
Thus, it behooves academic deans to have more than a passing acquaintance with the issues that affect the well-being and the responsibilities of higher education (Greenberg, 2006).

Understanding the culture of an institution is a necessary step in being able to bridge the gap between faculty needs and administrative responsibilities (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch, 2000). Through such projects as Preparing Future Faculty, a joint undertaking of the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Council of Graduate Schools, and the University of Washington’s program on re-envisioning the Ph. D., most major graduate programs have added a teacher-training dimension for their students. Fading into the past are doctoral programs narrowly focusing on the academic discipline. Increasingly, graduate programs have been extended to include discussion of professional issues such as tenure, service, consulting, and publishing (Greenberg, 2006).

Professional training programs. Although little empirical research has focused specifically on the process of identifying comprehensive training needs for academic leaders in higher education, most findings indicate a need to focus on budgeting and funding, faculty issues, legal issues, and professional development (Aziz et al., 2005). To date, several training programs for academic leaders address the aforementioned issues. The organizations offering these programs include the American Council on Education’s Fellows Program (A.C.E.), the National Institute for Chief Academic Officers sponsored by the Council of Independent Colleges, W. K. Kellogg Leadership Program Fellowship, the Institute for Management and Leadership in Education at Harvard, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Carnegie Mellon University, Higher Education Resource Services at the University
of Denver, and the Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration at Bryn Mawr College. For these programs to be successful, institutions must link the professional development activities with actual responsibilities of the job and realize this is only one component of a comprehensive organizational plan to better prepare their administrators (McDade, 1988).

**Advanced degree in higher education or related field.** Advanced degree programs in educational administration and leadership may offer a comprehensive and applicable training for higher education administrators (Gmelch, 2002). A typical curriculum in such a program provides the essential elements necessary to be an effective and successful academic leader in higher education. The majority of curricula offer core courses such as leadership theory, educational statistics, budget and finance, ethical and moral decision-making, human development, policy and procedures, educational law, counseling, and organizational structure (Gonzales, Stewart, & Robinson, 2003). Cultural leadership and diversity are not consistently addressed in the same manner among programs. A program may choose to incorporate these two components of leadership preparation either through an interdisciplinary approach or by specifically earmarking one course in the content area. The interdisciplinary approach entails weaving the theories, concepts, and practical application of cultural and diverse leadership into each course in the curriculum. Earmarking relies on one particular course for a more intense focus on the theories and concepts of cultural and diverse leadership.

An estimated 500 universities and colleges offer programs in educational leadership or educational administration (Development, 2006). The substantial growth and popularity of the number of educational leadership programs, whether ELLC-approved or not, may indicate an acknowledged need for a specialized preparatory program for educational administrators. The
growth may also indicate that universities and colleges are addressing the perceived need for better training of future educational administrators in higher education, secondary, and elementary educational institutions.

Rationale

Despite the availability and accessibility of the professional development programs, mentoring and on the job training for a dean remain the primary methods for preparing them for their new roles in higher education. These traditional methods are based upon a hierarchical organizational structure that perpetuates a more authoritative power and transactional leadership system that, often times, is detrimental to the academic freedom and integrity of faculty members who are accustomed to a governance that is more horizontal than hierarchical (J. Montez, 2003; Williams, 2001).

In a period of time when higher education institutions need to provide a high quality and affordable education for students, it is imperative for academic administrators to be well-prepared to lead the institution through unique challenges. Without adequate preparation, academic leaders may find it difficult to be effective in their administrative roles. Further research is needed to better understand the effectiveness of the professional preparation methods of academic deans.

To date, research involving the position of the academic dean has focused on their role within the institution (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch, 2000), the skills and/or characteristics necessary for success (Gmelch, 2002; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros; McDade, 1988), stress and burnout (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros; M. Wolverton & Gonzales), lack and type of preparation
(Gmelch; Gmelch & Wolverton; J. Montez & Wolverton, 2000; M. Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001), disciplinary variation (Del Favero, 2006; M. Wolverton & Gonzales), and the reasons for wanting or the unwillingness to being an academic dean (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies). However, no studies to date have been conducted to assess the relationship between the methods of professional preparation and perceived contribution to the effectiveness of academic deans in higher education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this causal-comparative study was to investigate the preparation of academic deans at four-year public and private higher education institutions in the United States. In this study, academic deans were surveyed to determine what preparation methods they have experienced in their career paths as well as what preparation methods they perceive to be most beneficial for the administrative post. This study also investigated the demographic differences (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) that may exist regarding the degree to which each method of preparation contributed to their preparation for the academic dean position. Lastly, this study examined the demographic differences that may exist among academic deans and their perception of how each method of preparation contributes to the leadership dimensions necessary to be successful in the academic dean position.


Research Questions

1. What preparation methods do academic deans experience?

2. Which preparation methods do academic deans perceive as the most beneficial for each of the seven leadership dimensions?

3. Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) differences in the degree to which each method contributed to one’s preparation as an academic dean?

4. Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) differences in how academic deans perceive each preparation method has contributed to your effectiveness in the seven leadership dimensions (creating a vision and goal setting, management of an academic affairs unit, interpersonal relationships, communication with external constituents and upper level administrators, maintaining and pursuing research, professional development, and professional endeavors, advancing the quality of education, and supporting and advancing institutional diversity)?

Theoretical Framework

This study builds upon the research conducted by M. Wolverton and Gonzales (2000), Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, and Hermanson (1996), and Del Favero (2006). M. Wolverton and Gonzales concluded the most important criterion for reaching the position of academic Dean is simply being in the right place at the right time. Therefore, the preparation of the chief academic officer in higher education is often left to chance. Gmelch et al. in their landmark study of over 600 academic deans found the absence of any formal professional preparation in the development of the academic dean is the most common practice and is widely accepted at all higher education institutions regardless of their Carnegie classification. In Del Favaro’s (2006)
study examining the relationship between academic discipline and the preparation of academic
deans for their leadership role, the author concluded that academic deans relied on experience in
past administrative posts and past relationships with faculty leaders (mentoring). She also
indicated that higher education continues to place minimal emphasis on the importance of
directed methods to properly prepare academic deans. This study will more closely examine the
specific types of preparation methods an academic dean is likely to experience en route to the
deanship as well as the level of contribution of each of the preparation methods to their overall
effectiveness as a dean.

Furthermore, this study builds upon the research of Heck, Johnsrud, and Rosser (2000)
who found that little empirical research existed on the assessment of higher education
administrators’ performance. They developed an evaluation model for assessing and monitoring
the effectiveness of academic deans and directors which identified seven leadership dimensions:
vision and goal setting; the management of an academic affairs unit; developing and maintaining
interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and students; communication skills; maintaining
and pursuing professional development; research and institutional endeavors; advancing the
quality of education of the unit; and supporting and advancing institutional diversity (Heck,
Johnsrud, & Rosser). The leadership dimensions were the basis for the survey developed by the
researcher and administered to academic deans for the purpose of determining the level of
contributions the method of preparation has on the seven leadership dimensions associated with
the role of academic dean.

Significance of Study

Institutions of higher education need to better understand effective methods of
preparation for academic deans so that such methods can be encouraged and facilitated earlier in
administrative careers. As such, the results of this study will likely benefit individuals involved with higher education. For example, the administrators, faculty, staff, and students of higher education institutions could benefit from academic deans who are better prepared for their responsibilities. More specifically, if academic deans receive formal preparation for their administrative roles, they will be more effective leaders and better decision makers in areas such as financial resources, curriculum development, alumni relations, academic integrity, student needs, and faculty retention and development. An effectively prepared academic dean will be more capable of successfully addressing the unique challenges facing higher education institutions.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

A potential delimitation of this study is the method of delivery of the research instrument. The survey was disseminated via e-mail. Not all academic deans may be as responsive to e-mail as to traditional mail when considering the vast amount of e-mail they receive on a daily basis.

Potential limitations of this study that could affect internal validity include the typical low response rate to survey methods and the accuracy of self-reporting. Another potential limitation of the study is that the primary researcher is not currently nor has ever served in the capacity as an academic dean. Therefore, academic deans may be reluctant to participate in the study resulting in a lower response rate. In addition, an e-mail from the chancellor of a public, four-year higher education institution in the Southeastern United States was sent to the participants of this study to potentially increase the response rate. The e-mail included an attachment that indicated the purpose of the study. The additional time it would take for a participant to open the attachment may have been a limitation to this study that resulted in a diminished pool of participants.
Since the independent variable, the method of preparation of academic leaders, was not manipulated, the internal validity is significantly threatened (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Another limitation is the ability to generalize the results of this study. The researcher exercised caution when interpreting the outcomes of a causal-comparative study because relationships may be easily identified, but causation cannot be fully established (Fraenkel & Wallen).

**Definition of Terms**

This section includes the definitions for the six most common methods of preparation of academic deans as defined by (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996; Nies & Wolverton, 2000; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000).

*Formal mentoring.* A process where an institution matched the academic dean with a veteran higher education administrator to nurture, support, and guides his or her professional development.

*Informal mentoring.* A voluntary process where an experienced higher education administrator was able to nurture, support, and guide the academic dean’s professional development.

*On the job training.* An informal practice where the academic dean learned the responsibilities, demands, ethics, duties, and details of the position after his or her appointment as an academic dean.

*Professional conferences and/or seminars.* Professional conferences and/or seminars related specifically to the academic dean position.

*Advanced degree in higher education or related field.* An advanced degree in higher education administration, educational administration and leadership studies, or a related program.
Professional training programs. A professional academy or training program, including but not limited to: American Council on Education’s Fellows Program, Higher Education Resource Services, Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration, National Institute for Chief Academic Officers.

The following section includes the definitions for the seven dimensions of academic dean leadership and their definitions as defined by Heck, Johnsrud, and Rosser (2000):

Vision and goal setting. The ability to articulate clearly the strategic goals of the unit, encourage ideas and creativity, create an atmosphere conducive to high faculty performance, demonstrate vision and long-range planning, emphasize teaching excellence appropriately, emphasize research excellence appropriately, emphasize service excellence appropriately, advocate for resources needed by the unit, encourage faculty development, encourage curriculum/program development, and provide leadership for the unit/subunit level initiatives.

Management of an academic affairs unit. The ability to insure that fair administrative procedures are followed, exercise fair and reasonable judgment in allocating resources, manage change constructively, delegate work effectively, handle administrative tasks in a timely manner, be an effective problem solver, and demonstrate knowledge of departments and programs within the unit, maintain an effective and efficient staff.

Interpersonal relationships. The ability to demonstrate understanding of the needs and concerns of unit members, treat individuals fairly and with respect, maintain positive and productive relationships within the unit, maintain positive and productive relationships external to the unit, demonstrate awareness of the quality of professional work of unit members, be accessible to faculty and staff within the unit, demonstrate understanding of the needs and concerns of students, and be accessible to students.
Communication skills. The ability to listen to and communicate with unit members, listen to and communicate with external constituencies, effectively represent the unit and its members to the rest of the university, effectively communicate the unit’s priorities to the upper level administration, and produce clear reports and correspondence.

Professional development, research and institutional endeavors. The ability to maintain an active research/scholarly agenda, pursue professional growth opportunities, engage in effective teaching, contribute service to professional organizations, and contribute service to community and campus projects.

Quality of education in the unit. The ability to advance the unit’s undergraduate and/or graduate programs effectively, advocate appropriate curriculum offerings, handle external accreditation reviews effectively, recruit new personnel and/or promotes recruitment skillfully, and demonstrate a commitment to ensuring a fair tenure and promotion process.

Support for institutional diversity. The ability to demonstrate commitment to advancing and supporting equal employment opportunities, demonstrate commitment to mentoring of women and faculty from underrepresented groups, provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, and insure the staff is educated in EEO/AA concerns.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents a summary of the literature related to higher education administrators, specifically, academic deans. The following will be reviewed in this chapter: the historical background of higher education deans including the demands placed upon them, both at private and public institutions; the assessment of the effectiveness of academic deans; the effective leadership traits necessary for an academic dean; and the methods of preparation for the academic dean’s position.

Historical Background of Higher Education Deans

Research to date has estimated that a decline in the pool of potential higher education academic officers will occur over the next five to ten years (Gmelch, 2000, 2002; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Land, 2003; M. Murray, 1991). Researchers have concluded that this decline may be due to a lack of preparation among college and university faculty members, the inability or lack of desire of many faculty members to make the transition from teaching to administration, and the high rate of retirements in middle and senior level higher education administrators (Land; J. P. Murray & Murray, 2000).

American colleges and universities formally prepare a large proportion of the leaders and major participants in the worlds of business, industry, government, and the learned professions but have done little to prepare their own faculty members and administrators for the world of higher education (Greenberg, 2006). Therefore, many academic leaders arrived at their new positions lacking leadership training, prior administrative experience, and a clear vision of the job requirements (Gmelch, 2000). A majority of higher education administrators never received formal training to prepare them for their new roles. Most followed the traditional path of faculty member, chairperson, director/division head, assistant dean/vice president, dean/vice president,
and, finally, president (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; Land, 2003; McDade, 1988; J. Montez, 2003; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000). Faculty members who have been promoted to administrative posts typically had a range of ten to sixteen years of teaching experience. A majority of senior-level higher education administrators held at least three positions with increasing responsibility (Cejda, McKenney, & Burley, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002).

The National Survey of Academic Deans Study (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996) and subsequent papers (J. Montez & Wolverton, 2000; Nies & Wolverton, 2000; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch, 2000; M. Wolverton, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 1998) derived from it provided the most reliable statistics and research in regard to the average profile of an academic dean. This national report sampled higher education institutions of three categories: Research I and II and Doctoral I and II, Masters I and II, and Baccalaureate I and II. The Gmelch et al. report included both private and public institutions and resulted in a sample size of 1,370 deans. The statistics revealed that deans averaged 54 years in age with an average tenure of 5.6 years. The range for years of experience as a dean varied greatly from one year to 27 years of experience. Approximately, 60% of the deans were male and over 88% were White.

