

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE SENIOR STUDENT
AFFAIRS OFFICERS IN THE UNITED STATES

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2011

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The dissertation is dedicated to my first son, Noah Jacob Rodkin, whose loss inspired me to begin the journey toward a doctoral degree. While I miss you greatly, my memories of our brief time together have kept me moving during this long journey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I need to thank my wonderful wife, Christy, for her patience over the past seven years while I attended class, wrote papers, and disappeared for hours at a time to work on this dissertation. Know that I am aware of and appreciate the sacrifices you have made so that I could finish this degree. I appreciate you and love you eternally.

I need to thank my two children, Ben and Delaney, for not complaining (too much) when I missed story time, bedtime, and playtime because of my academic responsibilities. Even more than you, I am looking forward to spending that time with you—and not my computer! I love you guys.

I also thank my supervisors at Santa Fe College, Dug Jones and Dr. Portia Taylor, for being understanding and flexible with my work requirements when classes were scheduled. It was always a relief to know that you were okay with me working odd hours to accommodate any oddly timed classes. Without your support, I would not have been able to complete the program. A special note of appreciation goes to Santa Fe College President Dr. Jackson Sasser for his continued support of my pursuit of a doctoral degree, in addition to providing financial and emotional support for Santa Fe College employees who are seeking additional degrees.

I would be remiss if I did not mention my coworkers in Student Life and Student Affairs at Santa Fe College for their support, and for leaving me alone those last few days when I was holed up in my office writing! Many of these coworkers are pursuing degrees, and this document is proof that the juggling act of work, school, and family is possible! Keep the balls in the air—it can be done!

I need to acknowledge my former advisors at the University of Florida, Norb Dunkel and Diane Porter-Roberts, for introducing me to the field of student affairs and for providing encouragement to explore this career. You helped me realize the power of student development,

the value of allowing students to learn from their mistakes, and the institutional benefits of providing students with a safe venue to develop leadership, interpersonal, and professional skills.

I appreciate all you did for me, and I continue to value our professional relationships.

Much appreciation goes to Cynthia Garvan at the University of Florida Office of Educational Research for her assistance with the statistical analysis portions of this document. A true teacher, she helped me understand what questions I really was trying to ask, and how to apply statistical tools to find the answers. Finally, I thank Dr. Dale Campbell, Dr. David Honeyman, Dr. Bernard Oliver, and Dr. Carl Barfield for believing in me and for helping me navigate the waters towards the completion of this dissertation.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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By

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August 2011

Chair: Dale F. Campbell

Major: Higher Education Administration

The purpose of this study was to assess community college senior student affairs officers' demographics, educational backgrounds, and leadership development experiences, as related to their mastery of the leadership skills outlined in the American Association of Community Colleges *Competencies for Community College Leaders (AACC Competencies)* (2005), and to determine which of these leadership skills is deemed most critical for community college senior student affairs officers to perform their jobs effectively. Furthermore, this study examined community college senior student affairs officers' perceptions of their preparedness for the *AACC Competencies*, and explored a variety of methods for providing leadership development.

The population for this study was community college senior student affairs officers in the United States, who were either listed in the *2011 Higher Education Directory* or the *2010 National Council for Student Development Membership Directory*. A total of 308 community college senior student affairs officers responded to *The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer: Demographics and Leadership Survey*. Findings reveal that: (a) overall, community college senior student affairs officers rated the leadership skills identified by the *AACC Competencies* as important or very important; (b) community college senior student affairs officers rated their preparedness for the *AACC Competencies* significantly lower than

they rated the leadership skills' importance; (c) earning an EdD and participating in mentoring relationships as a protégé both played a significant role in helping community college senior student affairs officers feel more prepared for the senior-level position; (d) participating in leadership development programs did not result in community college senior student affairs officers reporting a significantly higher level of preparedness for the *AACC Competencies*; and (e) institutional characteristics had a minimal impact on community college senior student affairs officers' perceptions of the importance of the *AACC Competencies*.

This study provides new knowledge about the application of the *AACC Competencies* to the training and development of community college senior student affairs officers. The findings can be used by professional organizations, state associations, university graduate programs, and community college student affairs divisions, to inform how these groups provide training and professional development for student affairs professionals. Additionally, community college student affairs professionals who aspire to serve as senior-level administrators could use this study's results to guide their professional development. Specifically, these individuals should obtain an EdD, develop at least one mentoring relationship, and experience a broad perspective of student affairs at the community college level.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study was to examine community college senior student affairs officers' leadership competencies and leadership development. In light of the economy at the time this study was conducted, the need for community college graduates, and the shortage of well-prepared community college leaders in higher education literature has focused more on leadership development. This chapter explains the purpose and significance of the study, introduces the research questions and methodology, and defines key terms.

Background Information and Significance of the Study

The concept of college administrators focused on student welfare existed prior to 1901, when Joliet Junior College (2010) was created as the nation's first community college. Since then, the community college system has grown in size and complexity, and today enrolls almost half of all U.S. undergraduates. For the fall 2007 semester, 6.6 million students (or 42% of all undergraduates) were enrolled at over 1,200 U.S. community colleges (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2009). Community college enrollment has grown 29.9% over the previous ten-year period, whereas undergraduate enrollment at four-year institutions has increased by only 25.8%.

This growth is expected to continue, as America's workforce looks to community colleges to provide job training. In the midst of the economic recession, President Barack Obama (2009) called on community colleges to play a lead role as "21st-century job training centers, working with local businesses to help workers learn the skills they need to fill the jobs of the future." President Obama set the goal of five million additional graduates from community colleges over a ten-year period, and offered \$12 billion in federal aid over those same ten years to improve programs, courses, and facilities (Hebel, 2009). The federal government's focus on community colleges, and the federal funding proposed for them, was unprecedented and underscored the link

between the community college and local workforce development needs (Parry & Fischer, 2009). Obama's call resulted in the Community College Completion Agenda, whereby community colleges across the country reaffirmed their commitment to help students persist until graduation, to increase access, and to maintain the highest quality levels (Mullin, 2010).

With community colleges viewed as “the postsecondary institutions most capable of strengthening the U.S. economy by equipping students with the leadership and workforce skills needed for today's rapidly changing, competitive global economy” (de le Teja, Dalpes, Swett, & Skenk, 2010, p. 12), it has never been more important to have qualified, competent community college leaders (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Watts & Hammons, 2002).

While much of the research on community college leadership focuses on the executive level (Boggs, 2003; Campbell & Associates, 2002; Hammons & Keller, 1990; Hockaday & Puyear, 2008; Townsend & Bassoppo-Moyo, 1997; Weisman & Vaughn, 2002), when specifically examining what helps students graduate, Sandeen (1991) emphasized the critical roles of institutions' administrative functions—functions that typically fall within senior student affairs officers' scopes of responsibility.

Sandeen's view was supported by Tinto (1993), who reported that a key element of retention is students' perceptions of the institution's programs and services. In addition, a correlation has been found between students' positive out-of-class experiences and student learning and persistence (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, 1991). Astin (1993) suggested that “learning, academic performance, and retention are positively associated with academic involvement, involvement with faculty, and involvement with student peer groups” (p. 394). Bogart and Hirshberg (1993) argued that, among contributing factors of college success, quality orientation programs help students' understanding of the institutional culture, and a first-year

experience study skills or survival class. Administrative responsibility for programs, services, out-of-class experiences, involvement with peer groups, orientation, and first-year experience study skills classes all fall under the purview of student affairs operations (Sandeem, 1996).

To ensure that community colleges can meet President Obama's graduation goals, these institutions' students must persist in completing their programs of study. This expectation of accountability is not new to community colleges, as numerous reports have been written over the past 30 years that call for greater accountability in all of higher education (The College Board, 2008; National Commission on Accountability in Higher Education, 2005; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Wingspread Group on Higher Education, 1993); this accountability also applies to student affairs in general (American College Personnel Association [ACPA], 1996; National Association of Student Personnel Administrators [NASPA] & ACPA, 2004). Leadership is "associated with change, with moving the organization and its people forward in some positive way" (Davis, 2003, p. 6). To adhere to the mandates of higher standards of accountability and achieve the desired outcomes, community colleges need competent and talented leaders (Boggs, 2004).

So who are the leaders of student affairs within the U.S. community college system? As predicted by researchers, 75% of the "baby boomer" community college administrators will retire by 2011 (Boggs, 2004; Campbell & Associates, 2002; Campbell & Levery, 1997; Hockaday & Puyear, 2008). Campbell's (2006) follow-up research found that similar vacancies will exist in student affairs senior administrative positions, including the registrar, financial aid director, and others. With these vacancies, one might wonder—who will provide leadership for community college student affairs? How will these individuals be prepared? What do they need to know?

To help answer the last question, two organizations, ACPA and NASPA, collaborated to define competencies for student affairs practitioners. After a year of analyzing 19 documents previously published by ACPA, NASPA, and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, ACPA and NASPA created the *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners* (2010), a comprehensive document with ten competencies, which are:

- Advising and helping;
- Assessment, evaluation, and research;
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion;
- Ethical professional practice;
- History, philosophy, and values;
- Human and organizational resources;
- Law, policy, and governance;
- Leadership;
- Personal foundations; and
- Student learning and development. (pp. 6–27)

Each competency is explained with a list of knowledge, skills, or attitudes that practitioners should demonstrate. Then, each competency is divided into basic, intermediate, or advanced levels, which demonstrates the expected professional growth that occurs throughout a student affairs practitioner's career. The authors explain that the *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners* should be used (a) to aid with curriculum design for student affairs graduate programs; (b) to assist with in the design of professional development opportunities; and (c) to provide a tool for practitioners to conduct self-assessments, as a means to evaluate and direct their professional development (ACPA & NASPA, 2010).

However, the student affairs work environment differs between community colleges and four-year universities (Laws, 2011). Since the majority of community colleges enroll less than 5,000 students (Provasnik & Planty, 2008), the size of a student affairs department and pace of the work is markedly different than at larger institutions (Hirt, 2006). While the functions performed are similar to other colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 2008), the roles and responsibilities of

the student affairs staff, including senior student affairs officers, vary considerably (Hirt, 2006; Laws, 2011).

To accommodate these differences, studies that focus on community college leadership may be examined to determine the competencies for community college senior student affairs officers (CCSSAOs). Among such studies is Leading Forward, an American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) project started in 2003, with the support of the Kellogg Foundation (AACC, 2005). Over a two-year period, following a series of leadership summits and a survey, the Leading Forward Advisory Panel determined universal support for the six primary competencies that would become the domains for the *Competencies for Community College Leaders (AACC Competencies)*: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism (AACC, 2005). The six competency domains were further explained by 45 individual leadership competencies, which formed the core of the document (Appendix A).