Female deans were evenly divided among private and public institutions; however, males and minorities were more commonly employed at public institutions and in urban areas. In regard to institutional categories, a majority of the deans questioned were employed at the Masters I and II institutions. All deans, despite gender or ethnicity, reported the reason for taking the position of dean was to improve the college. Males and minorities reported having been a
Since the first appointed dean in 1816, the role of a dean has never been standardized and, to this day, a single, consistent definition has not been determined. Early reports by Hawkes (as cited in the 2001 ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report) indicated the dean position was created to focus on student concerns. A minority of the dean’s time was devoted to faculty concerns, curriculum oversight, and minimal administrative tasks. However, in recent years, the role of the dean has changed dramatically. Research by Pence (2003) and Reason and Gmelch (2003) indicated that deans are now responsible not only for faculty supervision, evaluation and development, as in the past, but also for the fiscal management as well as the intellectual vision and academic integrity of an institution. Furthermore, Fish (2004) reported that on any given day, a higher education dean will address such issues as: tenure and promotion, alumni relations, attracting and retaining faculty, fund raising, enrollment problems, financial management, disciplinary proceedings, technology failures, information systems, community outreach, space allocation, curriculum development and reform, student complaints, faculty complaints, parent complaints, and meetings involving every aspect of campus. The role of the dean has transcended from the early phases of a student-caretaker to the highly visible and demanding role of the all-encompassing academic affairs caretaker (Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000).

Effective Leadership Traits of Higher Education Deans

Heck, Johnsrud, and Rosser (2000) investigated the assessment practices of higher education administrators and concluded that minimal empirical research exists to determine the best methods to assess performance. They attributed this to the lack of consistent and reliable
assessment tools as it is a fairly new practice to hold higher education administrators accountable for measurable outcomes. Heck et al. developed an evaluation model for assessing and monitoring the effectiveness of academic deans and directors. The written questionnaire was administered to almost 900 faculty and staff who rated the effectiveness of 22 deans and directors.

The instrument developed by Heck et al. evaluated an academic dean’s effectiveness through items that reflect the tasks, duties, and responsibilities of the position. Heck et al. developed 57 items to measure seven primary leadership dimensions and specific descriptive items for each dimension: vision and goal setting, management of the unit, interpersonal relationships, communication skills, research/professional/campus endeavors, quality of education in the unit, and supports for institutional diversity.

Each leadership dimension/scale consisted of a minimum of five items (tasks). Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for each dimension were all above .90 and were determined by the researchers to be reliable. All items utilized a five-point, Likert scale to measure the participants’ perceived effectiveness of their academic deans or directors.

The first leadership dimension, vision and goal setting, consisted of 12 items. The alpha coefficient for this dimension was .98 with an overall mean of 3.71 and standard deviation of 1.41. The items under vision and goal setting reflected such tasks as clearly articulating the goals of the department, creating a positive atmosphere conducive to high performance, the ability to demonstrate long-range planning, and encouraging excellence and development among the faculty, and staff.

Management of the unit is the second leadership dimension identified by Heck et al. (α=.97, M=3.64, SD=1.31). The nine descriptive items included the dean’s ability to ensure fair
procedures are followed, exercises fair and reasonable judgment, manages change constructively, delegation, efficient with administrative tasks and problem solving, demonstrates knowledge, and maintains an effective and efficient staff.

The next leadership dimension included the ability to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and students. Heck et al. included 10 tasks in their description of the dimension. The tasks focused on understanding the needs and concerns of others, demonstrating respect and fairness, maintaining positive and productive relationships, acknowledging the quality of work of unit members, mentoring practices, and accessibility to their constituents. The standard deviation, mean, and alpha coefficient for this dimension were 3.81, 1.32, and .98, respectively.

Communication skills are the fourth leadership dimension. The researchers identified eight tasks distinctive to this dimension. The tasks included the ability to listen and communicate with constituents, effectively represent the unit and communicate the unit’s priorities, and the ability to produce clear reports and correspondence. The statistical analysis revealed an alpha coefficient of .98, a mean of 3.94, and a standard deviation of 1.17.

The fifth leadership dimension recognized by Heck et al. was the ability of a dean or director to maintain and pursue professional development, research, and institutional endeavors (α=.97, M=3.29, SD=1.44). The six tasks involved with this dimension included maintaining an active research agenda, pursuing professional growth opportunities, engaging in effective teaching, and contributing to professional organizations as well as community and campus projects.

The ability to advance the quality of education of the unit was the sixth leadership dimension in the research of Heck et al. They identified seven tasks unique to educational quality
and a dean or director’s capacity to further improve upon the programs and curriculums offered through the unit. A dean or director’s ability to advance both undergraduate and graduate programs, advocate appropriate curriculum offerings, manage accreditation reviews, recruit and promote faculty and staff, and ensure a fair tenure process are among the seven tasks specific to this leadership dimension. The findings included an alpha coefficient of .98, a mean of 3.49, and a standard deviation of 1.49.

The last leadership dimension developed by Heck et al. was supporting and advancing institutional diversity. The alpha coefficient for this dimension was .97 with an overall mean of 3.80 and standard deviation of 1.14. This dimension had the least number of tasks associated with it. Five tasks were designated to describe this dimension. They included a demonstrated commitment to advancing and supporting equal employment opportunities as well as to the mentoring of women and faculty from underrepresented groups. Furthermore, deans and directors were assessed on their ability to provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities and to ensure the staff was educated in EEO/AA concerns.

Heck et al. reported considerably more within-group variability among the lower rater dean’s communication skills, support for institutional diversity, and the quality of education within the unit (SD=1.44). Whereas, with the higher rated dean, there was greater within-group agreement across the seven dimensions with the one exception of quality of education in the unit (SD=1.22). In regard to the generalizability of the instrument, Heck et al. calculated a coefficient of .84. The researchers concluded from the coefficient value that the assessment tool yielded dependable information in regard to measuring leadership effectiveness.

To date, several investigations have been conducted to assess effective leadership traits in higher education leaders (Gmelch, 2002; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton,
A comprehensive evaluation of the research indicated the following leadership traits are most descriptive of an effective leader: honesty, forthrightness, passion, vision, stewardship, courage, trustworthiness, fairness, integrity, credibility, adaptiveness, perseverance, competence, fortitude, creativity, active listener, ethicalness, good communication skills, open-mindedness, humility, strong goal orientation, high energy level, dedicated, and committed. Notably, intelligence was not included on list; however, Hoppe contended a leader does need enough intelligence to make decisions based on rational and objective reasoning. Furthermore, Montez (2003) concluded that given the complexity of higher education, a successful and effective leader must be able to encourage collaboration among the internal and external constituents, obviously, not an easy task in an ever-changing environment.

Academic leadership, as defined by Gmelch and Wolverton (2002), is the act of building a community of scholars to set direction and achieve common goals through faculty empowerment. They concluded that academic deans must perform three activities to lead effectively. The activities included the ability to build a community of scholars, set direction, and empower others. As cited in Gmelch and Wolverton, the 1996 National Survey of Deans in Higher Education reported that deans were balanced in their approach to leadership. However, deans in comprehensive universities more commonly filled the role of community builder. Gmelch and Wolverton further contended that after year ten, deans strayed away from direction setting behavior that may impact institutional development. Williams (2001) contended that an academic leader’s organizational style requires a collaborative approach involving interdisciplinary teamwork that is dynamic in nature. This concept is in stark contrast to the traditional emphasis placed on a hierarchy of authority among colleges and universities.
Historically, the specific attributes necessary for higher education leadership have not been definitively identified. In 2003, Montez conducted a study to determine what higher education leaders perceive as attributes or behaviors necessary for effective leadership and developed the Higher Education Leadership Instrument (HELI). She concluded that the instrument provides information that results in consistent, relevant, and meaningful methods for developing higher education programs. According to Montez, leadership development programs should focus on five dimensions of higher education leadership: integral, relational, credibility, competence, and direction/guidance. The integral dimension is the ability to function in organization that includes diverse authority, perspectives, and disciplines. The relational dimension involves not only inspiring and caring, but also the ability to resolve conflict, deal with difficult people, and mentor others. The credibility dimension describes the values-based behavior of higher education leaders such as integrity and a strong moral commitment. Interestingly, Montez noted that the competency dimension appears to receive the most attention in higher education leadership literature. Academic deans need to successfully plan, govern, and develop as well as implement organizational policy. They must also develop strong organizational skills, be financially responsible, and adapt to new and ever-changing technology. The last dimension, direction/guidance, reflects an academic dean’s ability to move forward in a climate of conflict and change.

In addition to the research conducted on the aforementioned intrinsic qualities of higher education leaders, the extrinsic qualities of leadership have also been investigated. Intrinsic qualities include integrity, ethical conduct, competence, trustworthiness, and dependability. Harkins (1998) reported that the extrinsic qualities of leadership such as charisma, passion, humility, education, assertiveness, benevolence, use of authority and self esteem are not as
essential to effective leadership as the more intrinsic qualities. Furthermore, Harkins contended that personal character values were more critically important to deans than administrative or technical skills.

Types of Preparation Methods for Academic Deans

The preparation of higher education administrators has long relied on three primary methods - on the job training, mentoring (informal and/or formal), and post-appointment professional development programs such as conferences or seminars (Allen & Cherrey, 2000; McDade, 1988; J. Montez, 2003; M. Murray, 1991). The position of academic dean is no exception to these traditional methods of preparation.

On the job training. Since many administrators are not formally trained for their role as a leader, they experience on the job training. In the beginning of their tenure, many new administrators lack the skills necessary to effectively lead their constituents (Gmelch, 2000, 2002; J. Montez & Wolverton, 2000). Furthermore, leadership becomes increasingly more complicated when they have risen through the ranks and are now leading their colleagues (McArthur, 2002). Fifty percent of deans were faculty members of the colleges of which they became deans (M. Wolverton, Gmelch, & Wolverton, 2000).

Harkins (1998) conducted a study to determine the level of leadership or management preparation of higher education deans and department chairs had either before or after they acquired their current leadership position. He surveyed 224 participants including 106 deans and 118 departmental chairs. Of these participants, only 45 were women. Fifty percent of the participants reported having no formal preparation and 45% reported that their institutions offered no formal leadership preparation.
A qualitative study examining the formal training and development of deans was conducted by Bolton (1996). The research consisted of interviews with seventeen deans of schools of business at universities in both United States and Europe. None of the deans reported receiving any formal training or development to prepare them for the role of dean.

*Mentoring.* In a 2004 study conducted by Bamberg, Layman, and Jones, 76 deans and directors were surveyed to determine the type of leadership development each had experienced. Sixty-seven percent of the female respondents reported being mentored whereas slightly less than half (47%) of the male respondents reported being mentored. Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that professional experience was more important for leadership development than formal programs, workshops, and activities. The formal programs, workshops, and activities listed by the respondents included institutional leadership programs, regional allied health deans groups, and Harvard University’s Management Development program.

A report by Nies and Wolverton (2000) from the Center for Academic Leadership at Washington State University, examined the informal and formal mentoring relationships of academic deans. The statistics utilized to substantiate the authors’ findings in this study were from the 1996 National Survey of Academic Deans in Higher Education. The results showed that 55% of the deans had mentors. Females reported being mentored by other females, most of whom were White. Both males and minorities reported their mentors were predominately White males. The authors noted great concern regarding that almost half of the deans received no mentoring either prior to or after their academic appointment. The authors concluded the most significant obstacle to mentoring is that it requires initiative and time for an activity that is primarily voluntary, unrecognized, and unrewarded. The authors believed that until formal
mentoring is supported by institutions, the value and benefits of mentoring relationships would continue to be a result of chance.

Duncan (1993) analyzed the effects of mentoring on higher education administrative career advancement. Twenty-eight higher education institutions’ deans were surveyed with a response rate of 72%. The results revealed that female deans had mentored or were being mentored at a much higher rate than their male counterparts, non-Whites and deans with 20-25 years of experience believed mentoring could be taught through training, the 41-45 year old age group as well as non-Whites and non-tenured deans indicated past and present experiences with a mentor, and individuals who were presently in a dean’s position and had more than 21-25 years of experience no longer had mentors. Duncan concluded that mentoring experiences might positively affect the career advancement for both male and female deans.

*Professional conferences and/or seminars.* Typically, the formal education of a dean has been in a specific academic discipline; therefore, they do not readily possess the necessary administrative skills to be successful and effective as an academic leader (Rowley, 1997). Any formal training that higher education administrators received was typically in the form of professional development and usually administered after they have assumed their responsibilities as an academic leader (Land, 2003; McDade, 1998; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003).

*Professional training programs/academies.* Although little empirical research has focused specifically on the process of identifying comprehensive training needs for academic leaders in higher education, most findings have indicated a need to focus on budgeting and funding, faculty issues, legal issues, and professional development (Aziz et al., 2005). Several training programs for academic leaders that address the aforementioned issues currently exist. The programs and organizations offering these programs include: the American Council on
Education’s Fellows Program (A.C.E.), the National Institute for Chief Academic Officers sponsored by the Council of Independent Colleges, the American Council on Education, the Institute for Management and Leadership in Education at Harvard, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Carnegie Mellon University, Higher Education Resource Services at the University of Denver, and the Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration at Bryn Mawr College.

Fogg (2005) researched the National Institute for Chief Academic Officers. The institute has conducted conferences for the past 34 years training provosts and deans how to succeed in higher education. The conference has utilized seminars, workshops, lectures, and group work focusing on litigation, recruiting a diverse faculty, mentoring junior professors, budgeting practices, and managing faculty. The target group for this conference has traditionally been academic leaders from small to midsize private colleges or universities.

As reported by Carr (1999), the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) program is gender specific. It has provided professional training activities for women in higher education. In addition, HERS has collaborated with Bryn Mawr College to sponsor a four-week Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration.

The American Council on Education’s Fellows Program (A. C. E.) has provided an interesting and more comprehensive approach to the development of the Chief Academic Officers (CAO). The council has implemented a program consisting of a yearlong series of meetings for CAOs in their first three years on the job (Fogg, 2005). Over 80% of the A. C. E. fellows entered the upper tiers of higher education administration becoming presidents, vice-presidents, provosts, and deans (Carr, 1999). The American Association of University Administrators has provided an opportunity involving mentorship for higher education
administrators and/or faculty. Academic leaders shadow an administrator at another institution for one or two weeks (Fogg).

The University of Kentucky College of Health Sciences (CHS) has developed an internship program designed to address the impending decline in higher education administrators (Gonzales, Stewart, & Robinson, 2003). The authors of the report detailing the CHS Administrative Internship Program explained the need for such a program. Gonzales et al. reported that in the allied health field alone there would be nearly 50 vacancies in top level higher education administration positions over the next ten years. The authors described the CHS Administrative Internship Program as having two purposes: to develop future higher education leaders and to educate faculty concerning administrative functions. Gonzales et al. reported that after completion of the program, individuals will be better prepared to assume the role of dean or other higher education administrative positions.