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed within this study is the lack of a designated set of leadership competencies necessary to be an effective senior student affairs officer at a community college in the United States. A literature review revealed that numerous papers (a) discuss the functions, responsibilities, and backgrounds of CCSSAOs (Apraku-Amankwaatia, 2004; Edwards, 2005; Holloway, 2003; Keim, 2008; Mattox & Creamer, 1998; Smith, 2002; Tull & Freeman, 2008; Wade, 1993); and (b) describe the leadership skills needed for community college executive officers (American Association for Community Colleges, 2005; Barreiro O’Daniels, 2009; Duncan & Harlacher, 1991; Duree, 2007; Hammons & Keller, 1990; Vincent, 2004). However, minimal research addresses the leadership competencies needed to serve in student affairs at the community college.

Purpose of Study

As previously stated, individuals with adequate community college leadership preparation are needed to fill anticipated vacancies in CCSSAO positions. But first, the skills required in those positions must be identified. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to assess CCSSAOs' demographics, educational backgrounds, and leadership development experiences, as related to these individuals' mastery of the *AACC Competencies*, and to determine which competencies are deemed most critical for CCSSAOs to effectively perform their jobs. Furthermore, the study examined CCSSAOs' perceptions of their preparedness for the *AACC Competencies*, and explored a variety of methods for providing leadership development.

Research Questions

Six research questions were asked in this study:

1. What are the general demographic characteristics, professional backgrounds, and leadership experiences of current community college senior student affairs officers in the United States?
2. Is there a relationship between the community college senior student affairs officers' perceptions of importance of the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* and their perception of their preparedness for those skills when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?
3. To what extent do the highest degrees earned by community college senior student affairs officers influence how they rate their preparedness on the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?
4. To what extent do the differences in leadership preparation outside of formal education influence how they rate their preparedness on the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?
5. To what extent do differences in institutional characteristics (specifically, institution size, setting, structure, and highest degree offering) affect the reported importance of the *AACC Competencies*?
6. Which leadership experiences do current community college senior student affairs officers believe best prepared them to serve in this capacity, and what do they wish they had done

differently to prepare for their first community college senior student affairs officer position?

Methodology

A quantitative survey was designed to address the research questions. The instrument was adapted from an existing survey developed by Duree (2007) for community college presidents. The new instrument, *The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer: Demographics and Leadership Survey*, was reviewed by a panel of leading researchers in the community college field and juried by a group of 10 current CCSSAOs (Appendix B).

During the spring 2011 semester, the survey instrument was emailed to all CCSSAOs listed in the *2011 Higher Education Directory* or in the *2010 National Council on Student Development Membership Directory*. The instrument was available through a Web-based application, and respondents entered all responses electronically. The types of inventories utilized to measure the items on the survey instrument were categorical responses (for demographic data), dichotomous responses (i.e., *yes* and *no*), numerical scales, and four-point Likert-type scales (e.g., *not important* to *very important*; *not prepared* to *very prepared*).

CCSSAOs were asked to rate the importance of, as well as their level of preparedness for, 45 individual leadership competencies connected to organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism. Data collected by this section of the instrument was used to assess overall preparedness. The preparedness level was then used to identify competencies where greater effort should be made to prepare future CCSSAOs.

Individual demographic data collected included age, gender, and race/ethnicity. The institutional demographics explored institution size, setting, structure, and the types of degrees offered. Professional information included title and educational background (highest degree

earned and major field of study in that degree). Career pathways information included the number of student affairs positions held, the number of years in the current position, the total number of years worked in student affairs, the position held prior to the current position, the number of years worked in various college/university career tracks, other positions (held both inside and outside of education), teaching experiences, and career aspirations. Leadership preparation information included respondents' participation in formal leadership development programs and mentoring relationships.

Two open-ended questions were added to provide an opportunity for study participants to expand on their earlier responses or to provide new information. The first question asked CCSSAOs to reflect on the leadership development experiences best prepared them to serve in that capacity. Secondly, they were asked to explain how, if they could do it again, they would have prepared differently for their first CCSSAO positions.

Statistical analyses were performed to determine what leadership competencies respondents ranked highest. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures were performed to determine the relationship between highest degree earned, participation in leadership development programs, and mentoring relationships on the self-perception of preparedness for the AACC *Competencies*. A combination of *t* tests and ANOVA procedures were conducted to detect significant differences in importance of the AACC *Competencies* based on each institutional characteristic group. Content analysis was performed to determine the types of experiences CCSSAOs found most valuable in preparing for their first CCSSAO positions, and on how they would have prepared differently for their first CCSSAO positions.

Definitions

American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). With a membership of close to 1,200 two-year, associate's degree-granting institutions, the AACC has become the leading

professional organization for the nation's community colleges. The AACC has five strategic foci: recognition and advocacy for community colleges; student access, learning, and success; community college leadership development; economic and workforce development; and global and intercultural education (AACC, 2011).

Community College. For the purposes of this study, a community college is defined as a nonprofit, two-year institution of higher education in which the most common degree awarded to students is an associate's degree.

Competency Model. Competency models organize and provide structure to lists of competencies to explain the core requirements for a job, and may be used for selection, evaluation, training, and career development (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Leadership Competencies. Leadership competencies are the behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that a person needs to provide effective leadership and positively impact an organization at a particular time (McNamara, 2003).

Mentoring Relationships. In the context of this study, mentoring relationships are formal or informal pairings of an established leader in the field (mentor) and a less experienced professional (protégé). Mentoring relationships have been shown to positively impact the protégé's career development and leadership (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007; VanDerLinden, 2005).

Leadership development programs. In this study's context, leadership development programs are short-term training experiences designed to help faculty or administrators improve their leadership skills. Often sponsored by professional associations, state agencies, or individual institutions, these workshops are generally outcomes-orientated, and may be based on a curriculum grounded in an established competency model.

Senior Student Affairs Officer. The senior student affairs officer, also known as the chief student affairs officer—and frequently holds the title of vice president for student affairs or dean of students—is the senior administrator on a college campus charged with leading the student affairs division. This individual generally reports to the chief executive officer (president or chancellor).

Student Affairs. Student affairs refers to the division within a college or university charged with handling the numerous, complex administrative and learning-experiential matters of students' time outside of the classroom (Moneta & Jackson, 2011; Sandeen, 1996). Positive experience and interactions with programs under the purview of student affairs has been shown to have a significant impact on student retention, persistence, and learning (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, 1991; NASPA & ACPA, 2004; Tinto, 1993).

University-Based Graduate Programs. University-based graduate programs, offering master's degrees and doctoral degrees, are commonly used to prepare administrators for professional positions in student affairs. Senior-level positions often require a doctoral degree. Within educational administration, one has an option of the EdD (Doctorate of Education) or a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy). While both are terminal degrees, the PhD is research oriented, and the EdD is directed toward practitioners and focuses on the application of theory and research.

Limitations

The study was limited to individuals listed as senior student affairs officers in the *2011 Higher Education Directory* or the *2010 National Council on Student Development Membership Directory*, and who had a valid email address listed in the directories. Not every senior student affairs officer at every U.S. community college was listed in these two documents, and employee turnover invalidated some of the email addresses. The results of this study provided a snapshot of CCSSAOs serving in that capacity during the spring 2011 semester; this population will

change over time, and the responses may not generalize over time. Information from this study was drawn from the CCSSAOs' responses. While the study was designed to be completed electronically, and multiple attempts were made to secure a maximum number of responses, there was limited control of the response rate. The timing the study itself may have been a limitation. Depending on the institution and its academic calendar, the initial notification may have arrived during the first week of classes, resulting in CCSSAOs being occupied with registration-related issues and student appeals. While the "registration rush" would have subsided when follow-up emails were sent, CCSSAOs' busy schedules may have prohibited some from participating. An assumption has been made that CCSSAOs who participated in the study responded honestly and fairly, due to the anonymity of their responses. The responses to questions about importance of and preparedness for the AACC *Competencies* were subject to individual bias and self-perception.

Organization of the Study

A review of the literature regarding the history and state of affairs for both community colleges and student affairs at the time the study was conducted, as well as a discussion about competencies and leadership development in higher education, may be found in chapter two. Chapter three contains an explanation of the research design and methodology (i.e., the data collection and data analysis procedures used in this study). Chapter four contains the statistics and findings from the data analysis of this study. The final chapter includes a summary of the study, discussion of the conclusions, implications of the findings, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the literature as it pertains to research on the four general areas: the community college system, the field of student affairs in the United States, the concept of competencies, and a review of leadership development practices. An overview of the community college system explores the history of the community college in the United States and relates the unique attributes of this system of higher education. Also, a focus on the differences at two-year institutions introduces an examination of challenges facing community colleges at the time of the study.

As Dundy (1999) pointed out, research on community college student affairs is sporadic at best. As such, the first section of this chapter uses the lens of the four-year institution to discuss the development of student affairs as a profession, including its foundations and development toward the modern student affairs division. This section of the chapter also describes the composition and state of a modern community college student affairs division. Finally, this section of chapter two explores the nature of student affairs leadership.

The third section of chapter two reviews the concept of competencies and explores research pertaining to competencies for higher education leaders, including both student affairs and general community college leadership. This review of competency-oriented research creates the groundwork for a discussion of leadership competencies for CCSSAOs. Chapter two's final section addresses leadership and leadership development in the community college. The literature examination delineates theoretical underpinnings and research that describes methods used to prepare leaders in both student affairs and throughout general community college leadership. Information related to a variety of leadership development tools, including

university-based graduate programs, leadership development programs, and mentoring relationships, are also included.

The Community College System

In the late 19th-century, post-Civil War United States, a widespread system of higher education was developing and transforming who was served and how they were served. Higher education was no longer reserved for the elite, after the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 led to the establishment of land-grant state universities with an emphasis on agriculture and mechanical sciences (Witt, Wattenbarger, Gollatscheck, & Suppiger, 1994). The Germanic influence on education led to a research-based curriculum at universities, at the expense of the liberal arts curriculum that had dominated the colonial colleges (Rudolph, 1962/1990; Thelin, 2004).

To emphasize the new research mission for their universities, University of Michigan President Henry Tappan and others advocated a new institutional model in which the first two years of higher education would be conducted at a separate college (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). These leaders reasoned that until the universities abandoned the lower division, they would never become true research centers. In effect, universities' shifting priorities provided the initial basis for the junior college movement, which gained momentum in the early 1900s.