*Advanced degree in higher education or related field.* In regard to formal education related to administration and/or leadership, most higher education higher deans have none. Upon review of the literature to date, rarely has an academic dean completed an advanced degree in higher education administration, educational leadership, or business administration. Rather, a significant majority of higher education deans hold a terminal degree in their academic disciplines (Del Favero, 2006). Del Favero sampled 210 academic deans to investigate the relationship between academic disciplines and the preparation of academic deans for their leadership role. Participants indicated that their past administrative experiences and relationships with faculty leaders were the most influential sources for learning the role of an academic dean.

In the review of literature to date, research findings revealed that just a small number of higher education deans reported receiving formal methods of preparation either prior to assuming
their academic leadership roles or after their appointment (Gmelch, 2000, 2002; Nies & Wolverton, 2000; Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000). A majority of the deans had not prepared for the role through any graduate or doctoral programs (Land, 2003). Rather, their doctoral degrees were in a specific discipline that typically did not require courses regarding administrative or leadership skills (Land).

An estimated 500 universities and colleges offered programs in educational leadership or educational administration (Development, 2006). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has authorized the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) to review preparation programs for educational leaders. The review process has utilized standards developed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). The ELCC conducts site reviews and determines which programs will receive a “National Recognition” status. Thus, an institution sponsoring a program earning such a status is assumably more credible and desirable to prospective students and potential employers. Of the 500 aforementioned educational leadership programs, 168 have received National Recognition for one or more of their educational leadership programs (Development). The National Recognition status was first awarded to two institutions, Cleveland State University and Youngstown State University, in 1997 (Development). Since that time, phenomenal growth has occurred in the number of institutions gaining National Recognition status. Perhaps, the growth has indicated of a new emphasis from higher education to better prepare their academic leaders for the rigorous demands of a deanship.

The participants in Harkins’ 1998 study reported that leadership preparation programs should concentrate on time management, problem solving, budget strategies, and conflict resolution. Furthermore, such programs should also provide training in enrollment, recruitment,
retention, institutional image, technology, and performance evaluations. The participants were also asked what topics would be beneficial in a graduate program for future higher education administrators. The responses included communication, computer skills, classroom instruction, conflict management, curriculum development, legal issues, and leadership theories. Interestingly, there was considerable overlap in content between the two questions concerning the preparation of higher education leaders, but the two did not generate exactly the same responses. Perhaps, the responses regarding the graduate program pertain more to the core traits necessary for a higher education leader, whereas, the responses regarding the leadership preparation pertain more to a post-appointment professional development program.

In a study involving leadership styles and leadership outcomes of academic deans, Cummiskey (1993) reportedly mailed 250 questionnaires to higher education institutions to survey the faculty. The study examined differences in leadership styles and ratings influenced by academic preparation or leadership training of the dean. The questionnaire asked deans and faculty alike to rate the preferred characteristics of a leader. The participants were then asked to rate the dean on the same characteristics. Cummiskey determined that no relationship could be established between the academic preparation or leadership training of the dean and the faculty perception of dean effectiveness.

Summary

Currently, the professional preparation of academic deans is largely left to chance. Higher education institutions primarily rely on mentoring and on the job training for their senior academic officers (Bolton, 1996; Gmelch, 2000, 2002; Harkins, 1998; J. Montez & Wolverton, 2000). The demands of the academic dean position have continued to increase in both quality and quantity (Fish, 2004; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000; Pence,
2003; Reason & Gmelch, 2003); however, the demand for better prepared administrators has not been a significantly increased. The dean position serves as the bridge between administrators, faculty, and students. Deans are responsible for advocating the academic vision of the college. The research to date demonstrates that academic deans are overworked, overstressed, and ill-prepared resulting in very short tenures (Gmelch; Gmelch & Wolverton; Land, 2003; J. P. Murray & Murray, 2000; M. Murray, 1991). A constant influx of new deans is not healthy for an institution and, ultimately, weakens its academic integrity and reputation.

Educational and economic researchers have speculated that many of the smaller, private, liberal arts institutions that are not considered ‘top tier’ may experience declining enrollments and possible extinction (Brooks, 1980; B. Wolverton, 2008). As tuition continues to rise to all-time highs at these institutions, so, too, do the expectations of the students for a quality education (http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters/k12news/HI_TrendsTudes_2005_v04_i01.pdf). To avoid the potential decline in enrollment or to provide the interdisciplinary majors demanded by students, academic leaders at higher education institutions need to be effective when dealing with these unique challenges. Colleges and universities are under increasing pressure to provide a high quality and affordable education for students; therefore, it is imperative for academic deans to be well prepared to lead their institutions through unique challenges. Given these challenges, it is essential for higher education to be able to effectively recruit and properly train potential academic deans.
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter reviews the methodology that was used in this study and includes: the research design, participants, data collection instruments, variables, materials, procedures utilized to collect the data, research questions, and data analysis procedures.

Research Design

This study examined the preparation methods utilized in the development of academic deans as well as their perceived contribution to each of the seven leadership dimensions of an academic dean.

This study was a causal-comparative design that utilized the survey instrument entitled the Professional Preparation of Academic Deans Questionnaire (PPADQ). The design provided the researcher with the ability to generalize from a sample to a population of academic deans so inferences regarding professional preparation methods could be made with a high degree of reliability (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Because the methods of preparation, the leadership dimensions of an academic dean, and the group differences in regard to the demographics of gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean already exist, there was no manipulation of the variables. Therefore, this study attempted to determine the perceived contributions of different methods of preparation of academic deans. The design also allowed for rapid turnaround from the completion of data collection. The data collection included a Web-based, questionnaire that was created and administered online.

Participants

The participants consisted of public and private higher education academic deans from four-year institutions. Through the initial invitation, 1,185 academic deans were asked to participate in this study. Only deans responsible for undergraduate academic programs were
asked to participate in this study. A comprehensive list of four-year colleges and universities in the United States was compiled by the University of Texas and accessed by the researcher via the web address: http://www.utexas.edu/world/univ/state/. Each institution’s web site was researched to generate a list of the names and e-mail addresses of the undergraduate academic deans. The list consisted of 1,185 academic deans. An e-mail address was not available for the academic dean at each institution listed by the University of Texas; therefore, not all deans were invited to participate in this study. A total of 310 academic deans completed the questionnaire that resulted in a 26.2% response rate for this study.

Instrumentation

The Professional Preparation of Academic Deans Questionnaire (PPADQ) (Appendix A) was designed specifically for this study and was administered online. The PPADQ consisted of 21 items across three sections: (1) demographic information, (2) method(s) of preparation and the perceived degree of importance of each method to the academic deans’ overall effectiveness, and (3) degree of importance of each preparation method to the academic deans’ effectiveness in the seven leadership dimensions. The PPADQ was developed by the researcher but utilized Heck, Johnsrud, and Rosser’s definitions of the seven leadership dimensions as the basis for Section 3. The definitions were derived from the Heck et al. questionnaire entitled Administrative Effectiveness in Higher Education: Improving Assessment Procedures. The authors granted permission to use the definitions in the development of the survey instrument utilized in the current study.

In Section 1, items 1-11 elicited demographic information from the participants. Participants were asked to report their gender, age, country of origin, race/ethnicity, institution type, degree type, degree field/area, tenure status, the number of years in higher education before
obtaining their first appointment as an academic dean, the number of total years in the position of academic dean, and prior administrative experiences in higher education.

Section 2 (items 12-13) included descriptions of the six most common methods of preparation for academic deans: formal mentoring, informal mentoring, on the job training, professional conferences and/or seminars, advanced degree in Higher Education or related field, and professional training programs. Participants were asked to indicate which method(s) of preparation they have experienced in their career paths. In addition, participants were also asked to indicate the degree to which each method of preparation contributed to their preparation as an academic dean. The section contained two items. The first item directed the participants to indicate which preparation method(s) they experienced. Participants were asked to check any of the six preparation methods that were applicable to their experiences. The second item asked the participants to indicate the degree of importance of each preparation method they experienced. A 5-point, Likert scale was applied with 0 as non-applicable, 1 as minimal level of contribution, and 4 as very significant.

The third section of the written questionnaire, items 14-21, incorporates the work of Heck, Johnsrud, and Rosser (2000). The Heck et al. instrument, Administrative Effectiveness in Higher Education: Improving Assessment Procedures, was designed to assess and monitor the effectiveness of academic deans and directors. The instrument consisted of a total 57 items with the number of items broken down by each leadership dimension: vision and goal setting (12), management of the unit (9), interpersonal relationships (10), communication skills (8), research/professional/campus endeavors (6), quality of education in the unit (7), and support for institutional diversity (5). After constructing a scale for each leadership dimension, Heck et al. determined each to be reliable with internal consistency coefficients all above .90. As cited in
Heck et al., Pike concluded that coefficients of .70 or greater are sufficient for assessment data utilized in decision making processes.

In section three of the PPADQ, the seven leadership dimensions were identified and defined for the participants. The participants were asked to indicate to what degree each preparation method contributed to their effectiveness in each of the seven leadership dimensions. To remain consistent throughout the PPADQ, the 5-point, Likert scale was applied with 0 as non-applicable, 1 as minimal level of contribution, and 4 as a very significant level of contribution.

The PPADQ was reviewed by a panel of experts from a public higher education institution in the Southeastern United States. The participants included an academic dean, an academic department chairperson, two academic program coordinators, and two faculty members from the university. The rationale for utilizing one academic dean was to gain insight from a person in the academic dean position. Furthermore, utilizing only one academic dean did not significantly decrease the sample population. The panel of experts provided feedback to the primary investigator resulting in more clearly defined demographics and definitions. As a result of the feedback from the panel of experts, the categories for race/ethnicity were adjusted to reflect the terminology utilized in higher education. The panel also aided in establishing the estimated length of time to complete the written PPADQ.

A pilot study was conducted to determine validity and reliability of the survey instrument, the PPADQ. The written questionnaire was distributed to 20 academic department chairpersons from a public higher education institution in the Southeastern United States. Academic department chairpersons were utilized to avoid significantly decreasing the sample population of academic deans for this study. The written questionnaire was distributed to the 20
academic department chairpersons via e-mail. From the data collected via the pilot study, an analysis of the statistics was conducted to make certain the participants comprehended the 21 items on the survey. A minor adjustment to the PPADQ was made as a result of the pilot study. In Section 1, demographic information, Master of Fine Arts was added to the degree type choices.

Procedure for Collecting Data

Academic deans at public and private higher education institutions in the United States were asked to complete a written questionnaire consisting of demographics including preparation methods, ethnicity, gender, age, institution type (public versus private), degree type, tenure status, the number of total years as an academic dean, the number of years in higher education to achieve the position of academic dean, the preparation methods they have experienced, and the degree to which the method of preparation influenced their perceived effectiveness in the seven leadership dimensions associated with the position of academic dean.

The names and institutions of academic deans were gathered from a comprehensive list of four-year colleges and universities in the United States. The list was compiled by the University of Texas and accessed by the researcher via the web address: http://www.utexas.edu/world/univ/state/. This researcher generated a list of each academic dean’s e-mail addresses from their institution’s website. To potentially increase the response rate of the participants, an e-mail from the chancellor of a public, four-year higher education institution in the Southeastern United States was sent to the academic deans selected for this study (Appendix B). The message from the chancellor emphasized the potential benefits of this study and encouraged the academic deans to complete the questionnaire. In addition, the e-mail
included an attachment that indicated the purpose of the study (Appendix C). The chancellor’s e-mail was sent one week prior to the request to participate.

An e-mail sent from the primary researcher with an introductory statement, request to participate, and the PPADQ was distributed to 1,185 academic deans (Appendix D). The introductory statement included the potential benefits of the study. Data on the preparation methods were collected via the PPADQ consisting of 21 items. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire utilizing the website www.surveymonkey.com. A direct link to the survey website was included in the e-mail to allow a rapid and convenient means to access the PPADQ. The utilization of www.surveymonkey.com ensured confidentiality for the participants as well as convenience and easy completion of the survey. Since the researcher was unable to distinguish which participants responded, all participants received a third e-mail message encouraging completion of the survey one week from the initial contact asking for participation in the study. A follow-up e-mail from the academic dean of a public, four-year higher education institution in the Southeastern United States was distributed one week later encouraging completion of the questionnaire (Appendix E). The survey was administered in August of 2008 and was also economically viable for the researcher conducting the study.

Research Questions

1. What preparation methods do academic Deans experience?

2. Which preparation methods do academic Deans perceive as the most beneficial for each of the seven leadership dimensions?

3. Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years) differences in the degree to which each method contributed to one’s preparation as an academic Dean?
4. Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) differences in how academic deans perceive each preparation method has contributed to your effectiveness in the seven leadership dimensions (creating a vision and goal setting, management of an academic affairs unit, interpersonal relationships, communication with external constituents and upper level administrators, maintaining and pursuing research, professional development, and professional endeavors, advancing the quality of education, and supporting and advancing institutional diversity)?

Data Analysis Procedures

Data were transferred from SurveyMonkey into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The entire data set was manipulated and analyzed. Demographic data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Missing data and outliers were evaluated. No data was eliminated from this study. Methods for data analysis for each research question are presented in Table 1.

Research questions one and two utilized descriptive statistics to describe the preparation methods academic deans experienced and the preparation methods that academic deans perceived as the most beneficial for each of the seven leadership dimensions.