In 1892, Yale University President William Rainey Harper was recruited to be the first president at the new University of Chicago. He brought a deep concern for public schools, and proposed a model featuring a seamless system of education in which students would transition from elementary school to secondary school to higher education. According to Ratcliff (1986), Harper believed the general education commonly associated with the first two years of university could best be completed in conjunction with public schools, separate from the research emphasis. His concept became a "six-year high school," and in 1901, the first of such institutions opened as Joliet High School in Joliet, Illinois (Witt et al., 1994). It later became Joliet Junior College, and

is widely recognized as the nation's first public community college (Joliet Junior College, 2010). With Joliet established, the junior college movement was underway, and six-year high schools opened throughout the Midwest over the next decade. Fretwell (1954) reported that by 1910, 13 six-year high schools and junior colleges had opened, each affiliated with the University of Chicago.

Beyond the six-year high school, Harper strongly felt that a group of small, struggling religious colleges would be more successful if they dropped their upper-division curriculum and focused on the general education curriculum common to two-year colleges. Brint and Karabel (1989) reported that Harper's idea was so popular in the South that by 1916, over half the nation's 74 junior colleges were private institutions. By 1922, the number of junior colleges swelled to 207 (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

As the junior college system grew, standards, accreditation, and national structures were developed. In 1921, the American Council on Education (ACE) became the first national organization to propose a list of standards, including the definition of a junior college as "an institution of higher education which gives two years of work equivalent in prerequisites, scope, and thoroughness to the work done in the first two years of a college as defined elsewhere by the American Council on Education" (Witt et al., 1994, p. 90). The nine standards ACE developed pertained to admissions requirements, graduation requirements, faculty credentials, teaching schedules, curricula, minimum enrollment size, financial status, facilities, and a need for inspection by an accreditation body.

The ACE standards were revised throughout the 1920s, in conjunction with the newly-created American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC), and by the end of the decade, each of the five regional accreditation associations adopted these ACE standards and accepted junior

colleges as members (Witt et al., 1994). As such, junior colleges attained credibility, and the degrees allowed students to transfer to upper-division institutions. By 1930, junior colleges existed in all but five states (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

Following the 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act, more commonly known as the GI Bill, the demand for access to higher education resulted in an unprecedented increase in both numbers of community colleges and their enrollments (Witt et al., 1994). The Truman Commission's report, *Higher Education for American Democracy*, emphasized the importance of two-year colleges and encouraged a system-wide name change from "junior college" to "community college" (Bonos, 1948). The Commission defined this new institution as "a center of learning for the entire community, with or without restrictions that surround formal course work in traditional institutions of higher education. It gears its programs and services to the need and wishes of the people it serves" (Zook, 1947, pp. 68–70).

Growth continued throughout the 1950s, despite a decreased community college enrollment during the Korean Conflict (Witt et al., 1994). By 1957, there were 652 community colleges in the United States; the number had tripled over a 35-year period (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). The curriculum evolved to include not only university transfer programs, but science-intensive programs, adult education, and vocational/technical training (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). In the early 1950s, the first associate's degrees in nursing were established, bringing national attention to the junior college movement, with the aid of the Kellogg Foundation (Witt et al., 1994).

The baby boom that followed World War II impacted the community college system as early as 1962. The demand for higher education access led to the development of community colleges in urban environments, which thus far had been bypassed. De los Santos (2004)

described the 1960s as “the decade when we were building an average of one community college a week in this country” (p. 149). The new community colleges had large enrollments from the onset, and by the decade’s end, the community college population had quadrupled to almost 2.5 million students (Witt et al., 1994).

Today’s community college. The influx of new community college students diversified the student populations. Community college students reflected the U.S. population in a different way than other forms of higher education. These new students, diverse in terms of age, race, ethnicity, level of academic preparedness, and languages spoken, forced community college administrators to adapt their programs and services to meet ever-changing needs. The solutions these administrators implemented, ranging from college preparation and English as a second language curricula to services for older and married students with children, exemplified the democratized and flexible nature of the community college system (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

Today’s community college students continue to diversify. By the 2006 – 2007 academic year, the U.S. Department of Education reported that there were 6.2 million students enrolled in over 1,045 public community colleges (Provasnik & Planty, 2008). This report also stated that in fall 2005, 19% of community colleges reported that ethnic and racial minorities made up a majority of their enrollments, compared to only 15% of public four-year institutions and 10% of private four-year institutions. Community college students differ from their four-year counterparts in many ways, particularly that most community college students are financially independent from parents (61%), compared to only 35% of students at public or private four-year institutions (Horn & Nevill, 2006). Community colleges also have larger percentages of nontraditional and low-income students than four-year institutions (Provasnik & Planty, 2008). The primary issues facing community colleges at the time of this study included meeting the

challenges of serving their regions' growing enrollment needs despite diminishing financial state support (AACC, 2010; Gorski, 2010), a mandate to increase students' completion rates (Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Lee, Jr. & Rawls, 2010), an increased focus on assessment and institutional accountability (AACC, 2010), and a focus on workforce and economic development (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2008).

An Overview of Student Affairs

Reviewing how the role of CCSSAOs has changed over time can provide a more complete understanding of modern CCSSAOs' needs and challenges. Therefore, the overview of student affairs examines the history of the student personnel movement, the development of the student affairs profession, and the components of the modern student affairs department at a four-year institution. From its foundations as student personnel work, the concept of student affairs predates the community college and has been well-documented in the literature (Appleton, Briggs, & Rhatigan, 1978; Ayers, Tripp, & Russel, 1966; Caple, 1998; Cowley, 1949; Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Gardner, 1934; Leonard, 1956; McGinnis, 1933; Mueller, 1961; Nuss, 2003; Shaffer & Martinson, 1966).

Student affairs can be traced back to 1870, at what was then known as Harvard College, when Ephraim Gurney became the first college dean, and his student affairs work included responsibility for student rights and responsibilities. Gurney initially assumed responsibility for disciplinary cases at Harvard, which previously was handled by the president's office (Caple, 1998). According to McGinnis (1933), dean positions were created over the next 30 years at Amherst (1880), Yale (1884), the University of Chicago (1892), and Columbia College (1896).

Early deans had largely administrative roles, functioning as an assistant to the president, student advisor, chief disciplinarian, registrar, and sometimes budget officer (McGinnis, 1933). In time, the deans focused on an "effort to maintain collegiate and human values" (Rudolph,

1962/1990, p. 435), as colleges and universities became more academically specialized. As institutions grew, the personnel functions were delegated to other officers reporting to the dean, and the scope of the dean's responsibilities grew.

The years between 1870 and 1910 featured a rise of the "university movement," as the Germanic model of higher education was implemented throughout the United States (Rudolph, 1962/1990; Thelin, 2004). During this time, as institutions deepened their commitment to research and rigorous scholarship, the faculty left humanistic work behind, and early deans stepped in to provide for students' needs (Rhatigan, 2000). The 1937 *Student Personnel Point View* explained that after the Civil War, the primary emphasis for higher education faculty shifted

away from the needs of the individual student to an emphasis, through scientific research, upon the extension of the boundaries of knowledge. The pressures upon faculty members to contribute to this growth of knowledge shifted the direction of their thinking to a preoccupation with subject matter and to a neglect of the student as an individual. (NASPA, 1989)

As such, the student affairs profession largely began by serving those needs faculty deemed less important (Fenske, 1980).

The 1937 *Student Personnel Point View* is often referred to as the foundation for the student affairs profession (Nuss, 2003; Rhatigan, 2000). This work established the basic premise that remains true to today's student affairs departments: needs of the individual student must be understood, and instructions and student support programs must be coordinated and tailored to fit each institution's needs (Nuss, 2003). The *Student Personnel Point View* listed 23 types of services comprising a then-comprehensive student personnel program and made recommendations for future development of the profession, including cooperation among national organizations, and a call for specific research on topics, including student-faculty interaction, students' out-of-class experiences, and student financial aid.

While this document was written over 70 years ago, the recommendations remain valid. Blimling (2003) made several arguments for consolidating ACPA and NASPA. Also, the 2008 Joint ACPA/NASPA Task Force was charged with exploring strategic alignment of the two national associations for student affairs (Torries & Walbert, 2009); memberships of both organizations voted on the measure in March and April of 2011. Student-faculty interaction and students' out-of-classroom experiences have been measured at over 2,000 colleges and universities by the *National Survey on Student Engagement and Community College Survey for Student Engagement* (2009). Research and reporting on student financial aid continues, with close to 2,000 articles on student financial aid appearing on the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators' (NASFAA) Website (2009a), including two major reports released within one year by national organizations calling for similar revision on federal student aid programs (NAFSAA, 2009b; Rethinking Student Aid Study Group, 2008).

Twelve years after the 1937 *Student Personnel Point of View* was drafted, the follow-up 1949 *Student Personnel Point of View* was published, emphasizing the importance of student personnel workers' role in fostering maturity and development of specific aspects of students' personalities (NASPA, 1989). This emphasis preceded the description of wellness as an all-encompassing area for development (Hattie, Myers, & Sweeney, 2004). The 1949 *Student Personnel Point of View* also provided an outline of specific student competencies, which Chickering (1969) later postulated in his *Seven Vectors of Student Development*. Lastly, as Carpenter (1996) explained, the revised *Student Personnel Point of View* introduced the concept that student personnel workers are involved in educational activities, and are not merely service providers. This foreshadowed the future literature that called for increased student affairs

personnel involvement in student learning (ACPA, 1996; Baxter Magolda, 1999; NASPA, 1989; NASPA & ACPA, 2004; O'Banion, 1997).

With the philosophical basis established for student affairs, political and issues emerged that altered the country, higher education, and the student affairs profession. The GI Bill forever changed higher education demographics (Nuss, 2003). Additional federal legislation, including the Higher Education Act of 1965, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the 1990 Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Higher Education Amendments of 1992, added to the complexities of student affairs divisions, by requiring specialized student affairs employees charged with carrying out specific requirements of the legislation (Nuss, 2003; Rhatigan, 2000).

Student personnel departments evolved into the modern student affairs divisions during the postwar years (Hirt, 2006). As previously explained, the GI Bill profoundly impacted higher education and student affairs. As enrollments grew, student affairs bureaucracies grew, to meet the burgeoning needs of increasing student populations (Ambler, 2000). While different institutions' needs evolved differently over time (Rentz & Saddlemire, 1988; Sandeen, 1996), over the past 50 years, several authors have tried to describe the components of a modern student affairs department.

Composition of a Modern Student Affairs Department

Mueller's (1961) report on the student personnel work in higher education categorized 17 functional areas of personnel work into three categories: personnel services basic to campus life, personal services for student growth, and personnel services for special student groups. The basic services included admissions, recruitment, evaluation, housing, academic advising, orientation, and programs for students' physical and mental health. Functional areas considered

services for student growth included student activities, student unions, student governments, campus publications, student discipline, and religious programs. The functional areas contained within the services for special student groups included fraternities and sororities, financial aid, placement services, and services for married students and foreign students. A few years after Mueller's work was published, a 1966 report by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare identified 17 functional areas of student affairs in higher education: recruitment, admissions, nonacademic records, counseling, discipline, testing, financial aid, foreign students, nurse-care services, medical services, residence halls, married-student housing, job placement, student union, student activities, intramural athletics, and religious affairs (Ayers, Tripp, & Russel).