Research questions three and four analyzed the two dependent variables (preparation methods and preparation methods contributing to leadership dimensions) by three demographic variables (gender, ethnicity, and years as an academic dean). For the analyses involving gender and race, t-Tests of independent samples were conducted. For the analyses involving years as an academic dean, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized.
Table 1

Data Analysis Techniques for Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What preparation methods do academic deans experience?</td>
<td>• Preparation methods</td>
<td>• Frequencies</td>
<td>• Percentages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Which preparation methods do academic deans perceive as the most beneficial for each of the seven leadership dimensions?</td>
<td>• Preparation methods perceived to benefit the seven leadership dimensions</td>
<td>• Mean</td>
<td>• Standard deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) differences in the degree that each method contributed to one’s preparation as an academic dean?</td>
<td>• Formal mentoring • Informal mentoring • On the job training • Professional conferences and/or seminars • Doctoral degree • Professional training programs</td>
<td>• Gender</td>
<td>• t-tests of independent samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ethnicity</td>
<td>• ANOVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Number of years as an academic Dean</td>
<td>• ANOVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) differences in how academic deans perceive each preparation method has contributed to your effectiveness in the seven leadership dimensions (creating a vision and goal setting, management of an academic affairs unit, interpersonal • Creating a vision and setting goals • Management of an academic affairs unit • Interpersonal relationships • Communication with external constituents and upper level administrators • Maintaining and pursuing research, professional development, and professional endeavors • Advancing the quality of education</td>
<td>• Gender</td>
<td>• t-tests of independent samples</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ethnicity</td>
<td>• ANOVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
<td>Independent Variables</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships, communication with external constituents and upper level administrators, maintaining and pursuing research, professional development, and professional endeavors, advancing the quality of education, and supporting and advancing institutional diversity?</td>
<td>• Supporting and advancing institutional diversity</td>
<td>• Number of years as an academic Dean</td>
<td>• ANOVA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the preparation of academic deans at four-year public and private higher education institutions in the United States. In this study, academic deans were surveyed to determine what preparation methods they have experienced in their career paths as well as what preparation methods they perceive to be most beneficial for the administrative post. This study also investigated the demographic differences (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) that may exist regarding the degree to which each method of preparation contributed to their preparation for the academic dean position. Lastly, this study investigated the demographic differences that may exist among academic deans and their perception of how each method of preparation contributes to the leadership dimensions necessary to be successful in the academic dean position.

This chapter presents the statistical results of the study based on the data collected from the Professional Preparation of Academic Deans Questionnaire (PPADQ). The instrument solicited feedback to questions on methods of preparation, the level of contribution of the methods on the overall effectiveness, and the level of contribution of the methods to specific leadership dimensions of the academic deanship. Findings regarding these topics are presented in this chapter. A demographic profile of the participants is described followed by an analysis of the research questions.

Demographic Profile

The participants for this research were academic deans from four-year public or private higher education institutions in the United States. In this study, 1,185 academic deans were surveyed. Of the deans contacted, 310 participated in the study for a response rate of 26.2%. The
response rate of this study is consistent with the average response rate of 20-30% for online surveys (Kapolowitz, Halock, & Levine, 2004). Of the 310 respondents, 193 (62.3%) were male and 117 (37.7%) were female. This percentage is slightly higher than past research which reported that 60% of academic deans were male (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996). The age range of the respondents was 32-83 with a mean age of 56.7. The mean age of respondents in this study was also slightly higher than indicated in previous research that reported an average age of 54. Less than 2% of respondents were under the age of 40 and 6.5% were over the age of 65. The average number of years as an academic dean of the respondents in this study was 6.9 years, an increase from previous research reporting an average tenure of 5.4 years. A majority of respondents were employed at four-year public higher education institutions (68.4%). Furthermore, most respondents were tenured (86.1%) and held a Ph. D. (73.5%). The number of years in higher education before obtaining an academic dean position ranged from less than one year to 40 years with an average of 17.7 years. The five more common degree fields for participants in this study were education (6%), business administration (6%), higher education administration (5%), economics (3%), and law (3%). The most reported prior administrative experiences were department chairperson (47.1%) and assistant/associate dean (32.6%).

In regard to race, 281 of the respondents were White, non-Hispanic (90.6%). The percentage of academic deans that are White, non-Hispanic has increased in recent years. Previous studies concluded that approximately 88% of academic deans were White (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996). The largest minority group was Black, non-Hispanic with 12 respondents (3.9%). Other minority group respondents included six Hispanics.
(1.9%), five Asian or Pacific Islander (1.6%), and four American Indian or Alaska Native (1.3%). The United States was the most reported country of origin (92.9%).

Research Question 1: What preparation methods do academic deans experience?

In the second section of the PPADQ, respondents were asked to indicate any or all preparation methods they experienced. The respondents selected from the following responses: formal mentoring, informal mentoring, on the job training, professional conferences and/or seminars, an advanced degree in higher education or a related field, and professional training programs. A majority of respondents (90.3%) in this study reported that on the job training was the primary preparation method they experienced en route to the academic deanship. Informal mentoring was the second most common preparation method (63.5%) followed closely by professional conferences and/or seminars (56.1%). Less than a quarter of the respondents (22.3%) reported professional training programs contributed to their preparation. A smaller percentage of respondents (19.4%) indicated that an advanced degree in higher education or a related field was a component of their preparation methods. Lastly, the least common preparation method for academic deans was formal mentoring (12.9%). The reported preparation methods of academic deans in this study are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Methods</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>63.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this study, gender was examined in regard to preparation methods. Female academic deans in the sample reported experiencing all preparation methods more often than their male counterparts. The two methods that demonstrated the largest gender gap were professional conferences and/or seminars and professional training programs with females. Sixty-four point one percent (64.1%) of females compared to 51.3% of males indicated they experienced professional conferences and/or seminars. Professional training programs had an even greater separation between females (30.8%) and males (17.1%). Table 3 summarizes the results of the preparation methods of academic deans by gender.

Table 3

Preparation Methods of Academic Deans by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Methods</th>
<th>Males (n=193)</th>
<th>Females (n=117)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preparation methods were also examined by race, results of which are presented in Table 4. As indicated earlier in this chapter, respondents in this study were overwhelmingly White (90.6%). Due to the low percentage of non-White respondents in each race, American Indian or Alaska Native (1.3%), Asian or Pacific Islander (1.6%), Black, non-Hispanic (3.9%), Hispanic (1.9%), Race/ethnicity unknown (0.3%), or other (0.3%); the racial classifications, excluding “other” respondents, were compiled into one group, non-Whites, for the purpose of statistical analysis. The largest number of non-White (n=28) academic deans reported on the job training (82.1%), informal mentoring (60.7%), and professional conferences and/or seminars (50.0%) as the most common methods of preparation. White respondents also reported the aforementioned
methods as the most common (91.5%, 64.1%, 56.6%, respectively). Formal mentoring was experienced the least by both racial groups.

Table 4

*Preparation Methods of Academic Deans by Race*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Methods</th>
<th>Non-Blacks (n = 28)</th>
<th>Whites (n = 281)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>60.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range in the number of years of experience in the position of academic dean in this study was very broad; therefore, the respondents were divided into five groups based upon their years as an academic dean. The number of years of experience included in each group were selected to allow for a more equal distribution of the number of academic deans in each group. The groups were defined as 0-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and 16 or more years. As noted previously in this section, the mean tenure of an academic dean in this study was 6.9 years. Thus, the majority of respondents were within the years as a dean groups of 0-2 (n=91), 3-5 (n=71), and 6-10 (n=82). As would be expected, given the average tenure of a dean, the two remaining groups of 11-15 years as a dean (n=36) and 16 or more years as a dean (n=30) had a much lower number of respondents. Furthermore, the contract of an academic dean is commonly a five-year appointment. Through the utilization of the aforementioned groups, academic deans could be identified in the early and the late years of that contract and subsequent contracts.

The findings specific to which preparation methods that academic deans experience based upon their years in the position are similar with the overall results of this study. On the job training was the most common method of preparation among the respondents regardless of the
number of years of experience as an academic dean. The second most common preparation method was informal mentoring with the exception of academic deans who have been in the position for 16 or more years who reported that professional conferences and/or seminars were the second most common method of preparation. For the remaining groups of years of experience in the deanship, professional conferences and/or seminars were the third most common preparation method. Table 5 displays the preparation methods by the years as an academic dean.

Table 5
Preparation Methods of Academic Deans by Years as an Academic Dean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>0-2 years (n=91)</th>
<th>3-5 years (n=71)</th>
<th>6-10 years (n=82)</th>
<th>11-15 years (n=36)</th>
<th>16+ years (n=30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M %</td>
<td>M %</td>
<td>M %</td>
<td>M %</td>
<td>M %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal mentoring</td>
<td>11 12.1</td>
<td>11 15.5</td>
<td>8 9.8</td>
<td>4 11.1</td>
<td>6 20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal mentoring</td>
<td>59 64.8</td>
<td>48 67.6</td>
<td>52 63.4</td>
<td>21 58.3</td>
<td>17 56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>79 86.8</td>
<td>65 91.5</td>
<td>72 87.8</td>
<td>35 97.2</td>
<td>29 96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>43 47.3</td>
<td>40 56.3</td>
<td>51 62.2</td>
<td>20 55.6</td>
<td>20 66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>17 18.7</td>
<td>10 14.1</td>
<td>17 20.1</td>
<td>7 19.4</td>
<td>9 30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training program</td>
<td>9 9.9</td>
<td>12 16.9</td>
<td>27 32.9</td>
<td>10 27.8</td>
<td>11 36.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 2: Which preparation methods do academic deans perceive as the most beneficial for each of the seven leadership dimensions?

The third section of the PPADQ requested that respondents indicate the degree of importance that each method contributed to their effectiveness as an academic dean as defined by the seven leadership dimensions developed by Heck et al. (2000). A four-point Likert-type scale was developed by the researcher to gather quantitative information. The scale utilized the terms not applicable, minimal, moderate, significant, and very significant.
On the job training was the preparation method reported to have the most significant contribution to each of the seven leadership dimensions. In addition, three of the preparation methods—formal mentoring, advanced degree in higher education or a related field, and professional training programs—were rated as not applicable to the seven leadership dimensions by the majority of the respondents. The following discussion presents results as applicable to each leadership dimension.

Vision and goal setting

Vision and goal setting is the first of seven leadership dimensions. It involves the ability of a dean to clearly articulate the strategic goals of the unit, encourage ideas and creativity, create an atmosphere conducive to high faculty performance, demonstrate vision and long-range planning, emphasize teaching excellence appropriately, research excellence appropriately, and service excellence appropriately, advocate for resources needed by the unit, encourage faculty development as well as curriculum/program development, and provide leadership for the unit/subunit level initiatives (Heck et al., 2000).

The highest reported preparation method contributing to the dimension of vision and goal setting was on the job training, as 49% of the respondents rated this method as very significant. The preparation method that was the least beneficial to vision and goal setting was professional conferences and/or seminars (23.2%). These results are displayed in Table 6.
Table 6

Preparation Methods of Academic Deans Perceived as Beneficial to Vision and Goal Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal mentoring</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal mentoring</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of an academic affairs unit

The second leadership dimension is the ability of the academic dean to ensure that fair administrative procedures are followed, exercise fair and reasonable judgment in allocating resources, manage change constructively, delegate work effectively, handle administrative tasks in a timely manner, be an effective problem solver, demonstrate knowledge of departments and programs within the unit, maintain an effective and efficient staff (Heck et al., 2000).

In regard to the management of an academic affairs unit, on the job training was considered the most beneficial preparation method (62.9%). The management of an academic affairs unit was the most significantly impacted by on the job training when compared to the percentages reported for the other leadership dimensions in this study. Professional conferences and/or seminars were found to have the least degree of contribution (24.8%). Table 7 depicts the preparation methods perceived as beneficial to the leadership dimension of the management of an academic affairs unit.
Table 7

Preparation Methods of Academic Deans Perceived as Beneficial to the Management of an Academic Affairs Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>77</td>
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<td>83</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>1.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills are another leadership dimension essential to the overall effectiveness of an academic dean. It entails the ability to demonstrate understanding of the needs and concerns of unit members, treat individuals fairly and with respect, maintain positive and productive relationships within the unit and positive and productive relationships external to the unit, be accessible to faculty and staff within the unit as well as students, demonstrate awareness of the quality of professional work of unit members and understanding of the needs and concerns of students (Heck et al., 2000).

The majority of respondents (57.7%) indicated that on the job training was very significant to their effectiveness with interpersonal relationships. The respondents also reported that professional conferences and/or seminars had a minimal impact on their interpersonal relationships (31.9%). Table 8 displays the perceived benefit of each preparation method on the interpersonal relationships of the academic deans who participated in this study.
Table 8

**Preparation Methods of Academic Deans Perceived as Beneficial to Interpersonal Relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
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<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
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<td>3.9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>42.3</td>
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<td>18.7</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communication skills**

An effective academic dean should possess the ability to effectively communicate with his/her constituents. The fourth leadership dimension of communication skills is defined as the ability to listen to and communicate with unit members and external constituencies, represent the unit and its members to the rest of the university, communicate the unit’s priorities to the upper level administration, and produce clear reports and correspondence (Heck et al., 2000).

The preparation method with the highest response rate in benefiting communication skills was on the job training (48.4%). Once again, professional conferences and seminars were reported by the academic deans in this study to have the least level of contribution to their communication skills (32.6%). A summary of the results are shown in Table 9.
Table 9

Preparation Methods of Academic Deans Perceived as Beneficial to Communication Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal mentoring</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal mentoring</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
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<td>42.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
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<td>35.2</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors

The ability for an academic dean to maintain an active research/scholarly agenda, pursue professional growth opportunities, engage in effective teaching, and contribute service to professional organizations, community, and campus projects is the fifth leadership dimension.

The results of this study revealed that on the job training was the most frequently reported preparation method that had a very significant impact on an academic dean’s ability to maintain and pursue professional development, research, and institutional endeavors (34.8%). In contrast to the other six leadership dimensions, formal mentoring was found to have highest percentage of respondents reporting a minimal impact (22.9%). The results of the six preparation methods of academic deans and their level of contribution to maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors are summarized in Table 10.
Table 10

*Preparation Methods of Academic Deans Perceived as Beneficial to Maintaining and Pursuing Professional Development, Research, and Institutional Endeavors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
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<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
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<td>9.0</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
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<td>22.6</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
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<td>36.1</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Quality of education in the unit*

In higher education, a primary and obvious responsibility of an academic dean is the ensuring the quality and integrity of the education of the institution; this serves as the sixth dimension. Therefore, the dean must demonstrate the ability to advance the unit’s undergraduate and/or graduate programs effectively, advocate appropriate curriculum offerings, handle external accreditation reviews effectively, recruit new personnel and/or promote recruitment skillfully, and commit to ensuring a fair tenure and promotion process.

Of all the preparation methods, on the job training had the highest percentage of very significant ratings (53.9%) in regard to the quality of education of the unit. The preparation method rated to have the least level of contribution to ensuring the quality of education of the academic affairs unit was formal mentoring (22.9%). Table 11 displays the preparation methods perceived as beneficial to the leadership dimension of ensuring the quality of the education in the unit.
Table 11

Preparation Methods of Academic Deans Perceived as Beneficial to Quality of Education of the Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
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<td>9.4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>77</td>
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<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
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<td>Professional training programs</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Support for institutional diversity

In higher education, academic leaders have the responsibility to ensure a safe learning and working environment for all members of society. They must consider the needs of every individual regardless of gender, age, race, religion, and/or sexual orientation. Thus, an academic dean must have the ability to demonstrate commitment to advancing and supporting equal employment opportunities, mentoring of women and faculty from underrepresented groups, provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, and insure the staff is educated in EEO/AA concerns. These abilities support the seventh dimension—support for institutional diversity.

An academic dean’s effectiveness in the leadership dimension of supporting and advancing institutional diversity was most significantly influenced through the preparation method of on the job training (34.8%). Interestingly, this percentage was exactly the same as the leadership dimension, maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors. Professional conferences and/or seminars had the highest number of
respondents reporting a minimal benefit (26.8%) on supporting and advancing institutional diversity. The results the support for institutional diversity are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12

_Preparation Methods of Academic Deans Perceived as Beneficial to Support for Institutional Diversity_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>132</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
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<td>29</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11.9</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9.4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
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<td>35.8</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An overall summary including the means and standard deviations for the degree to which each preparation method contributed to the seven leadership dimensions are displayed in Table 13. In this table, the seven leadership dimensions are coded in the following manner: 1. vision and goal setting, 2. management of an academic affairs unit, 3. interpersonal relationships, 4. communication skills, 5. professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, 6. quality of education of the unit, and 7. support for institutional diversity.

Across all seven leadership dimensions, the preparation method that contributed most and was reported most frequently was on the job training. Informal mentoring was the second most frequent and/or beneficial preparation method of academic deans followed by professional conferences and/or seminars.

With the exception of maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors and the quality of education in the academic affairs unit, academic deans
perceived that professional training programs either had a greater benefit or occurred more often than having advanced degree in higher education or related field. Formal mentoring was the least likely to have occurred or benefited each of the seven leadership dimensions.

Table 13

Summary of Preparation Methods and Leadership Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>LD 1</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>LD 2</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>LD 3</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>LD 4</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>LD 5</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>LD 6</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>.86</td>
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<td>.77</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>1.01</td>
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<td>.81</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.29</td>
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<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.46</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
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<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
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<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.98</td>
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<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: LD 1=vision and goal setting, LD 2=management of an academic affairs unit, LD 3=interpersonal relationships, LD 4=communication skills, LD 5=professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, LD 6=quality of education of the unit, and LD 7=support for institutional diversity.

The degree of contribution of each preparation—total sample

The results reported in Table 14 summarize the degree of contribution of each preparation method across the seven leadership dimensions. On the job training was rated by the participants as having very significantly contributed (71.3%) in all seven leadership dimensions. Thus, on the job training occurred far more often than any other preparation method. Informal mentoring had a very significant contribution level of 30.3%. The only other preparation method with a very significant percentage over 10% was the advanced degree in higher education or a
related field (11.0%). The preparation method with the highest response rate for having a minimal level of contribution to an academic dean’s effectiveness was formal mentoring (23.9%). Academic deans reported over 35% of the time that they either did not experience or received no benefit from three preparation methods. These preparation methods were formal mentoring (43.9%), advanced degree in higher education or related field (42.3%), and professional training programs (35.8%). The full results are reported in Table 14.

Table 14

The Degree of Contribution of Each Preparation Method (Total Sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Very Significant</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>25.2</td>
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<td>1.6</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
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<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>30.3</td>
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<td>35.8</td>
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<td>21.0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 3: Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) differences in the degree to which each method contributed to one’s preparation as an academic dean?

Gender

A t-Test of independent samples was conducted to determine if significant gender differences existed in the degree to which each preparation method contributed to the respondents’ preparation as an academic dean. The respondents reported that on the job training had the greatest degree of contribution for both males and females. The mean was relatively consistent for males and females at 3.60 and 3.54, respectively. Significant gender differences were found in the preparation methods of professional conferences and/or seminars ($t(283)=-2.32, p=.02, r^2=.19$) and professional training programs ($t(254)=-2.25, p=.02, r^2=.02$). Percentage of variance ($r^2$) was calculated as a measure of effect size for these significant results. The effect size for the preparation method of professional conferences and/or seminars (19%) with respect to gender was large. A moderate effect size indicated that gender accounted for 2% of the variability in professional training programs. Table 15 presents the degree of contribution for each preparation method by gender.

Table 15

| Preparation Method                                  | Males | | Fema|les | | T | | p  |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|---|-----|-----|---|-------|
| Formal Mentoring                                    | 165   | .88| 93  | .75 |  | .88   | .38  |
| Informal Mentoring                                  | 182   | 2.49| 108 | 2.77| -1.71| .09  |
| On the job training                                 | 186   | 3.60| 115 | 3.54| .60 | .55  |
| Professional conferences and/or seminars            | 177   | 1.81| 108 | 2.12| -2.32| .02* |
| Advanced degree in higher education or related field| 159   | 1.03| 91  | 1.27| -1.27| .21  |
| Professional training programs                      | 163   | 1.01| 93  | 1.41| -2.25| .02* |

*p<.05
Race

An additional t-Test of independent samples was conducted to assess the degree of contribution of preparation method of academic deans by race. Of all the preparation methods, the only preparation method that non-Whites ($M=1.58$) reported a higher degree of contribution than Whites ($M=1.11$) was professional training programs. However, no significant differences were found among race and the degree of contribution of each preparation method. These results are shown in Table 16.

Table 16

The Degree of Contribution of Each Preparation Method by Race (t-Test results)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>Non-Whites</th>
<th></th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Years as an academic dean

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was performed to assess if group differences existed among the groups for years as an academic dean and the preparation methods. Professional conferences and/or seminars ($F(4, 280)=4.45, p=.00, \eta^2=.06$) and professional training programs ($F(4, 251)=5.83, p=.00, \eta^2=.09$) were found to be significantly different. Eta squared ($\eta^2$) results for professional conferences and/or seminars (6%) and professional training programs (9%) with respect to the number of years as an academic dean was large. The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 17.
Table 17

*Years as Academic Dean Differences (ANOVA)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Scheffé test to determine which groups were significantly different. For the method of professional conferences and/or seminars, results indicated that two groups, respondents with 16 or more years as an academic dean ($M=2.37$) and respondents with five to ten years as an academic dean ($M=2.07$), were significantly different from the group of respondents who reported zero to two years as an academic dean ($M=1.53$). These results are presented in Table 18.

Table 18

*Years as an Academic Dean and the Degree of Contribution of Professional Conferences and/or Seminars*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years as an Academic Dean</th>
<th>Professional Conferences and/or Seminars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preparation method of professional training programs also demonstrated a significant group difference with regard to years as an academic dean. The Scheffé result indicated that respondents with five to ten years as an academic dean ($M=1.63$) are significantly different from the group of respondents who reported zero to two years as an academic dean ($M=.71$). Table 19
displays the number respondents in each group as well as the means and standard deviations for each group.

Table 19

*Years as an Academic Dean and the Degree of Contribution of Professional Training Programs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years as an Academic Dean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Research Question 4: Are there demographic group (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) differences in how academic deans perceive each preparation method has contributed to your effectiveness in the seven leadership dimensions (creating a vision and goal setting, management of an academic affairs unit, interpersonal relationships, communication with external constituents and upper level administrators, maintaining and pursuing research, professional development, and professional endeavors, advancing the quality of education, and supporting and advancing institutional diversity)?*

**Gender**

The results of a *t*-Test of independent samples indicated significant gender differences among the respondents’ level of contribution of on the job training to professional development, research, and institutional endeavors (*t*(293)=2.57, *p*=.01, *r*²=.02) as well as the support for institutional diversity (*t*(294)=2.81, *p*=.01, *r*²=.03). In regard to the impact of professional conferences and/or seminars on vision and goal setting (*t*(285)=-2.02, *p*=.04, *r*²=.01), a significant gender difference was also found among the academic deans in this study. Furthermore, a significant gender difference exists among the benefit of professional training programs on interpersonal relationships (*t*(251)=-2.09, *p*=.04, *r*²=.02) and the quality of
education in the academic affairs unit ($t(252)=-1.98, p=.05, r^2=.02$). The percentage of variance was calculated for each significant result. The effect sizes for gender with respect to professional development, research, and institutional diversity (4%) and institutional diversity (2%) were moderate. Furthermore, the effect size for gender accounted for a moderate 2% of the variability in regard to professional conferences and/or seminars. Table 20 depicts the gender differences among academic deans occurring within the six preparation methods and their impact on the seven leadership dimensions.

Table 20

**Gender Differences (t-Test results) in Preparation Methods Impacting the Seven Leadership Dimensions of an Academic Dean**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>LD 1</th>
<th>LD 2</th>
<th>LD 3</th>
<th>LD 4</th>
<th>LD 5</th>
<th>LD 6</th>
<th>LD 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-1.49</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>2.57*</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>2.81**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>-2.02*</td>
<td>-1.81</td>
<td>-1.20</td>
<td>-1.75</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
<td>-1.95</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>-1.44</td>
<td>-1.61</td>
<td>-2.09*</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>-1.73</td>
<td>-1.98*</td>
<td>-0.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p <.05, ** p <.01

Note: LD 1=vision and goal setting, LD 2=management of an academic affairs unit, LD 3=interpersonal relationships, LD 4=communication skills, LD 5=professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, LD 6=quality of education of the unit, LD 7=support for institutional diversity.

**Race**

Another $t$-Test of independent samples was administered to investigate if there were any significant differences between non-White and White academic deans with respect to the preparation methods and the seven leadership dimensions of academic deans. Significant race differences were found with non-Whites reporting a higher perceived benefit from professional conferences and/or seminars on the management of an academic affairs unit.
Effect size with respect to race and the impact of professional conferences and/or seminars was moderate. In addition, the perceived contribution from professional conferences and/or seminars on the support for institutional diversity was also significant \((t(278)=2.07, p=.03, r^2=.02)\) with a moderate effect size. Lastly, non-Whites received a perceived benefit from holding an advanced degree in higher education or a related field \((t(250)=-2.16, p=.04, r^2=.02)\). Again, the effect size for race in regard to an advanced degree in higher education or a related field accounted for a moderate 2% of the variability. These results are revealed in Table 21.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>LD 1</th>
<th>LD 2</th>
<th>LD 3</th>
<th>LD 4</th>
<th>LD 5</th>
<th>LD 6</th>
<th>LD 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>2.20*</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td>-2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
<td>-1.30</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-1.43</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

Note: LD 1=vision and goal setting, LD 2=management of an academic affairs unit, LD 3=interpersonal relationships, LD 4=communication skills, LD 5=professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, LD 6=quality of education of the unit, and LD 7=support for institutional diversity.

**Years as an academic dean**

The results of an ANOVA performed to examine the impact of the years as an academic dean and differences in preparation methods on the seven leadership dimensions of an academic dean are presented Table 22. The respondents in this study were divided into five groups based upon their years as an academic dean: 0-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and 16 or more years. The results indicated that professional conferences and/or seminars and professional training programs had a perceived benefit on all seven of the leadership dimensions of an
significant differences were found among the level of experience groups in professional conferences and/or seminars impacting each of the leadership dimensions: vision and goal setting \( (F(4, 282)=2.43, p=.05, \eta^2=.03) \), the management of an academic unit \( (F(4, 275)=4.64, p=.01, \eta^2=.09) \), interpersonal relationships \( (F(4, 274)=5.20, p=.01, \eta^2=.05) \), communication skills \( (F(4, 273)=5.21, p=.00, \eta^2=.07) \), professional development, research, and institutional endeavors \( (F(4, 275)=2.99, p=.02, \eta^2=.04) \), the quality of education in the unit \( (F(4, 275)=4.69, p=.01, \eta^2=.06) \), and the support for institutional diversity \( (F(4, 276)=2.60, p=.04, \eta^2=.04) \). Eta squared was calculated a measure of effect size for these significant results. The effect size was large with respect to the management of an academic affairs unit (9%), communication skills (7%), and the quality of education (6%). In regard to vision and goal setting (3%), interpersonal relationships (5%), and the support for institutional diversity (4%), the effect size was moderate.

Significant differences were also found among the experience groups for professional training programs benefitting the seven leadership dimensions of academic deans: vision and goal setting \( (F(4, 254)=5.93, p=.00, \eta^2=.09) \), the management of an academic unit \( (F(4, 248)=5.20, p=.01, \eta^2=.08) \) interpersonal relationships \( (F(4, 248)=4.02, p=.02, \eta^2=.06) \), communication skills \( (F(4, 249)=3.42, p=.00, \eta^2=.05) \), professional development, research, and institutional endeavors \( (F(4, 249)=6.21, p=.00, \eta^2=.09) \), the quality of education in the unit \( (F(4, 249)=7.70, p=.04, \eta^2=.11) \), and the support for institutional diversity \( (F(4, 251)=4.36, p=.00, \eta^2=.07) \). Effect size, Eta squared, was calculated for each significant result. The effect size with respect to vision and goal setting (9%), the management of an academic affairs unit (8%), interpersonal relationships (6%), professional development, research and institutional endeavors (9%), the quality of education in the unit (11%), and the support for institutional diversity were
One leadership dimension, communication skills (5%), revealed a moderate effect size. In addition, holding an advanced degree in higher education or a related field had a significant impact on the management of an academic affairs unit \((F(4, 249)=4.64, p=.02, \eta^2=.05)\). Further analysis resulted in a moderate effect size of 5%.

Table 22

*Years as an Academic Dean and Differences in Preparation Methods Impacting the Seven Leadership Dimensions of an Academic Dean (ANOVA)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation Method</th>
<th>LD 1</th>
<th>LD 2</th>
<th>LD 3</th>
<th>LD 4</th>
<th>LD 5</th>
<th>LD 6</th>
<th>LD 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Mentoring</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Mentoring</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the job training</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional conferences and/or seminars</td>
<td>2.43*</td>
<td>3.77**</td>
<td>3.61**</td>
<td>5.22**</td>
<td>2.98*</td>
<td>4.69**</td>
<td>2.59*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree in higher education or related field</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>2.95*</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training programs</td>
<td>5.93**</td>
<td>5.20**</td>
<td>4.02**</td>
<td>3.42*</td>
<td>6.21**</td>
<td>7.70**</td>
<td>4.36**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \(p < .05\), ** \(p < .01\)

Note: LD 1=vision and goal setting, LD 2=management of an academic affairs unit, LD 3=interpersonal relationships, LD 4=communication skills, LD 5=professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, LD 6=quality of education of the unit, and LD 7=support for institutional diversity.