In 1977, Packwood described college personnel services as including admissions, financial aid, orientation, housing, student activities, student union, campus ministry, ombudsman, student discipline, campus security, health services, counseling, placement, and alumni services.

Robinson (1980) described the major student affairs functions as recruitment and admissions, counseling and advising, residence halls, health services, placement services, student activities, and financial assistance. Sandeen (1996) stated the functions of a comprehensive student affairs division at a university include such services as:

- admissions and recruitment,
- orientation,
- registration,
- financial aid,
- academic advising and support services,
- international student services,
- college unions and student activities offices,
- counseling services,
- career development,
- residence life,
- disabilities services,
- intercollegiate athletics,

- childcare services,
- student health services,
- food services,
- dean of students,
- community service and leadership programs,
- judicial affairs,
- recreation and fitness programs,
- student religious programs,
- special student populations,
- commuter student services, and
- program research and evaluation.

Sandeen added that several universities included the responsibility for veteran's affairs, outreach programs, testing, student legal services, speech and hearing clinics, and transfer centers within the organizational responsibility of student affairs. Rentz (1996) asserted that the predominate roles in student affairs are enrollment management, academic advising, career services, counseling, judicial affairs, multicultural affairs, orientation, residence life, student activities, student financial aid, and student health.

More recently, Kuk and Banning (2009) found that student affairs divisions are complex organizations whose structures vary greatly from institution to institution. The common functional areas they report include: counseling centers, residence life, career services, health centers, student activities, student centers, campus recreation, judicial affairs, academic advising and support services, disability services, multicultural student services, dean of students, and enrollment management (consisting of admissions, financial aid, and a registrar).

Community College Student Affairs

As Floyd (1991) illustrated, the 1937 *Student Personnel Point of View* and the 1949 *Student Personnel Point of View* established a basis for and provided direction for the student affairs profession. However, these publications did not address the specific needs of community college student affairs. While the composition of community college student populations differ

from that at four-year institutions (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Horn & Nevill, 2006; Provasnik & Planty, 2008), the functions of the student affairs department are similar to those of four-year institutions.

Mattox and Creamer (1998) found that the majority of U.S. community colleges include the following student services: recruitment, admissions, orientation, career counseling, records, educational testing, counseling, academic advisement, co-curricular activities, student government, registration, financial aid, job placement, enrollment services, student development services, and student special support services. Cohen and Brawer (2003) described the community college student affairs operation as consisting of recruitment and retention, counseling and guidance, orientation, extracurricular activities, financial aid, and program articulation.

A community college's size greatly impacts the size of the student affairs staff. Provasnik and Planty (2008) reported that 61% of community colleges have enrollments of less than 5,000 students, and 35% enroll less than 2,500 students. In contrast, only 38% of public four-year institutions have an enrollment of less than 5,000 students. Hirt (2006) pointed out that these smaller colleges have fewer student affairs employees than their larger counterparts—perhaps fewer than a dozen employees—but are charged with carrying out the same student affairs functions. While the administrative outcomes may be similar, the job responsibilities and day-to-day experiences of community college student affairs employees are very different. For example, at a community college, the academic advisers may be also be responsible for orientation, or counselors may handle personal counseling, career counseling, and academic advising. This shift from the traditional “silos” to a shared experience represents the larger shifts in student affairs organizations advocated by Manning, Kinzie, and Schuh (2006). Dassance

(1994) suggested linking all college functions to maximize student services' effectiveness—a shift occurring at many community colleges.

The collaborative environment extends beyond the student affairs division. Hirt (2006) reported that community college student affairs administrators reported more partnerships with faculty than at other types of institutions. Examples of successful student affairs-faculty partnerships at community colleges are first-year experience programs, learning communities, service learning, supplemental instruction, and student life programs (Frost, Strum, Downey, Schultz, & Holland, 2010). Student affairs-faculty collaboration are rooted in the belief that community college student affairs employees are more attuned to the institutional mission and are more focused on outcomes (student learning and student success) than at other types of higher education institutions (Hirt, 2006). Hirt further asserted that the collaborative nature of community college student affairs, plus the community college's natural proclivity to change, positions community colleges to take the lead in fostering partnerships with academic affairs.

A national study of 210 community college presidents and senior student affairs officers looked at challenges and opportunities for student affairs. The researchers found that 73% of respondents felt the role of student affairs would grow at their institution, due to increased demands for accountability, an increased influx of first-generation students, and increased enrollment of underprepared students (Helfgot & Culp, 2005). Senior student affairs officers who participated in the study suggested that their division would also be more involved, emphasizing student learning, student success, and student learning outcomes.

Primary Issues Facing Community College Student Affairs

Student learning has been a focus of student affairs since the mid-1990s, since the Student Learning Imperative stated that “enhancement of the student learning and personal development” should be the “primary goal of student affairs programs and services” (ACPA, 1996). O'Banion

extended this concept with his discussion of a community college as a “Learning College” (1997). The shift from teaching to learning has implications for student affairs, as learning is extended beyond the classroom (de la Teja & Kramer, 1999; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2010) and is now seen as a “complex, holistic, multi-centric activity that occurs throughout and across the college experience” (NASPA & ACPA, 2004, p. 6). The task for student affairs professionals is to ask what students can and should learn from their programs, services, and activities, and how to best assess, document, and publicize this learning (Helfgot, 2005).

The concept of student success originated in student affairs and was later adopted throughout the community college system (Helfgot & Culp, 1995). Success is more than student learning—success is the ability of students to parlay that learning to achieve a desired academic outcome and perform successfully in their chosen fields (Helfgot, 2005). Individual student success may be hard to define, as community college students have diverse goals that range from degrees or certifications, to passing a specific class, or from being prepared to either enter the workforce or transfer to a four-year institution (Zachry & Orr, 2009). The College Completion Agenda is based on the idea that student success is defined by a student graduating from college with a degree or certificate (Lee, & Rawls, 2010). Student affairs professionals help students achieve this measure of success in many ways, among which are orienting them to college life, providing appropriate academic advising to guide students along the proper track, implementing cocurricular activities that help students learn job skills necessary for the 21st-century workplace, fostering relationships with local businesses that may hire graduates, and ensuring articulation agreements are in place to facilitate students’ smooth transfers to upper-division institutions.

One challenge with focusing solely on completion as a measure of student success is that this focus assumes that all community college students hope to earn degrees or certificates. Community college students are more diverse than their peers at four-year institutions—they tend to be older, and enter the college with previous degrees (Helfgot, 2005). Older students often return to a community college to take one or two classes to bolster their educations, usually for a specific purpose related to job training. Often, this pattern is repeated several times, resulting in a group of students Helfgot refers to as “serial learners” (p. 12). Student affairs administrators need to develop ways to assess whether or not students achieved their desired academic goals, and this requires a focus on assessment to revise assumptions on student success, to ask the right questions, and to select and implement the right assessment instruments (Oburn, 2005).

The focus on student learning for student affairs has fostered an emphasis on student learning outcomes—the statements that specify what the learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. As the manner in which student affairs practitioners develop a culture of evidence on campus, assessing student learning outcomes from student affairs activities and services help demonstrate the role student affairs plays in supporting the college’s mission (Helfgot, 2005). Developing, measuring, and reporting student learning outcomes requires proficiencies in assessment, and can be used to demonstrate need, to document effectiveness, and to determine which services make a difference to students, as well as the extent of that difference (Oburn, 2005). The Council on the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) made student learning outcomes a cornerstone of the latest *CAS Professional Standards in Higher Education* publication (Dean, 2009), emphasizing the broad impact of the student learning movement on student affairs. As Oburn (2005) emphasized:

Replacing anecdotal cultures with cultures of evidence is not an easy task, but with committed student affairs leaders, partners, tools, and training, it can be done. Student affairs practitioners who rely on data to guide programming and budgeting decisions will strengthen the profession as well as their institutions by demonstrating that student affairs divisions offer quality programs that contribute significantly to student access, learning, and success. (p. 32)

Student Affairs Leadership

Within an institution, student affairs leadership is usually a senior management position, reporting to an institution's chief executive officer (CEO). In a study of 2,621 two-year and four-year institutions, Tull and Freeman (2008) found that the majority (54%) of senior student affairs officers held the title vice president or vice chancellor. The next most prevalent title was dean (34%), followed by director (8%). In examining only responses from community colleges, the results were similar: 48% vice president or vice chancellor, 40% dean, and 9% director (Tull & Freeman, 2008). This research reflected a shift from Smith's (2002) earlier findings, where a study of 201 CCSSAOs in the Southeast United States found that the predominant title was dean (43%). The second most popular title was vice president or vice chancellor (32%), followed by director or coordinator (13%).

Numerous studies have examined the demographics and educational backgrounds of CCSSAOs. Wilson-Strauss's 2005 study of 37 CCSSAOs found that the majority were female (62.2%), and 37.8% were male. This differed from Edwards (2005), whose study of 28 CCSSAOs in the Northeast United States reported that 64.3% were male, and 35.7% were female. The findings from Smith's (2002) larger sample ($N = 201$) of CCSSAOs in the Southeast United States found a larger majority of men (55.2%), with only 39.8% females (and 4.5% not reported). Keim's (2008) study had the largest sample size ($N = 300$), with results that fell in the middle of the previous studies, with 52% male and 48% female. Keim's large-sample study seemed to follow the 30-year trend observed in the literature. A 1972 nationwide study

found that only 15% of CCSSAOs were female; by 1984, this percentage increased to 26%, and to 39% by 1993 (Edwards, 2005). This shift reinforced an observation by Hamrick and Carlisle (1990), who wrote that far more women than men were entering the student affairs field.

Additional demographic features worth noting are age and ethnicity. Smith (2002) found that that average age of CCSSAOs in the Southeast United States is 48 years old. This was younger than Edwards' (2005) sample in the Northeast United States, where the majority was in the range of 50 – 59 years old (2005). Pertaining to ethnicity, Edwards' (2005) study of CCSSAOs found 68% Caucasian, 28% African American, and 4% of Hispanic origin. Smith's (2002) study only reported on Caucasian (74.1%) and African American (18.9%) ethnicities. The ethnicities of the remaining 7% of the sample were not reported.

Regarding highest degree earned by CCSSAOs, Piper (1981) found that 54% had master's degrees, and 39% had doctorates. Twenty years later, Smith's (2002) profile of CCSSAOs reported that 51% held master's degrees, and 42% held doctorates. More recently, Keim (2008) reported equivalent percentages (48%) for both master's degrees and doctorates. Both Smith and Keim found that a majority (62% and 56%, respectively) of the doctorates earned were EdDs; Keim also reported that 81% of the doctorates were in education.

Sandeen (1991) wrote the seminal book on the responsibilities of the senior student affairs officer. In his text, he described the primary roles as leader, manager, mediator, and educator. As a leader, the senior student affairs officer organizes and has administrative responsibility for multiple institutional programs and services that comprise the student affairs division, and builds a team within the division. In the manager role, the senior student affairs officer develops and implements a plan consistent with the college mission, secures and allocates financial resources to allow the division to achieve this vision, and regularly assesses the division, to allow for

recognition. As a mediator, the senior student affairs officer resolves disputes—usually in situations involving students—and encourages cooperation and collaboration. In the educator role, the senior student affairs officer supports the educational mission of the institution through policies and practices, and serves as an advocate for student growth and development.

Culp (2011) found that highly effective CCSSAOs share these five traits:

- They are leaders as well as managers and realize that no one-size-fits-all student affairs model exists;
- They connect student affairs to learning and the college to its students;
- They understand the competencies and knowledge of skills student affairs professionals and leverage these capabilities into college-wide partnerships with academic affairs;
- They know how to build trust, create teams, communicate effectively, motivate and inspire, and influence the college community; and
- They do not allow themselves to be fenced in; they view themselves as leaders in the college and the community, not just in student affairs. (p. 17)

Competencies

While competencies are a fairly modern convention in training and leadership development, many industries have found competencies useful for determining whether or not a candidate would be an appropriate match for a specific position, as well as identifying potential areas for growth and development of current employees. The modern use of competency-based human resources can be traced back to 1973, when McClelland proposed a set of competencies to be used as indicators of performance (Boyatzis, 2008). Today, industries ranging from health care to engineering to government have used core competency models to guide strategic improvement programs that address leadership and organizational culture (Calhoun et al., 2008).

As training tools, competencies provide a framework for establishing a training curriculum or agenda. The term *leadership competencies* is used to describe the set of behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that a person needs to provide leadership and positively impact an

organization at a particular time (McNamara, 2003). Stahl and Bjorkman (2006) defined leadership competencies as “a set of common personal characteristics to be found in leaders, which are needed for outstanding performance” (p. 60). Spencer and Spencer (1993) suggested that competencies are patterns of thinking that underscore behaviors, creating a long-term impact. Drawing from an anthropology and human resources background, Zwell (2000) explained that the practice of behavioral competencies can be used to establish a common, unifying foundation upon which corporate culture, hiring practices, and employee development strategies may be developed.

Boyatzis (2008) saw competencies as a behavioral approach to emotional, social, and cognitive intelligence. Emotional intelligence competencies draw on such concepts as self-awareness and emotional self-control. Social intelligence competencies manifest in social awareness and relationships, including teamwork and empathy. Cognitive intelligence competencies include systems thinking and pattern recognition.

A fourth dimension, cultural intelligence, was introduced by Chin and Gaynier (2006), to bring attention to unifying factors that undergird organizations and people. The authors asserted that in the global marketplace, cultural dynamics are critical to organizational transformation and leadership success. For an organization, culture includes shared values and guiding principles, and significantly impacts an organization’s profitability and overall performance.

The practical aspects of competencies were emphasized by Intagliata, Ulrich, and Smallwood (2000) in their description of a leadership brand. The authors stated that competencies are an important tool for leadership development because they provide direction to employees, are measurable, can be learned, and may help integrate management practices. Collectively, the competencies may help create a leadership brand and differentiate the

organization's "quality of management." Within the corporate marketplace, such distinctions have monetary value, as an Ernst and Young report (as cited in Intagliata, Ulrich, & Smallwood, 2000) showed that 30 – 40% of investor decisions may be linked to "quality of management" (p. 13). In higher education, such "investors" may be donors, legislators, or students trying to determine where to expend their resources.

Hernez-Broome and Hughes (2004) pointed out that leadership development in organizations takes place in a work environment through such methods as training programs, coaching and mentoring, action learning, and development assignments. The curricula used to guide this development is based on the organization's leadership competencies.

Different organizations present their competencies in different ways. Lombardo and Eichinger (2000) developed a general leadership competency frame with 67 individual competencies. Chin, Gu, and Tubbs (2001) introduced the Global Leadership Competency Model with eight hierarchical factors. The Maternal and Child Health Leadership Competencies (1999) contains 12 competencies divided into three categories. The U.S. Coast Guard (n.d.) developed a list of 28 leadership competencies items that fall within four categories.

Within higher education, several professional organizations have developed competencies for their members. These competencies are used to form curricula for training institutes, workshops, and certification programs. For example, Porter's (2005) research on the competencies of Chief Housing Officers enabled the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I, 2010) to develop a training model used at the annual National Housing Training Institute. Institute attendees use these competencies to complete a self-assessment, as a way to develop an individualized professional plan to help them realize their career goals.

One example of an association using competencies as the basis for a certification comes from the National Academic Advising Association (2003), which recently proposed the creation of an Advisor Certification program based on a framework called “National Academic Advisor Certification Standards.” This framework consists of 13 competencies organized into five categories. Another route was taken by NAFSA – Association of International Educators (NASFA), with their Statement of Professional Competencies for International Educators. Whereas the previous two professional organizations essentially created lists of competencies, NAFSA (2009) developed a statement that serves as a narration describing their members’ collective values and beliefs, and lists qualifications common for all international educators, in addition to smaller lists of qualifications for different types of positions common to NAFSA members.

Professional competencies in higher education are not limited to student affairs. EDUCAUSE, a higher education information technology association, examined leadership styles, knowledge-based competencies, and activity-based competencies to develop a model for effective information technology leadership (Nelson, 2003). The author explored the relationship between leadership styles and the different types of competencies, to describe what makes a chief information officer effective in higher education.

The competencies ACUHO-I and EDUCAUSE created were primarily for senior-level administrators. In contrast, the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO, 2006) expanded their competencies spectrum by developing three sets of competencies: one for chief business officers, one for the business office staff, and one for individuals with business and finance responsibilities who work in other units of the institution. The authors explained that they completed this project to identify core competencies and the

professional development needs of business professionals at different ranks and working in different environments within higher education.

General Competencies in Student Affairs

Beyond function-specific competencies, several attempts have been made to determine general competencies for student affairs professionals. Over 35 years ago, the Council of Student Personnel Associations in Higher Education (1975) identified three competencies, referred to as functions: administrative, instructive, or consulting. The administrative function is carried out by applying systematic approaches to human relationships, with an emphasis on community, coordination, supportive services, rules, and regulations. Administrative function concerns are primarily for accountabilities, program development, and a clear definition of rights and responsibilities. Instruction functions are focused on knowledge acquisition, teaching, and research. As educators, student affairs professionals who focus on the instruction function are well-equipped to provide teaching experiences outside the classroom. The consultant function is best characterized by the concept that students maintain responsibility for their own development, which the consultant fosters through counseling, collaborating, and facilitating.

Wade (1993) identified 14 professional competencies and 16 personal characteristics for student affairs professionals. Wade's research, which observed perceptions of senior student affairs officers, sought to determine which competencies and characteristics are most important for a new professional to advance within the student affairs field (Appendix C). Several years after Wade's research, Lovell and Kosten (2000) reported on necessary skills, knowledge, and personal traits for success in student affairs leadership. After examining 23 studies spanning 30 years of research on successful student affairs administration, Lovell and Kosten discovered a core set of skills, knowledge bases, and personal traits. The authors identified eight skills, six

knowledge bases, and two personal traits recommended throughout the literature for senior student affairs officers (Appendix D).

Hyman (1983) and Waple (2000) both developed lists of competencies for new student affairs professionals at four-year institutions. In research aimed at improving graduate preparation programs in student affairs, Hyman asked three groups (senior student affairs officers, chief housing officers, and graduate faculty teaching in student affairs preparation programs) to rate the importance of 33 competencies and how well they felt students acquired each competency. Based on feedback from a pilot study, Waple (2000) updated Hyman's list of competencies by adding practical skills. Waple's study, with a revised list of 28 competencies, asked the same questions as Hyman's study, but instead of involving faculty and senior staff, Waple's study focused on new professionals working in student affairs at four-year institutions. This approach provided insight to what knowledge was gained in graduate preparation programs, as well as what skills were actually needed in the workplace.

Herdlein (2004) surveyed 50 senior student affairs officers at four-year institutions, to gauge the effectiveness of student affairs graduate preparation programs in training new professionals on the knowledge, skills, and personal traits judged most important by senior student affairs officers. Herdlein found that the senior student affairs officers believed interpersonal development was most important, followed by practical competence, complex cognitive skills, and intrapersonal development. Furthermore, study respondents stated that the most critical traits needed for success in the field were the ability to work with diverse populations, effective communication, interpersonal skills, budgeting, knowledge of politics, collaboration skills, leadership ability, flexibility, and critical thinking.

ACPA – College Student Educators International (ACPA) developed a set of eight competencies, as a tool to help student affairs practitioners develop professional development plans:

- Advising and helping,
- Assessment, evaluation, and research,
- Ethics,
- Leadership and administration/management,
- Legal foundations,
- Pluralism and inclusion,
- Student learning and development, and
- Teaching. (p. 5)

Arising from a need for greater participation in assessment and accountability, the competencies were seen as a way to help professionals identify skill deficiencies, so these individuals could be intentional in seeking professional growth. Each of the eight competencies was developed with examples of basic, intermediate, and advanced skills, to demonstrate the potential depth found within the competency (ACPA, 2008).

The latest major effort to define competencies for student affairs practitioners builds on ACPA's work. Recently completed as a combined effort of ACPA and NASPA, a joint task force comprised of leaders from both organizations spent a year analyzing 19 documents previously published by ACPA, NASPA, and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), producing a comprehensive document with 10 competencies called *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners* (2010). Their 10 competencies are:

- Advising and helping;
- Assessment, evaluation, and research;
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion;
- Ethical professional practice;
- History, philosophy, and values;
- Human and organizational resources;
- Law, policy, and governance;

- Leadership;
- Personal foundations; and
- Student learning and development. (pp. 6–27)

Each competency is explained by listing a series of knowledge, skills, or attitudes that practitioners should be able to demonstrate. As with the earlier ACPA document, each competency is divided into basic, intermediate, or advanced levels, to demonstrate the professional growth that is expected to occur throughout a student affairs practitioner's career. The authors explained that the *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners* should be used to aid in curricula design for graduate preparation programs in student affairs, to assist with the design of professional development opportunities, and to be used by practitioners to conduct self-assessments, as a means to gauge and direct their professional development (ACPA & NASPA, 2010).