Summary

The overall purpose of this study was to investigate academic deans and the types of preparation methods they have experienced and perceived benefits of the preparation methods on the seven leadership dimensions of an academic dean. To answer the four research questions, descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized. T-tests and ANOVAS were conducted using demographic information (gender, race, and years as an academic dean) to examine group differences. The following represents responses to each research question.

Results conveyed that the participants most commonly experienced preparation method was on the job training. The least reported preparation method of academic deans was formal mentoring. Females indicated more experience in each of the six preparation methods than
males. In regard to race, non-Whites completed professional training programs at a higher rate than Whites.

Over half of the academic deans surveyed reported that on the job training was either very significant or significant in four of the seven leadership dimensions: vision and goal setting, the management of an academic affairs unit, interpersonal skills, and maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors. The remaining two dimensions, communication skills and supporting and advancing institutional diversity, were also very significant but at a lower rate. Professional conferences and/or seminars were reported to have the least benefit to an academic dean’s level of preparation in all but two leadership dimensions, maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors and the quality of education of the unit. These two dimensions were least benefited by formal mentoring. Overall, three methods that either did not occur in the participant’s preparation or did not provide any benefit to the leadership dimensions were formal mentoring, an advanced degree in higher education or a related field, and professional training programs.

Significant differences were found in regard to gender and the degree of contribution of each preparation method. Females reported a higher degree of contribution from professional conferences and/or seminars and professional training programs. On the job training was the highest rated contributor by both males and females and had little variance between the two genders.

The degree of contribution of each preparation method and race was analyzed via a t-test of independent samples. Non-Whites did report a higher degree of contribution professional training programs; however, the result was not significant.
The years as an academic dean and preparation methods were examined utilizing an ANOVA. Two preparation methods were found to be significantly different from the others, professional conferences and/or seminars and professional training programs. The Scheffé result indicated that participants who had been an academic dean for either 16 or more years or those with five to ten years of experience as a dean are significantly different from those who have had less than two years of experience. The more experienced academic deans perceived greater benefit from professional conferences and/or seminars and professional training programs.

The t-tests results showed that females perceived on the job training to have a significantly higher level of contribution to their effectiveness in professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, and the support for institutional diversity. A significant gender difference also exists in the perceived effectiveness of professional conferences and/or seminars had on vision and goal setting and of professional training programs on interpersonal relationships and the quality of education in the academic affairs unit.

Non-Whites perceived that professional conferences and/or seminars had the most impact on their effectiveness to manage an academic affairs unit. In regard to the participants’ years as an academic dean, professional conferences and/or seminars as well as professional training programs were found to have contributed to the effectiveness of all seven leadership dimensions.

A discussion of the results, conclusions drawn from the findings, and recommendations for future study in the field of education and leadership studies will be provided in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Findings from this study provide an understanding of the preparation methods and their level of contribution to the preparation of academic deans. Specifically, this research examined the six preparation methods and the degree to which they contribute to the overall perceived administrative effectiveness measured by the seven leadership dimensions of an academic dean. Results of this study can help inform higher education faculty, administrators, and selection committees as they seek to increase the effectiveness and retention of academic deans in higher education institutions.

This final chapter is divided into three sections. The first section presents a review of the study and a discussion of the results as they relate to the total sample, gender, race, and years as an academic dean. The second section provides the conclusions regarding the statistical and practical results of this study, while the third section presents recommendations for further research and practice in the field of higher education and leadership studies.

Discussion

This section presents a review of the study and a discussion of the results as they relate to the total sample, gender, race, and years as an academic dean. The focus is related to the following: discussion of factors relating to the preparation methods that academic deans experience, factors relating to the preparation methods and their contribution to the overall effectiveness of an academic dean, and factors relating to the preparation methods and their contribution to each of the seven leadership dimensions important to deanship, and a discussion on the effect of gender, race, and years as an academic dean.
Review of the Study

Higher education in the United States is facing an impending decline in the number of middle and senior level administrators, specifically, academic deans, due to high burnout and retirement rates as well as reluctance among current faculty to make the transition to administration (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999). The high burnout rate, the seeming lack of interest to become an academic dean, and limited research conducted to date on academic deans should cause higher education to pause and consider if academic deans are properly prepared for the position (Gmelch, 2000, Gmelch et al.).

Traditionally, academic deans have risen through the faculty ranks and/or various administrative positions en route to their role as the senior operating officer for academic affairs. Previous research has shown that the more common preparation methods for academic deans consist of past administrative experiences, on the job training (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999; Land, 2003; J. Montez & Wolverton, 2000; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001; M. Wolverton, Gmelch, & Wolverton, 2000; M. Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000) and mentoring practices (Allen & Cherrey, 2000; Gmelch; Gmelch & Wolverton; M. Murray, 1991; Nies & Wolverton, 2000; M. Wolverton, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 1998; Zey, 1984). Other, less common, methods include post-appointment professional conferences and/or seminars (Carr, 1999; Fogg, 2005; Gmelch; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros; Greenberg, 2006; M. Wolverton, Montez, & Gmelch), professional training programs (Aziz et al., 2005; McDade, 1988), and advanced degrees in higher education or a related field (Development, 2006; Gmelch, 2002; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Gonzales, Stewart, & Robinson, 2003; J. Montez, 2003; Williams, 2001).
Heck, Johnsrud, and Rosser (2000) have defined the leadership dimensions of the academic deanship through seven categories: vision and goal setting, the management of an academic affairs unit, developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and students, communication skills, maintaining and pursuing professional development, research and institutional endeavors, advancing the quality of education of the unit, and supporting and advancing institutional diversity. These dimensions served as a framework for measuring the perceived benefit of preparation methods on leadership responsibilities of the deanship.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the preparation of academic deans at four-year public and private higher education institutions in the United States. This study also investigated the demographic differences (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) among academic deans and their perception of how each method of preparation has contributed to the leadership dimensions necessary to be successful in the academic dean position. In this study, 1,185 academic deans were invited to participate. Of the deans contacted, 310 participated in the study resulting in a response rate of 26.2%. The participants completed an online survey to determine what preparation methods they most frequently experienced and perceived as most beneficial for the administrative post. A limitation of this study included the accuracy of the responses due to the imprecision that often occurs with self-reporting. The participants in this study were asked to report their perception of how each preparation method contributed to each of the seven leadership dimensions. A 5-point, Likert scale was utilized in sections two and three of the Professional Preparation of Academic Deans Questionnaire. Participants chose one of five descriptive terms from the 5-point scale that best conveyed their
perception of the level of contribution to each preparation method. Thus, the responses were speculations and not truly a quantifiable measurement.

Another limitation of the study that may have resulted in a decreased response rate was that the primary researcher was not a current academic dean nor has ever served in this capacity. However, the initial request to participate in the study was from a current university chancellor and the follow-up request to participate in the study was from a current academic dean.

The modest number of participants limits the generalizability of the results to a larger population. Furthermore, the results of this research may have been different if a greater number of academic deans had participated in the study.

A delimitation of this study was the use of e-mail as the method of the delivery for the research instrument. Of the academic deans asked to participate in the study, not all may have opened the e-mail within the two-week data collection period or may have chosen not to open the e-mail because they did not recognize from whom the e-mail was sent.

Despite the limitations and delimitation of the study, adequate data were provided to begin exploring the types of preparation methods of academic deans and the relationship between the preparation methods and the seven leadership dimensions of academic deans.

Overall, on the job training (90.3%) was the most frequently reported preparation method and appeared to have the most significant benefit to all seven of the leadership dimensions. The level of contribution of on the job training, while very significant for all seven leadership dimensions, did vary among them. On the job training had the highest level of significance on the management of an academic affairs unit (62.9%). In declining order of significance, the impact of on the job training for the six remaining leadership dimensions were: interpersonal relationships (57.7%), the quality of education of the unit (53.9%), vision and goal setting
(49.0%), communication skills (48.4%), and maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors as well as the support and advancement of institutional diversity (34.8%)

Discussion of the total sample of the study

Overwhelmingly, the majority of academic deans received informal methods of preparation, such as on the job training (90.3%) and informal mentoring (63.5%). On the job training was the primary preparation method experienced by academic deans regardless of gender (males, 90.2%; females, 90.6%), race (Whites 91.5%, Non-Whites, 79.3%) or age (0-2 years, 86.8%; 3-5 years, 91.5%; 6-10 years, 87.8%; 11-15 years, 97.2%; and 16 or more years, 96.7%). This finding is similar to the research of Harkins (1998) who found that 50% of the higher education administrators received no formal preparation. In addition, Bolton (1996) interviewed academic deans, none of whom reported receiving any formal training or development to prepare them for the position. Additional studies have also concluded that a majority of academic deans primarily experienced informal preparation methods such as on the job training and informal mentoring (Gmelch, 2000, 2002; Nies & Wolverton, 2000; Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000).

This researcher contends that the high frequency of on the job training and informal mentoring were most likely due to the lack of opportunities, funding, or encouragement by higher education institutions to participate in more formal preparation methods (Bamberg et al., 2004; Del Favero, 2006; Gmelch, 200, 2002; Land, 2003; Nies & Wolverton, 2000; Wolverton & Gonzales, 2001). On the job training and informal mentoring are the most dominant and significant preparation methods contributing to the success of an academic dean; however, they may be enhanced in conjunction with other preparation methods. The overall sample population
of this study did not result in significant differences among the six types of professional 
preparation methods the participants’ experienced, the perceived contribution level of the 
methods on their overall effectiveness and the seven leadership dimensions. However, significant 
differences did occur among the demographic subgroups of females, race, and years as an 
academic dean. Females reported an increased attendance at professional conferences and/or 
seminars as well as professional training programs when compared to males. Professional 
conferences and/or seminars were also attended at a higher rate by non-Whites than Whites. 
Furthermore, academic deans with more years of experience reported professional conferences 
and/or seminars as the second most common preparation method whereas the overall sample 
reported informal mentoring as the second most common preparation method.

The findings of this study found a similar results in regard to the six types of preparation 
methods and the perceived benefit of them on a dean’s overall effectiveness. Female academic 
deans and deans with more years of experience in the role reported a perceived increased benefit 
from professional conferences and/or seminars and professional training programs. Furthermore, 
the perceived contributions from the preparation methods on the seven leadership dimensions of 
the deanship also resulted in significant differences among gender, race, and years as an 
academic dean. Females reported a perceived increased benefit from professional conferences 
and/or seminars on vision and goal setting as well as a greater contribution from professional 
training programs on their effectiveness with interpersonal relationships and providing a quality 
education. Non-Whites also reported a perceived greater benefit from professional conferences 
and/or seminars in regard to the management of an academic affairs unit and support for 
institutional diversity. Of the non-Whites who held an advanced degree in higher education or a 
related field, a perceived increased contribution was reported in regard to the support of
institutional diversity. Interestingly, academic deans with more years of experience in the
deanship reported a perceived increased benefit from professional conferences and/or seminars
on all seven leadership dimensions.

Considering the significant differences that occurred among gender, race, and years as an
academic, perhaps a more comprehensive approach involving informal methods such as on the
job training and informal mentoring and an increased completion of professional conferences
and/or seminars, higher education degrees or a related field, professional training programs, and
formal mentoring would likely provide additional and credible resources to improve an academic
dean’s overall effectiveness and their effectiveness in most leadership dimensions (Gmelch;
Gonzales et al.; Nies & Wolverton; Wolverton & Gonzales).

The majority of participants reported that formal mentoring (87.1%) did not significantly
contribute to the overall effectiveness of an academic dean or any specific leadership dimension
because it occurs less often than any other preparation method. Perhaps this is due to lack of
incentives for higher education administrators to serve as mentors. Currently, limited
administrative support, financial incentives, and/or release time is provided to administrators to
serve as a formal mentor (Bamberg et al., 2004; Land, 2003; Nies & Wolverton, 2000). The
considerable time and personal commitment required through a formal mentoring process may
be daunting to even the most established higher education administrator and/or faculty member.

Any formal preparation that academic deans do receive is typically through professional
conferences and/or seminars (56.1%). This is a similar finding to that of Land (2003), Raines and
Squires Alberg (2003), and McDade (1998). Participation in professional conferences and/or
seminars is typically the most common formal method that is both encouraged and financially
supported by higher education institutions (Carr, 1999; Fogg, 2005).
The professional training programs for higher education administrators are expensive and require a considerable time commitment on behalf of the participant. Perhaps, the participants reported a low response rate (22.3%) for this preparation method. The training programs also do not align with the traditional career trajectory of an academic dean. Rarely, a faculty member is asked to attend such programs to ensure their transition from within the faculty ranks to administrative positions (Carr, 1999; Gonzales et al., 2003). Higher education seems to remain rooted in the practice of promoting faculty members with a degree in a specific academic discipline rather than individuals who have experienced more formal preparation methods conducive to the demands of the academic deanship. A majority of academic deans have never attended a professional training program (77.7%) nor do they currently hold an advanced degree in higher education or a related field (80.6%). Thus, minimal emphasis has been placed upon these preparation methods as an important consideration when evaluating the qualifications of potential academic deans.

Advanced degrees in higher education and related fields as well as formal mentoring were the least reported preparation methods. Concerning an advanced degree, this is not surprising given the research conducted to date. In 2006, Del Favero conducted a study examining the relationship between academic disciplines and the preparation of academic deans. She found a majority of deans held a terminal degree in their academic discipline and rarely held a degree in higher education or a related field. Land (2003) also reported similar findings.

The lack of formal mentoring divulged in this study is slightly inconsistent with the existing research. Bamberg et al. (2004) concluded that 67% of females received formal mentoring which is higher than the 45% reported in this study. The formal mentoring among males occurred at closer rate, 47% in the Bamberg et al. report and 55% for this research. In a
study conducted by Nies and Wolverton (2000), 55% of males and females engaged in a formal mentoring program, a percentage significantly higher than the 12.9% reported in this study.