As Wilson-Strauss (2005) pointed out, most research on community college leadership is written from the executive perspective, and most research on leadership within student affairs is directed at the four-year institution, with little research conducted specifically on community college student affairs leadership. Wilson-Strauss (2005) replicated earlier studies by Hyman (1983) and Waple (2000), with a focus on community college student affairs. Wilson-Strauss developed a list of 25 competencies (Appendix E), derived primarily from a 1991 paper produced by a joint ACPA/NASPA commission that was supplemented by analyzing student affairs literature. His research on graduate preparation programs in student affairs aimed to determine the extent to which competencies of CCSSAOs were being taught in graduate preparation programs. His study also asked CCSSAOs to rate the importance of the 25 competencies. CCSSAOs indicated that the four most important competencies for new CCSSAOs were effective written and oral communication, ethics, personnel management, and

problem solving. Conversely, the lowest ranked competencies were risk taking, advising students, physical resource management, and research models and methods.

In one of the few articles focused on competencies for CCSSAOs, Laws (2011) argued that the emphases should be to think and act entrepreneurially, develop and utilize problem-solving and decision-making skills pertaining to a wide range of issues, be prepared to manage a multigenerational staff, and be adept at developing and maintaining partnerships with external constituencies that may help the division fulfill its mission. The entrepreneurial CCSSAO promotes innovation, risk taking, and creativity. A flat organizational structure and the flexible, outward focus that defines the community college (Hirt, 2006) lend themselves to an entrepreneurial spirit. Today's community colleges students are more diverse than in previous generations, and these students present a variety of mental health issues that require careful consideration to ensure the health and well-being of the college community (Traynor, 2009). Laws (2011) explained the CCSSAO's role in making decisions about these students, and how the decisions impact the entire college. Sandeen (1996) asserted that the manager role of the senior student affairs involves supervision and oversight of departments and their employees. Laws (2011) discussed the intricacies that derive from having members of up to four generations (traditionalists, baby boomers, generation Xers, and millennials) working in one office, and the importance of a good administrator to understand each employee's needs. Finally, Laws's mention of effective partnerships referred to working with business or community agencies to provide services students need, including housing, health care, and opportunities for internships, co-ops, and observations sites.

Competencies for Community College Leaders

There has been much research on leadership development in higher education, and several opinions have been published on the skills, characteristics, and attributes a successful collegiate

leader should possess. Community college leadership, as a subset of this body of literature, has been discussed for at least 25 years. Much of the literature focuses on executive leadership, although the concepts are transferable to other areas of leadership within higher education, including student affairs.

Campbell (1985) identified four overarching challenges facing community college leaders, along with adaptive strategies for meeting each challenge, and suggested a list of competencies related to each strategy. This list of challenges, adaptive strategies, and competencies (Appendix F) was developed to help community college presidents take advantage of what their fellow presidents learned while addressing these issues. Even though this list is 25 years old, the competencies are still relevant and reappear in more recent publications.

To develop a definition of the characteristic and skills that the next generation of community college leaders must possess, Hammons and Keller (1990) asked sitting community college presidents, “What should be the competencies and personal characteristics of future community college presidents?” The presidents rated a list of 62 competencies divided into three categories based on Stodgill’s (1974) classic *Handbook of Leadership*: leadership skills, group-related skills, and personal characteristics. Thirty-six additional items from community college leadership and business literature were added to the 26 items found in Stodgill’s text (Appendix G). Hammons and Keller found a consensus on 23 competencies, and stability on 18 items.

As the end of the 20th century drew near, the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges (1988) stated that the leadership provided by community college presidents would be the key to an institution’s success in the face of impending challenges, and that a new model of executive leadership would be needed in the next century. To help meet this challenge, Duncan and Harlacher (1991) described five leadership competencies for community college presidents.

Following a literature review and a survey of 10 sitting presidents, they proposed five leadership competencies for community college presidents:

- Institutional vision and revitalization,
- Ethical leadership,
- Institutional empowerment and transformation,
- Political leadership, and
- Institutional conceptualization and survival. (p. 41)

Additionally, Duncan and Harlacher concluded that successful community college executives should possess the following characteristics, qualities, and traits:

- Innate personality characteristics: self-confidence, ambition and drive, persistence, consistency, a sense of humor, and a positive orientation;
- Interpersonal traits: compassion, people orientation, friendliness, and sensitivity to the needs of different constituencies;
- Ethical/moral qualities: firmness, trustworthiness, integrity, and honesty;
- Intellectual traits: wisdom, superior judgment, independence of thought, intelligence, decisiveness, creativity, and innovation; and
- Physical qualities: stamina and high levels of energy. (p. 40)

Pierce and Pederson (1997) examined qualities of successful community college presidents. They found that the three most important personal traits were personal adaptability, role flexibility, and sound judgment. Adaptability matters relate to responding to changes in student demographics, legislative mandates, or changing economic conditions. The collaborative nature of community colleges requires a president be adept at working with community agencies, organizations, businesses. Most importantly, the president must be skilled at making sound decisions. This involves listening to others, asking good questions, accessing reliable data from reliable sources, and possessing a strong sense of autonomy to make decisions free of external pressures.

Brown, Martinez, and Daniel (2002) identified 48 potential skills for community college leaders, organized into 10 categories (Appendix H). The top 10 recommended skills, as ranked by all 128 respondents, were:

- Conflict resolution, mediation, and negotiation skills,
- Effective writing skills,
- Institutional effectiveness: assessment and analysis,
- Developing and communicating a vision,
- Effective listening and feedback skills,
- Understanding of interpersonal communication,
- Understanding and application of “change,”
- Understanding of collaborative decision making,
- Understanding of the community college mission, and
- Effective public speaking skills. (p. 57)

It is noteworthy that 9 of the top 10 most important recommended skills for community colleges leaders fell into leadership and communication categories.

More recent studies included Wallin’s (2006) study on short-term leadership programs and Hockaday and Puyear’s (2008) research on traits and skills for community college leaders.

Wallin (2006) developed to a framework for GYOL development workshops with three emphasis areas: skills orientation, relationship orientation, and personal concerns. Skills orientation refers to specific tasks, including resource development, budget development, legal issues, and conflict resolution. Relationship orientation refers to motivation and teambuilding. Personal concerns address areas of family and individual wellness. While asserting that there is no typical leader, Hockaday and Puyear (2008) provided a list of desired traits and skills for community college leaders:

- Vision,
- Integrity,
- Confidence,
- Courage,
- Technical knowledge,
- Collaborators,

- Persistence,
- Good judgment, and
- Desire to lead. (pp. 1–3)

American Association of Community Colleges *Competencies for Community College Leaders*

The competencies examined in this study, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) *Competencies for Community College Leaders*, originated out of a 2003 Kellogg Foundation grant awarded to address the national need for community college leaders. Known as Leading Forward, AACC convened a series of four one-day leadership summits designed to build consensus around a core set of knowledge, values, and skills needed to lead community colleges, and how best to impart this core set for long-term effectiveness. Panel participants included practitioners, educators, and trainers who were engaged in community college leadership development. Qualitative data from these summits were analyzed and used to create a set of core competencies required to provide effective community college leadership. A 2004 survey sent to all leadership summit participants was used to confirm the critical competencies. Based on the survey feedback, the AACC board of directors approved the *Competencies for Community College Leaders* in 2005. The six primary competency domains were:

- **ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY:** An effective community college leader strategically improves the quality of the institution, protects the long-term health of the organization, promotes the success of all students, and sustains the community college mission, based on knowledge of the organization, its environment, and future trends.
- **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:** An effective community college leader equitably and ethically sustains people, processes, and information as well as physical and financial assets to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals of the community college.
- **COMMUNICATION:** An effective community college leader uses clear listening, speaking, and writing skills to engage in honest, open dialogue at all levels of the college and its surrounding community, to promote the success of all students, and to sustain the community college mission.

- **COLLABORATION:** An effective community college leader develops and maintains responsive, cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical internal and external relationships that nurture diversity, promote the success of all students, and sustain the community college mission.
- **COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADVOCACY:** An effective community college leader understands, commits to, and advocates for the mission, vision, and goals of the community college.
- **PROFESSIONALISM:** An effective community college leader works ethically to set high standards for self and others, continuously improve self and surroundings, demonstrate accountability to and for the institution, and ensure the long-term viability of the college and community. (pp. 4–6)

The six competency domains were further explained by 45 individual leadership competencies, which formed the nucleus of the document (Appendix A).

Along with the approved core set, the AACC *Competencies* also approved five principles of leadership designed to aid in the appreciation and use of the AACC *Competencies*:

- Leadership can be learned.
- Many members of the community college community can lead.
- Effective leadership is a combination of effective management and vision.
- Learning leadership is a lifelong process, the movement of which is influenced by personal and career maturity as well as other development processes.
- The leadership gap can be addressed through a variety of strategies such as college GYOL programs, AACC council and university programs, state system programs, residential institutes, caching, mentoring, and on-line and blended approaches.

In Duree's (2007) study based on the AACC *Competencies*, 415 community college presidents rated the 45 individual leadership competencies from the six domains, to determine how these individuals perceived their levels of preparation for their first presidencies and the level of importance they attributed to each of the 45 leadership competencies. The competencies within the organizational strategy and communication domains were rated highest in importance, with 95.8% and 95.4% of respondents rating them as very important or important, respectively. Resource management was rated the third most important domain, with 94.0% of respondents

rating the competencies as very important or important. The competencies within the collaboration domain were rated very important or important by 91.4% of respondents. Similarly, 88.1% of the sample rated the community college advocacy competencies very important or important. The competency domain rated least important was the professionalism domain, with only 78.4% of respondents rating its competencies as very important or important.

For each of the 45 leadership competencies, the community college presidents in the sample provided higher importance ratings than preparedness ratings. The six items for which respondents felt least prepared, with less than 70% rating themselves very prepared or prepared, were:

- Contribute to the profession through professional development programs, professional organizational leadership, and research/publication (60.5%);
- Take an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources (61.4%);
- Manage stress through self-care, balance, adaptability, flexibility, and humor (65.3%);
- Work effectively and diplomatically with unique constituent groups such as legislators, board members, business leaders, accreditation organizations, and others (66.0%);
- Demonstrate cultural competence relative to a global society (66.3%); and
- Demonstrate transformational leadership through authenticity, creativity, and vision (69.4%). (pp. 85–89)

Of these six lowest-rated items on the preparedness scale, three are in the professional domain—the domain rated lowest in importance.

Leadership Development for Community College Student Affairs

As the literature makes clear, there is no one way in which community college leaders are trained (AACC, 2005; Campbell, 2002; Duree, 2007; Friedel, 2010; Hockaday & Puyear, 2008; Piland & Wolf, 2003; Ullman, 2010; Watts & Hammons, 2002). Among the ways to prepare community colleges leaders are:

- University-based graduate programs in community college leadership or higher education administration;
- Leadership institutes organized by national professional associations (AACC, ACPA, League for Innovation in Community Colleges, NASPA, National Council on Student Development [NCSD], etc.); and
- GYOL programs organized by individual institutions, a group of institutions, or a state system.

The following sections explore each of these leadership preparation methods more in-depth.

University-Based Graduate Programs

Brown et al. (2002) felt that a doctorate should be a prerequisite to obtaining a community college leadership position. Tunks (2007) stated that it is unusual for a college administrator to attain an executive-level position without a terminal degree. Duvall (2003) asserted that, as community colleges look for new leadership, they often focus on individuals who earned a doctoral degree in community college leadership or higher education leadership. Recent studies by Duree (2007) and Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) suggested that 87 – 90% of community college executives hold doctorates. While these terminal degrees are from a range of academic specialties, the majority hold doctorates in education, including many in community college leadership.

Amey (2006) contended that university-based programs in community college leadership take many different forms, including for-credit or noncredit, degree or certificate, and skill-based or theoretical. With all these differences, certain characteristics are consistent, largely because the programs uniformly cater to working professionals. The essential characteristics of these leadership programs include:

- Accessible,
- Low cost,
- High quality,
- Tailored for working professionals,
- Provide mentoring opportunities, and

- Allow for personal reflection and assessment. (p. 1)

Bragg (2002) and Amey (2006) reviewed the composition of several university-based graduate programs in community college leadership. Both found that many programs use learning communities or cohorts, internships, technology-based learning, and connections to local community college leaders.

Learning communities or cohort-based learning structures are programs where students are admitted as a group and take the same set of courses together, as they progress toward a degree. These systems often rely on group projects, leading to feelings of teamwork and connectedness, and a commitment to the program—all of which are often lacking for part-time students. These cohorts develop into strong networks that aid in program completion and lead to professional development and career advancement long after the doctorate has been earned.

Internships provide opportunities to apply theory to practice. For students who are full-time professionals, internships may provide them with a short-term work experience in a different setting than their regular workplaces, thus adding to their portfolio of experiences with student affairs. For students who are not working, an internship provides improved insight to the workplace and a chance for discussions, shadowing, networking, and mentorship.

Appropriate use of technology as a learning tool can help a cohort stay connected, and may help working professionals participate in classes without traveling to the university. Amey (2006) described a course structure where students and faculty meet in person for a weekend once a month, and spent the intermediate time using technology to communicate and collaborate. With many community colleges utilizing distance learning, this experience helps administrators develop a more in-depth understanding of their students' academic experiences.

Both Bragg (2002) and Amey (2006) stressed how important connections are to the local community college. Presidents and other senior administrations may serve as adjunct faculty or guest lecturers. They may create a culture that supports the program, by establishing policies that enable their employees to enroll in a doctoral degree program, either by allowing flexible work hours and/or by paying tuition, fees, and/or books for their employees taking classes in the program. They may also host classes on their campuses, making the educational program more accessible to their employees. Outcome data collected by Amey (2006) suggested:

- Students are satisfied with their experiences and learning outcomes;
 - The material is important and beneficial to them in their current jobs and future aspirations;
 - The networks they develop are significant; and
 - They are more willing to assume leadership responsibilities, even while in the same jobs.
- (p.16)

Sustaining these positive outcomes and meeting the diverse needs of community colleges requires some flexibility and scalability on the part of the university-based program, as the demand for these programs grows in response to the leadership gap.

It is also important to assess how well the university-based graduate programs prepare their graduates for leadership positions. Duree (2007) found that there was no significant difference between how community colleges presidents rated their preparation for the AACCC *Competencies* based on the highest degree earned. Even though 90% of the participants in Duree's study possessed a doctorate, the findings suggested that having a doctorate does not guarantee that a person is prepared to assume a community college presidency.

Leadership Development Programs

Hockaday and Puyear (2008) asserted that professional organizations should assist in preparing community college leaders. Tunks (2007) found 44 different leadership programs for

community college administrators offered by different professional associations and advertised by the AACC. Largely aimed at the executive, these programs include the AACC's Future Leaders Institute, Future Leaders Institute Advanced, the Presidents Academy Summer Institute, and the New CEO Institute. Others programs sponsored by professional community college-based associations include the American Council on Education's Fellows Program, the National Community College Hispanic Council's Leadership Fellows Program, the League for Innovation in the Community College's Executive Leadership Institute, National Institute for Leadership Development "Leaders" Workshops and The CEO Experience, and The Chair Academy's Foundation Leadership Academy and Advanced Leadership Academy.

Professional associations for student affairs administrators offer a significant number of leadership development experiences. These include ACPA's Mid-Level Management Institute and Senior Student Affairs Officer Symposium, NASPA's Institute for Aspiring Senior Student Affairs Officers, Institute for New Senior Student affairs Officers, Manicur Symposium, Stevens Institute, the Student Services Institute for Community and Two-Year Colleges, and the National Council on Student Development's Community College Student Development Leadership Institute. Associations that focus on specific functional areas of student affairs offer their own leadership development experiences, including ACUHO-I (National Housing Training Institute), Association of College Unions – International (Women's Leadership Institute and Indiana Professional Development Seminar), and Association for Student Conduct Administration (Donald D. Gehring Academy for Student Conduct Administration). Institutions have support for developing GYOL development workshops, using the AACC *Competencies* as the basis of curricula (AACC, 2005). Individual institutions, teams of colleges, or state agencies usually

coordinate these workshops. Carroll and Romero (2003) advocated that institutions work together to develop these short-term leadership experiences.

Even with an established curriculum, the process to develop such a program can be daunting. Jeandron (2006) described four stages for GYOL program development: plan, develop, deliver, and strengthen. The planning phase includes involving key personnel, including the president, senior administrators, faculty, and members of the governance board. Programs funding should also be allocated during the planning phase. The development phase features curriculum design and selecting the participants and faculty based on interests, qualifications, and diversity. The delivery phase is implementation of the program itself, which should include elements of team-building, networking, and mentoring. Strengthening is accomplished by listening to feedback from a thorough program assessment provided by both participants and program instructors.

Tunks (2007) analyzed the impact leadership workshop attendance on 23 community college employees working at two Florida institutions. Prior to attending the workshop, the study participants took the Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ), an instrument that generates a personality profile across 32 dimensions. Following workshop completion, the OPQ was administered a second time, and the data collected was examined to determine if participating in the leadership development program resulted in a change in leadership style, as measured by the OPQ. The analysis of pretest and posttest scores found no significant difference between the groups as whole. Additionally, the analysis of pretest and posttest scores did not indicate that gender had a statistically significant impact on the outcomes.

Duree's (2007) study of 415 community college presidents examined their perceptions of their preparedness for the 45 leadership competencies contained within the six domains of the

AACC Competencies. Just over 50% of the sample participated in a formal leadership development program prior to assuming their first presidency. Respondents who participated in a formal leadership program perceived themselves as less prepared for the *AACC Competencies* than those who did not participate in such a program. This finding should not be perceived as diminishing the positive impact of attending leadership development programs. Rather, this finding may indicate that attending a leadership development program made future presidents' realize the complexities and scope of their positions, and this realization may have lead to their reporting themselves as less prepared.

Mentoring

Lankau and Scandura (2007) described mentoring as a forum for personal learning and development within organizations. The authors contended that a successful mentoring program will advance the organization by building a learning organization, developing future leaders, and strengthening employee diversity. Likewise, the value and role of mentoring is expressed throughout literature on community college leadership development (Campbell, Sved, & Morris, 2010; Fulton-Calkins & Milling, 2005; Hockaday & Puyear, 2008; McDade, 2005; Phelan, 2005; VanDerLinden, 2005; Weisman & Vaughan, 2002). In response to the need for trained leaders, Hockaday and Puyear (2008) stated that national, state, and local community college organizations should identify, train, and mentor prospective leaders for community colleges. Weisman and Vaughan (2002) felt that forming mentoring relationships should be part of any GYOL program. McDade (2005) explained that mentoring relationships are learning processes that produce administrative skills and socialization.

Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005) identified mentoring programs as a way of assisting with the transition of individuals from one role to another. They advocated for continual leadership learning opportunities through succession planning. This includes recognizing

anticipated vacancies of key positions in a timely fashion, identifying a diverse group of employees who could potentially fill those vacancies, and providing leadership development experiences for those individuals, including assigning a mentor. Mentors should be selected from within the institution, to offer the necessary guidance and support to ease the transition. Watkins (2003) asserted that the first 90 days of leaders' tenures in a new role is critical to establish themselves and succeed. A mentor can help smooth the transition, allowing more immediate success.

Tunks (2007) looked at the impact of a "community college leadership program on the leadership behaviors of community college administrators" (p. 14). Tunks reported that mentoring emerged as a distinctive theme, when study participants were asked to reflect on what they would have done differently to ensure success, and what advice they would give to others. Specifically, the participants affirmed that they would treat mentoring differently (i.e., find one faster or utilize theirs more than they did), or they would encourage others to have a mentor.

Phelan (2005) advocated for mentoring in the form of an intergenerational leadership program, to fill gaps he identified in existing university-based graduate preparation programs. Phelan envisioned a program where senior community college administrators are brought together on a regular basis to prepare the next generation of community college leaders, by sharing their experiences on a number of practicalities associated with the community college system, including "labor relations, advancing institutional financing through economic development, foundation board relations, legislative and congressional relations, board/president relations, policy governance, higher education law, visioning and strategic planning, and media and community relations" (p. 785). Phelan also discussed the importance of relationships as an essential byproduct of the mentoring relationship.

Roper (2002) saw relationships as a primary reason why some student affairs administrators are more effective than others. He argued that young professionals often “fail to grasp the importance of developing and responsibly managing relationships” with faculty, peers, supervisors, and senior administrators, in part because they are so busy with the details of their positions (p. 11). Participation in mentoring relationships may help new student affairs professionals be more successful, as mentors often help mentees see the “bigger picture” (VanDerLinden, 2005).