As indicated previously in this chapter, the most beneficial preparation method for academic deans in this study was on the job training. This pattern was consistent for each of the seven leadership dimensions. On the job training had the highest percentage of very significant ratings: vision and goal setting (49.0%), the management of an academic affairs unit (62.9%), developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and students (57.7%), communication skills (48.4%), maintaining and pursuing professional development, research and institutional endeavors (34.8%), advancing the quality of education of the unit (53.9%), and supporting and advancing institutional diversity (34.8%). These findings are parallel with previous studies that indicated few, if any, academic deans received any formal preparation methods such as professional training programs either prior to or while in the academic dean position (Gmelch, 2000, 2002; Nies & Wolverton, 2000; Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000). Thus, on the job and informal mentoring may be the preparation methods that are most easily accessible and economically viable for an academic dean.

The least beneficial preparation method as reported by the deans in this study was not as consistent among the seven leadership dimensions when compared to which method was the most beneficial to academic deans. Professional conferences and/or seminars were reported to have the least benefit for five of the seven leadership dimensions: vision and goal setting (23.2%); management of an academic affairs unit (24.8%); interpersonal relationships (31.9%); communication skills (32.6%), and support for institutional diversity (26.8%). In regard to the two remaining leadership dimensions, maintaining, pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors (22.9%), and advancing the quality of education of the unit (22.9),
formal mentoring was the least beneficial method. A possible explanation of the relationship between the preparation methods and the seven leadership dimensions could be that increased effectiveness in institutional endeavors and the quality of education of an academic affairs unit require more on the job training since these leadership dimensions are likely to be institutional specific. In contrast, it may be easier to formally learn how to be more effective in vision and goal setting, management of an academic affairs unit, communication skills, interpersonal relationships, and institutional diversity.

Discussion of gender

Female academic deans reported an increased contribution from professional conferences and/or seminars \((p=.02)\), and professional training programs \((p=.02)\) when compared to males. Interestingly, males and females indicated a relatively equal contribution from on the job training (males, \(M=3.60\); females, \(M=3.54\)). According to Duncan (1993), female academic deans more commonly experience mentoring at a higher rate than males attributing to the increased benefit of informal mentoring for females. However, in this study and in stark contrast to Duncan’s findings, males reported higher rates of both informal and formal mentoring. The disproportionately high number of male deans may have skewed the results of this study. Perhaps, males are simply more comfortable mentoring other males.

Females also reported increased effectiveness from on the job training in regard to professional development, research, and institutional endeavors and support for institutional diversity more than their male counterparts. Professional conferences and/or seminars significantly benefitted a female dean’s effectiveness in vision and goal setting. In addition, females perceived that professional training programs had an increased benefit on their interpersonal relationships and advancing the the quality of education in the unit. However, the
overall level of contribution of more formal preparation methods may have been skewed in this study, as White males were the largest demographic group in this study. Overall, the more formal preparation methods are not specific to gender or minorities; however, programs such as HERS are specifically designed for female higher education administrators. Furthermore, many professional conferences and/or seminars as well as professional training programs include sessions with emphasis on issues for women and/or minorities. This emphasis may be a factor in the lower attendance rate of male academic deans in more formal preparation methods. The increased rate of attendance of females in formal preparation methods may be a result of females believing the methods would increase their ability to compete in a field that is dominated by White males (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996). Perhaps, if White males had a higher completion rate of these programs, the significant differences with gender and ethnicity would be diminished.

Discussion of race

The research to date indicates that White males perform a majority of mentoring (Nies & Wolverton, 2000). Perhaps, White males are mentoring not only a majority of the White males but non-White males and females as well. Both non-Whites and females, as indicated previously in this chapter, attended professional training programs at a higher rate than White males. Two previous studies conducted by Gonzales, Stewart, and Robinson (2003) and Carr (1999) provide further support for the value of professional training programs. Gonzales et al. reported that after completion in a higher education administrative program, individuals are better prepared to assume the role of academic dean. Carr reported that over 80% of the American Council on Education’s Fellows Program fellows became higher education presidents, vice-presidents, provosts, and deans.
Furthermore, non-Whites reported that professional conferences and/or seminars significantly benefitted their effectiveness in the management of academic affairs unit. Since the more formal preparation methods are attended more often by females and non-Whites, it may be comprehensible to believe that White males would also benefit from these preparation methods (Carr, 1999; Gonzales et al, 2003).

Discussion of years as an academic dean

Participants of the current study revealed that professional conferences and/or seminars were perceived as more beneficial by academic deans with five to ten years of experience and those with 16 or more years of experience. Perhaps, this finding is simply a result of academic deans with longer tenures, specifically those with five or more years of experience, attending an increased number of professional conferences and/or seminars. Perhaps, the benefit of professional conferences and/or seminars appears to come much too late in an academic dean’s tenure. They often occur in the years post-appointment (Land, 2003; McDade, 1998; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003) rather than prior to appointment or in the early years of appointment. Furthermore, the encouragement and support, both financial and promotional, for this preparational method are sometimes limited. Thus, there may be diminished incentive for academic deans to invest their personal time and/or resources into such programs.

Traditionally, the burnout rate for the academic dean position is high (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999). However, a promising insight from this study is the increase in the average tenure of an academic dean. This study found an average of 6.8 years as an academic dean versus 5.4 years reported by Gmelch et al. (1999). The trend of a high burnout rate appears to have slowed over the past decade. Perhaps, the increased longevity in an academic dean’s average tenure may be attributable to more formal training programs resulting
in better prepared administrative leaders. For example, results of this study revealed that academic deans with sixteen or more years have the highest percentage of participants with an advanced degree in higher education or a related field of any years of experience group. As discussed previously in this study, the role of the academic dean has changed dramatically since the inception of the position. Perhaps, the preparation methods, both informal and formal, for the deanship are beginning to address the new responsibilities and demands of the position resulting in better prepared deans and contributing to longer tenures.

A significant difference was found among all age groups in regard to professional conferences and/or seminars and professional training programs. All age groups reported that two the aforementioned preparation methods were significantly beneficial to each of the seven leadership dimensions. Interestingly, academic deans with 16 or more years of experience indicated a greater benefit from holding an advanced degree in higher education or a related field on their effectiveness in the management of an academic affairs unit. This may be due to the finding that academic deans with 16 or more years of experience had the highest percentage of participants with an advanced degree in higher education or related field.

Conclusions

This study sought to determine which preparation methods occurred most frequently among academic deans and the degree to which they contributed to the deans’ overall perceived effectiveness. The results of this study also distinguished which preparation methods are significant in regard to an academic dean’s effectiveness in the seven leadership dimensions of vision and goal setting, management of an academic affairs unit, developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and students, communication skills, maintaining
and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, advancing the quality of education of the unit, and supporting and advancing institutional diversity.

While not generalizable to the entire population of academic deans, a better understanding of the relationship between preparation methods and effectiveness in the deanship may provide academic deans, university/college presidents, chancellors, provosts and selection committees information that will enhance their ability to make informed decisions regarding the most beneficial methods in preparing and retaining academic deans.

Three conclusions can be drawn from this study regarding the preparation methods of academic deans: (1) academic deans most frequently experience two informal preparation methods - on the job training and informal mentoring; (2) female and non-White academic deans are more likely to participate in more formal preparation methods; and (3) more formal preparation methods were reported as more beneficial to females, non-Whites, and academic deans with more years of experience. The conclusions regarding the results of this study are further discussed.

The position of a higher education academic dean has not been defined since its incarnation in 1816; therefore, it is not surprising that the methods of preparation for the deanship have not changed despite the ever-evolving demands placed upon deans. Traditionally, academic deans have relied on past administrative experiences, on the job training, and informal mentoring as their means of preparation (Del Favero, 2006; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996; Nies & Wolverton, 2000). This is consistent with the results from this study that revealed two prominent preparation methods, on the job training and informal mentoring. While these findings are not surprising, the challenge remains for higher education administrators to determine the best methods to utilize in conjunction with on the job training
and informal mentoring to better prepare today’s academic dean. Taking into account the findings from this study may assist in a better understanding of the preparation methods as they relate to an academic dean’s level of effectiveness. The researcher offers explanations and suggestions regarding the findings of this study that may be valuable in improving the effectiveness and increasing the length of tenure in academic deans.

The findings of this study revealed that over 90% of academic deans experienced on the job training while informal mentoring occurred over 60% of the time. Moreover, these two methods were also found to be the highest contributors to a dean’s overall effectiveness as well as the seven leadership dimensions. These methods are, perhaps, the only ones readily available and; therefore, most likely to occur for newly appointed deans. Most deans do not experience more formal methods such as professional conferences and/or seminars until post-appointment (Land, 2003; McDade, 1988; Raines & Squires Alberg, 2003). However; these more formal methods may enhance the on the job training experience. The findings in this study also indicated that the majority of mentoring within higher education was informal in nature. Several researchers support this claim (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Nies & Wolverton, 2000). The mentoring that does occur should be critically evaluated for its relevance and value to all deans regardless of gender or race. A majority of academic deans are males, specifically, White males. Therefore, the mentoring that does occur typically is comprised of White males mentoring females and non-White males. If increasing the diversity of academic deans is a goal in higher education, serious consideration should be given to the mentoring practices that would best serve the current and future higher education leaders.

This study also examined demographic group differences and found that females and non-Whites experienced more formal preparation methods. While the research in this area is
lean, the increased emphasis on more formal preparation methods for female and non-White academic deans may be attributable to the theory of the glass ceiling. Higher education administration traditionally consists of White males (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996). Perhaps, female and non-White deans feel compelled to experience more formal preparation methods that would best enable them to compete in an already competitive market that is dominated by White males.

Both female and non-White academic deans perceived an increased benefit from more formal preparation methods in their overall effectiveness and in the seven leadership dimensions unique to the deanship. The years in the academic dean position also impacted the perceived benefits of the preparation methods. Deans with more experience reported greater value from more formal training programs than those who are early in their tenures. As no research to date has examined the impact of preparation methods on the seven leadership dimensions categorized by Heck et al. (2000), no literature exists to further support the findings in this study. However, this researcher contends that the perceived benefits that female and non-White deans as well as deans with several years of experience reported may be a result of their increased participation rates in more formal preparation methods. Thus, these groups did not simply rely on the typical methods of preparation or the happenchance that the typical methods would be available to them.

Prior to this study, the researcher wanted to identify the preparation methods that were experienced by academic deans and which methods had the highest level of contribution to a dean’s overall effectiveness as well as their effectiveness in each of the seven leadership dimensions. While there were two clear preparation methods that were most commonly experienced and had the highest degree of contribution to the overall effectiveness including specific leadership dimensions of an academic dean, the findings of this study suggest the
occurrence of these methods may be the result of convenience and tradition rather than a strategic plan on the part of higher education. As the demands of the academic deanship have significantly changed since the 1990s (M. Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001), it is imperative that the methods to properly prepare academic deans evolve to meet those demands.

**Recommendations**

Findings from this study present an understanding of how academic deans are prepared for their positions, which preparation methods are most beneficial to their overall effectiveness, and which methods contribute most to each of the seven leadership dimensions of an academic dean. The results of this study are intended to benefit higher education institutions by informing higher education faculty, administrators, and selection committees as they seek to increase the effectiveness and retention of academic deans in higher education institutions. Specific strategies presented in this chapter are designed to assist higher education leaders to better identify, support, and retain effective academic deans. This chapter concludes with further recommendations for research in this area of study.

**Recommendations for academic deans and/or prospective academic deans**

Academic deans and individuals who may be interested in the position, should consider participating in more formal preparational methods rather than simply relying on the typical methods of on the job training and informal mentoring that occur in a very accidental manner. A more proactive approach towards preparing for the academic deanship is encouraged by this researcher. In addition to the typical methods, programs such as professional conferences/seminars, professional training programs, and an advanced degree in higher education or a related field may provide a better fit in preparing individuals for the specific demands of the academic deanship, particularly the seven leadership dimensions: vision and goal...
setting, management of an academic affairs unit, developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and students, communication skills, maintaining and pursuing professional development, research, and institutional endeavors, advancing the quality of education of the unit, and supporting and advancing institutional diversity. This study found that academic deans with the most years of experience perceived a significant benefit from professional conferences and/or seminars. Furthermore, academic deans who have completed professional training programs have a high rate of placement in higher education administration positions (Carr, 1999).

Although formal mentoring programs may not be available at every higher education institution or may not be effectively utilized by faculty and administrators, this should not discourage current or prospective academic deans to avoid seeking out a mentor or to serve as a mentor.

**Recommendations for senior higher education administrators and selection committees**

Senior higher education administrators such as university/college presidents, chancellors, provosts, and others responsible for the hiring of academic deans should consider a wider range of preparation methods when evaluating a candidate’s professional experiences. It would behoove senior level administrators and search committees to look for a candidate who has experienced both informal and formal preparation methods such as professional conferences and/or seminars, professional training programs, formal mentoring programs, and an advanced degree in higher education or a related field and not simply the traditional practices of on the job training and informal mentoring. Based upon the findings in this research, female and non-White deans as well as academic deans with several years of experience who held an advanced degree in higher education or a related field reported a perceived increase in their effectiveness in the
management of an academic affairs unit. Perhaps, an institution should consider hiring a dean with an advanced degree in higher education or a related field.

The same senior level administrators would be wise to attempt to identify potential academic deans earlier rather than later. This early identification system would afford the candidate the time, support, and resources to be better prepared prior to or in the first two years of their deanship. Thus, diminishing the learning curve and assisting the newly appointed dean to be more successful earlier in his/her tenure will, perhaps, contribute to lengthening the average tenure of an academic dean.

Mentoring practices, whether formal or informal, vary greatly among university and colleges. However, the benefits of mentoring typically outweigh the financial commitment required by an institution (Bamberg et al., 2004; Duncan, 1993; Gmelch et al, 1996; Nies & Wolverton, 2000). Based upon the review of literature conducted for this study, university/college presidents, chancellors, and provosts should consider supporting and promoting a mentoring program for prospective and current higher education administrators as a means to improve the level of readiness for new appointments and continued effectiveness for current administrators.

While many higher education institutions hire academic deans who followed a career trajectory path through another college or university, the author contends that it would behoove the institution to commit to formal mentoring practices. A potential argument may be that an institution would not choose to invest financial and human resources to mentor potential higher education administrators realizing that these individuals may accept a deanship elsewhere. However, mentoring, informal or formal, can be conducted in an economically feasible manner.
Furthermore, if an academic dean have been mentored through his or her career path, all institutions, past and present, involved with that particular dean will reap the benefits.

In addition to on the job training and informal mentoring, higher education institutions should make a conscious effort to provide support and funding for more formal preparation methods such as professional conferences and/or seminars as well as professional training programs prior to an academic dean’s appointment and throughout their tenure. Again, the support of continued professional development may reduce the high burnout rate resulting in longer tenures involving effective and competent academic deans.

Recommendations for future research

When considering the findings of this study, offering recommendations for future research as well as recognizing the limitations and delimitations of the research design is important. This researcher observed several points to consider when conducting future research with regard to the preparation methods of academic deans. One suggestion includes a longer data collection period to increase the response rate of academic deans and improve upon the limited generalizability of this study. Another suggestion includes a follow-up study using a questionnaire that measures an academic dean’s self-efficacy in each of the seven leadership dimensions and which preparation methods most significantly contributed to the deans that were most highly effective. Utilizing an instrument or questions that may more accurately reflect which preparation methods most significantly contribute to highly effective deans can be of great assistance in not only identifying specific preparation methods that can improve each leadership dimension, but can also assist in the planning and implementation of training programs for academic deans.
The addition of a qualitative component to this research would enhance the interpretation of the quantitative findings by incorporating individual perspectives. Having the opportunity for follow-up interviews with the researcher could better explain the significance and level of contribution of each preparation method. Through a qualitative follow-up, the researcher would be capable of a more in-depth and subjective investigation regarding the preparation methods. Possible follow-up questions could include: (1) What preparation methods were available to you as an academic dean? (2) Why did you participate (or not participate) in each of the preparation methods? (3) What is the perceived importance and/or relevance of the preparation method(s) to the participant? (5) Did you receive financial support and/or encouragement to attend more formal training programs? and (6) If you did not receive funding and/or encouragement to attend more formal preparation methods, would you have attended these programs if you had received the financial support and/or encouragement to do so? Utilizing these follow-up questions may provide the researcher a better understanding of the participation rates of academic deans in regard to the preparation methods they reported via the questionnaire.

Since there were group differences for some of the demographic variables in this study, a closer examination of other variables, such as marital status and having children may be important, especially when considering their potential influence on the capability of participating in more formal preparation methods. Finally, because some colleges and universities only follow the traditional career trajectory practices for academic affairs administrators, continued studies on early identification of potential academic deans needs to occur concurrently with research examining the best practices for preparing academic deans.

To conclude, further research is needed involving academic deans in colleges and universities in the United States. It has been projected that the number of higher education
faculty administrators will decline in the next decade (Gmelch, 2000, 2002; Gmelch & Wolverton, 2002; Land, 2003; J. P. Murray & Murray, 2000). Unfortunately, researchers also predict a diminished pool of willing and capable academic deans (Gmelch; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999). The traditional professional preparation of academic deans consisting of less formal methods such as on the job training and informal mentoring will not easily be amended. However, an earlier and more comprehensive preparation of academic deans, involving both informal and formal preparation methods, will benefit academic deans in such areas as better management of the academic affairs unit; enhanced communication skills; increased support and advancement of institutional diversity; more directed and innovative vision and goals for the institution; improved relationships with faculty, staff, and students; and an increased quality of education. Perhaps, incorporating both the traditional and effective informal preparation methods with the more formal preparation methods would benefit everyone involved including the institution, faculty, and, perhaps most of all, the students. Certainly, they are valuable enough to warrant not leaving the preparation of academic deans to happenstance.

With the combination of the limited research conducted specifically on academic deans in higher education and the projected decline in candidates, more studies on this area are needed.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

The Professional Preparation of Academic Deans Questionnaire

Instructions:
Please invest a few minutes of your time to provide your experiences and perceptions concerning the method of preparation for your role as a higher education academic Dean. The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes of your time.

Section I: Demographics

1. Gender: _____ M _____ F

2. Age: _____ (years)

3. Country of origin:

4. Ethnicity:
   _____ American Indian or Alaska native
   _____ Asian or Pacific Islander
   _____ Black, non-Hispanic
   _____ Hispanic
   _____ White, non-Hispanic
   _____ Race/ethnicity unknown
   _____ Other

5. Institution type:  _____ Private  _____ Public

6. Your degree type:  _____ Ph. D.
   _____ Ed. D.
   _____ Master’s degree
   _____ Other

7. Degree field/area:

8. Tenure status:  _____ Tenured  _____ Non-tenured

9. Number of years in higher education before obtaining your first appointment as an academic dean:

10. Number of total years in the position of academic dean:

11. Please list prior administrative experiences in higher education:
Section II: Method(s) of Preparation.
In this section, you are asked two questions specific to your method(s) of preparation for your role as an academic Dean. The six most common methods of preparation of academic Deans and their definitions are Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Hermanson, 1996; Nies and Wolverton, 2000; Wolverton & Gonzales, 2000):

**Formal mentoring**: a process where an institution matched you with a veteran higher education administrator to nurture, support, and guide your professional development.

**Informal mentoring**: a voluntary process where an experienced higher education administrator was able to nurture, support, and guide your professional development.

**On the job training**: an informal practice where you learned the responsibilities, demands, ethics, duties, and details of the position after your appointment as an academic Dean.

**Professional conferences and/or seminars**: you have attended professional conferences and/or seminars related specifically to the academic Dean position.

**Doctoral degree in Higher Education**: you have completed or are completing a doctoral degree in Higher Education Administration, Educational Administration and Leadership Studies, or a similarly named higher education program.

**Professional training programs**: you have attended a professional academy or training program, including but not limited to: American Council on Education’s Fellows Program, Higher Education Resource Services, Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration, National Institute for Chief Academic Officers.

12. Which of the following method(s) of preparation for an academic deanship did you experience? Please check all that apply.

- [ ] Formal mentoring
- [ ] Informal mentoring
- [ ] On the job training
- [ ] Professional conferences and/or seminars
- [ ] Doctoral degree in Higher Education
- [ ] Professional training programs
13. For the following items, please indicate the degree of importance each item contributed to your preparation as an academic Dean.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring
_____ Informal mentoring
_____ On the job training
_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars
_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education
_____ Professional training programs
Section III: The academic dean’s Dimensions of Leadership
In this section, you are asked to indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness in seven dimensions of leadership specific to the position of a higher education academic dean (Heck, Johnsrud, & Rosser, 2000). The seven dimensions of academic dean leadership and their definitions:

Vision and goal setting
The ability to articulate clearly the strategic goals of the unit, encourage ideas and creativity, create an atmosphere conducive to high faculty performance, demonstrate vision and long-range planning, emphasize teaching excellence appropriately, emphasize research excellence appropriately, emphasize service excellence appropriately, advocate for resources needed by the unit, encourage faculty development, encourage curriculum/program development, provide leadership for the unit/subunit level initiatives.

Management of an academic affairs unit
The ability to insure that fair administrative procedures are followed, exercise fair and reasonable judgment in allocating resources, manage change constructively, delegate work effectively, handle administrative tasks in a timely manner, be an effective problem solver, demonstrate knowledge of departments and programs within the unit, maintain an effective and efficient staff.

Interpersonal relationships
The ability to demonstrate understanding of the needs and concerns of unit members, treat individuals fairly and with respect, maintain positive and productive relationships within the unit, maintain positive and productive relationships external to the unit, demonstrate awareness of the quality of professional work of unit members, be accessible to faculty and staff within the unit, demonstrate understanding of the needs and concerns of students, be accessible to students.

Communication skills
The ability to listen to and communicate with unit members, listen to and communicates with external constituencies, effectively represent the unit and its members to the rest of the university, effectively communicate the unit’s priorities to the upper level administration, effectively represent the unit and its members to the rest of the university, produce clear reports and correspondence.

Professional development, research and institutional endeavors
The ability to maintain an active research/scholarly agenda, pursue professional growth opportunities, engage in effective teaching, contribute service to professional organizations, contribute service to community and campus projects.

Quality of education in the unit
The ability to advance the unit’s undergraduate and/or graduate programs effectively, advocate appropriate curriculum offerings, handle external accreditation reviews effectively, recruit new personnel and/or promotes recruitment skillfully, demonstrate a commitment to ensuring a fair tenure and promotion process.
Support for institutional diversity
The ability to demonstrate commitment to advancing and supporting equal employment opportunities, demonstrate commitment to mentoring of women and faculty from underrepresented groups, provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, ensure the staff is educated in EEO/AA concerns.

14. Please indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness in vision and goal setting.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring
_____ Informal mentoring
_____ On the job training
_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars
_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education
_____ Professional training programs

15. Please indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness in the management of an academic affairs unit.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring
_____ Informal mentoring
_____ On the job training
_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars
_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education
_____ Professional training programs
16. Please indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness in developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with faculty, staff, and students.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring
_____ Informal mentoring
_____ On the job training
_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars
_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education
_____ Professional training programs

17. Please indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness with communication skills.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring
_____ Informal mentoring
_____ On the job training
_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars
_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education
_____ Professional training programs
18. Please indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness in maintaining and pursuing professional development, research and institutional endeavors.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring
_____ Informal mentoring
_____ On the job training
_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars
_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education
_____ Professional training programs

19. Please indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness in advancing the quality of education of the unit.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring
_____ Informal mentoring
_____ On the job training
_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars
_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education
_____ Professional training programs
20. Please indicate the degree to which each method of preparation has contributed to your effectiveness in **supporting and advancing institutional diversity**.

1=not applicable, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=very significant

_____ Formal mentoring

_____ Informal mentoring

_____ On the job training

_____ Professional conferences and/or seminars

_____ Doctoral degree in Higher Education

_____ Professional training programs

21. Comments:

Thank you taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. Please remember to clear your browser’s cache and page history after you submit the survey.
Dear Academic Dean:

In approximately one week, you will receive an e-mail message from Ms. Margo Greicar, a faculty member at the University of North Carolina Wilmington and a doctoral student at Bowling Green State University, asking you to participate in her research project, The Professional Preparation of Academic Deans. She will be requesting that you participate in a web-based survey.

I believe her study will be beneficial to the academic dean position and higher education, and so I encourage you to respond. Thank you for your consideration in participating in Ms. Greicar’s research endeavor. Please see the attached document for further discussion of the study’s purpose.

Sincerely,

Rosemary DePaolo, Chancellor

University of North Carolina Wilmington
APPENDIX C

Purpose of the Study

_The Professional Preparation of Academic Deans_

The purpose of the study is to investigate the preparation of academic deans at four year public and private higher education institutions in the United States. In the study, academic deans will be surveyed to determine what preparation methods they perceive to be most beneficial for the administrative post. This study will also investigate the demographic differences (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) which may exist among academic deans and their perception of how each method of preparation has contributed to the leadership dimensions necessary to be successful in the academic dean position.
APPENDIX D

Introductory Statement and Request to Participate

Dear Academic Deans:

You are invited to be part of a research study on The Professional Preparation of Academic Deans. As part of my work on my doctoral dissertation in Bowling Green State University’s Educational Administration and Leadership Studies program, I am conducting a research study of academic deans and their professional preparation experiences. Because you have been identified by the American Conference of Academic Deans and/or the American Council on Education currently serving as an academic dean, you are invited to participate in this research endeavor.

The purpose of this study is to determine what preparation methods academic deans have experienced and what preparation methods they perceive to be most beneficial. The study will also investigate the demographic differences (gender, ethnicity, and the number of years as an academic dean) which may exist regarding the degree to which each method of preparation contributed to their preparation for the academic dean position as well as the perception of how each method of preparation contributes to the leadership dimensions necessary to be successful in the academic dean position. The potential benefit of this study includes an improved understanding of effective methods of preparation for academic deans that could benefit the administrators, faculty, staff, and students at higher education institutions. Completing the survey for this research—The Professional Preparation of Academic Deans—will take approximately 10-15 minutes of your time to participate.

I understand that your time is extremely valuable; however, I would very much appreciate your involvement in this study. Your participation in this project is voluntary, and you are free to stop your participation at any time without penalty or explanation. Completing and submitting the survey—either in hardcopy form or electronically—is all that I ask of you. Your informed consent to participate in this study is assumed by your completion of the survey and submitting it through the method of your choice. Information you provide will remain confidential, and your identity will not be revealed. You will not be asked to identify yourself by name or organizational affiliation, and your responses will be combined with the responses of approximately 300 other deans. Only the research team will have access to the data you provide. Your confidentiality as a respondent and your responses will be protected throughout the study and publication of the study's results. The risks of participating in this study are no greater than those encountered in normal daily life. Should you participate in this study, please retain this consent document for your record.

Although it is my intent that no one else will see the original returns, please be advised that posting responses on the Internet is not 100% secure, and it is possible that someone else could intercept your survey. Should you choose to complete the survey electronically, please remember to clear your browser's cache and page history after you submit the survey in order to protect your privacy. Further, some employers use tracking software to monitor and record keystrokes, mouse clicks, and web sites visited. This could impact the confidentiality of your responses, so should you choose to complete the survey electronically, you may wish to do so on your home computer.

If you have any questions or comments about this research study, or if you wish to receive a summary of the complete results, please contact me at 614.746.0198 or mgreica@bgsu.edu or contact Dr. Rachel Vannatta, my dissertation advisor, at rvanna@bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of Bowling Green State University’s Human Subjects Review Board at 419.372.7716 or hsrb@bgsu.edu.

You can access the survey at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=9wArFS_2bSvYFYgjOTvOqaA_3d_3d
If you would like a hard copy version of the survey, please contact me at mgreica@bgsu.edu or 614.746.0198.

Thank you for your assistance. Enjoy the summer months.

Sincerely,

Margo Greicar
APPENDIX E

Electronic Message from an Academic Dean

Dear Fellow Academic Dean:

One week ago you received an e-mail message from Margo Greicar, a faculty member at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, inviting you to participate in her doctoral research project, The Professional Preparation of Academic Deans, by taking a web-based survey. **If you have completed the survey, thank you!**

If you have not yet had a chance to take the survey, I encourage you to respond. I believe that Ms. Greicar’s study will be useful to current academic deans and will also prove beneficial to those aspiring to become higher education administrators.

This message is being sent to everyone in the selected sample population. Since no personal data is retained with the surveys for reasons of confidentiality, we are unable to identify whether or not you have already completed the survey.

*To take the web-based survey, click on:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=9wArFS_2bSvYFYgjjOTvOqaA_3d_3d

Thank you, in advance, for your participation.

Best regards,

David P. Cordle, Dean
College of Arts and Sciences
University of North Carolina Wilmington