Given the field’s roots as a helping profession, Carpenter and Stimpson (2007) posited that mentoring is an effective method of facilitating professional development within student affairs. Within this context, Cooper and Miller (1998) explained mentoring as “the relationships established from interactions resulting from professional concern and desire to facilitate the professional development of others” (p. 56). They described the value found in personal, intimate interactions with other professionals as useful in professional development for student affairs. Cooper and Miller asked 365 experienced NASPA members (excluding graduate students and new professionals) to describe three “personal influencers,” defined as

people who have helped you develop a sense of who you are, personally and professionally, and how you view yourself as a student affairs practitioner. Personal influencers will tend to be people with whom you worked, spent professional time, or who provided you with supervision or mentoring. They may be institutional colleagues or professional colleagues through various organizations/associations. These are people with whom you may have developed a close working interpersonal relationship. (p. 62)

Study participants most often identified their “personal influencers” as supervisors (55%), faculty members (18%), internship supervisors (14%), and colleagues or coworkers (8%). As a whole, participants were more likely to identify men than women, though women were more likely to identify other women. Participants most often used the term *mentor* to describe the significant relationship. Finally, respondents reported what made their relationships significant,

and what the personal influencers did or said that made an impact. Cooper and Miller found that the responses were connected to qualities of guidance (described as personality traits or interpersonal behaviors), role modeling (leadership qualities and negative traits), and career support (career guidance and professional development). Based on their findings, Cooper and Miller made a case for establishing a formal mentoring program within the context of student affairs employment.

Twale and Jelinek (1996) explored the mentoring experiences of female senior student affairs officers in the Southeast United States. Of the 40 women in their sample, 60% had a mentor while still in graduate school; of these, 56% of the mentors were female. As new professionals, slightly fewer (56%) reported having mentors, though a greater percentage of these mentors were female (64%). A majority of the female senior student affairs officers in Twale and Jelinek's study (80%) indicated that they served as mentors for one or more graduate students or new professionals, usually women. About a decade after Twale and Jelinek's research, Duree's (2007) study of community college presidents showed that just under half of respondents (49.4%) participated in a mentoring relationship as a protégé. Conversely, over 85% of respondents were participating in a mentoring relationship as a mentor.

Summary

Leadership development for CCSSAOs is complex and multifaceted, with needs based on a number of variables. For example, CCSSAO leadership development must be examined through the lenses of both the institution type and nature of the student affairs field in which these individuals work. To provide a context for further exploring these concepts, this chapter reviewed the history and state of both community colleges and student affairs, and introduced the concept of competencies.

Competencies include the behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that a person needs to provide leadership to positively impact an organization at a particular time. CCSAOs have an opportunity to develop competencies germane to both the field of student affairs and to the community college. These competencies, including the six domain competencies found within the AACC *Competencies*, may be learned through a variety of formal methods, including formal graduate education, leadership development programs, and mentoring relationships.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of chapter three is to outline the procedures used in this study and the methods use for analyzing the data. The statement of purpose is restated, along with the specific research questions developed for this study. This chapter also includes information relating to the research population, instrument development, validity and reliability, endorsement of the study, administration of the instruction, data analysis, and summary.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to assess CCSSAOs' demographics, educational backgrounds, and leadership development experiences, as related to their mastery of the leadership skills outlined in the *AACC Competencies*, and to determine which of these leaderships skills is deemed most critical for CCSSAOs to perform their jobs effectively. Furthermore, the study examined CCSSAOs' perceptions of their preparedness for the *AACC Competencies*, and explored a variety of methods for providing leadership development. To these ends, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the general demographic characteristics, professional backgrounds, and leadership experiences of current community college senior student affairs officers in the United States?
2. Is there a relationship between the community college senior student affairs officers' perceptions of importance of the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* and their perception of their preparedness for those skills when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?
3. To what extent do the highest degrees earned by community college senior student affairs officers influence how they rate their preparedness on the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?
4. To what extent do the differences in leadership preparation outside of formal education influence how they rate their preparedness on the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?

5. To what extent do differences in institutional characteristics (specifically, institution size, setting, structure, and highest degree offering) affect the reported importance of the AACC *Competencies*?
6. Which leadership experiences do current community college senior student affairs officers believe best prepared them to serve in this capacity, and what do they wish they had done differently to prepare for their first community college senior student affairs officer position?

Instrument Development

A quantitative survey research design was used to address the research questions.

Quantitative survey research design allows researchers to collect data from a sample at one point in time via a questionnaire (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). An electronic, Web-based questionnaire was developed as the survey instrument for the target population. Web-based surveys have been shown to provide efficiencies for the researcher and the participants, allowing for an increased response rate (Porter, 2004).

As a study on community college leadership that focused on the AACC *Competencies*, this study adapted a survey that was previously developed for a similar study on community college presidents. *The Community College Presidency: Demographics and Leadership Preparation Factors Survey* was developed by researchers at the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and the Office of Community College Research and Policy at Iowa State University, under the leadership of Larry Ebbers, university professor, and Frankie Santos Laanan, associate professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (Duree, 2007). During the course of this survey's development, it was subjected to rigorous tests for reliability and validity, underwent external review by leading researchers, piloted with a small group of community college presidents, and received the endorsement of the AACC's then-CEO, George Boggs (Duree, 2007).

The survey used in this study was adapted with Ebberts's permission from *The Community College Presidency: Demographics and Leadership Preparation Factors Survey* (Appendix B). This new instrument, *The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer: Demographics and Leadership Survey*, was developed by a researcher working under the direction of Dale Campbell, professor, School of Human Development and Organizational Studies in Education at the University of Florida. This community college president survey was modified to focus on community college student affairs administrators. The Office of Educational Research, housed within the College of Education at the University of Florida, provided support in modifying and refining the instrument. Additional support came from the Santa Fe College Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

The survey was developed and designed to be administered as a Web-based survey. Before the sample was notified by email about participating in the survey, the instrument was externally reviewed by a panel of leading researchers in the community college student affairs field, and also was juried by a group of 10 current CCSSAOs. In addition, the University of Florida Institutional Review Board granted approval for this research.

Endorsement of the Study

As stated by Berdie, Anderson, and Neibuhr (1986), "The endorsement of key individuals or organizations has a major effect on the attitude of people being asked to participate in the survey and is helpful in achieving a high response rate" (p. 9). The survey was reviewed by and received the endorsement of the NCSDE. The NCSDE endorsement was sought because of the organization's status as an affiliate of the AACC, and because the NCSDE is an "organization solely dedicated to serving the needs of student development professionals in the community college. NCSDE is the nation's primary voice for sharing knowledge, expertise, professional

development and student advocacy for community college student development professionals” (NCSD, 2010a).

A letter of endorsement for this study was provided by Tom Walter, NCSD President (Appendix I). This letter provided an explanation of the objective and use of the study and encouraged CCSSAOs to participate. This letter was emailed to the research population in the initial correspondence regarding the launch of the online survey, and was included with each subsequent communication to the research population.

Research Population

The research population for this study included all CCSSAOs at U.S. two-year colleges, who were listed in either the *2011 Higher Education Directory* or the *2010 NCSD Membership Directory*. The *Higher Education Directory* was selected to solicit participants because it is the successor to the U.S. Department of Education’s *Education Directory* and has published directory information on accredited colleges and universities for 25 years (Higher Education Publications, Inc., 2010). Since the NCSD endorsed the study, all CCSSOs who were NCSD members were added to the sample.

The *2011 Higher Education Directory* listed 1,427 individuals classified as either Chief Student Life Officer or Director, Student Affairs, working at two-year colleges (NCSD, 2010b). The group was refined by eliminating 442 individuals who work at institutions outside the United States, do not work at two-year institutions, or were not identified as senior student affairs officer by their institutions. This resulted in a group of 985 individuals for the sample.

The *2010 NCSD Membership Directory* contained 216 individuals, along with their institutions and titles. This group was refined by eliminating 147 individuals who either work at institutions outside the United States or were not identified as the senior student affairs officers at their institutions. This resulted in 69 eligible individuals who could be added to the sample.

Since the intent of this study was to gather responses from as broad a sample as possible, the entire population of CCSSAOs listed in the *2010 Higher Education Directory* and the *2010 NCSD Membership Directory* were used as a sample. Eliminating 16 duplicates produced a final list of 1,038 individuals.

Survey Instrument

Data were collected using *The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer: Demographics and Leadership Survey*. This survey was designed after conducting an extensive review of the literature that discussed community college president and CCSSAO demographics, professional backgrounds, educational preparations, and roles and responsibilities (Duree, 2007; Edwards, 2005; Kubala & Bailey, 2001; McFarlin, Crittenden, & Ebbers, 1999; Sandeen, 1991; Smith, 2002; Wade, 1993; Weisman & Vaughn, 2007). The instrument used by Duree (2007) to examine community college presidents' demographic and leadership preparation was adapted to answer this study's research questions. The types of inventories used to measure the 41 items on the survey instrument included categorical responses (for demographic data), dichotomous responses (i.e., *yes* and *no*), numerical scales, four-point Likert-type scales (e.g., *not important* to *very important*; *not prepared* to *very prepared*), and open-ended responses (Appendix B).

The items in the instrument were organized into seven sections: (a) individual and institutional demographics; (b) career pathways; (c) leadership preparation; (d) faculty, staff, and public relations; (e) research and publications; (f) competencies for community college leaders; and (g) conclusion.

Individual and institutional demographics. The first section of the instrument was designed to provide demographic and professional information about respondents and a description of their current educational institutions. Individual demographic data collected included age, gender, and race/ethnicity. Professional information collected included title and

educational background (highest degree earned and major field of study in that degree). The institutional demographics explored institution size, setting, structure, and the types of degrees offered. The institution size and setting categories used in this study were adapted from an Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System report summarized on the AACC Website (AACC, 2003).

Career pathways. The purpose of this section was to determine career tracks for CCSSAOs. Questions asked in this section explored the number of different student affairs positions held, the number of years in the present position, and the number of years working in student affairs, plus the previous position, number of years working in community college student affairs, university student affairs, and other positions (both inside and outside higher education), teaching experiences, and career aspirations.

Leadership preparation. The third section asked participants to describe their involvement with any formal and informal leadership development activities outside of their degree programs. A variety of strategies exist to bolster leadership in higher education, including institution-based and state-based GYOL programs, leadership institutes offered through professional organizations, corporate training and coaching, mentoring, and online approaches (AACC, 2005; Hockaday & Puyear, 2008; Ullman, 2010). Questions in this section sought to learn about the importance of graduate program cohorts and faculty, peers at community colleges, social and business networks, mentorships, and formal leadership programs.

Faculty, staff, and public relations. This segment explored CCSSAOs' additional responsibilities and interactions, both within their institutions and in their communities. For example, respondents could indicate external boards on which they served, and individuals or

groups they meet or speak with on a weekly basis. This section presented an opportunity to explore who CCSSAOs interact with, both on campus and in the community.

Research and publications. This section provided an opportunity to assess CCSSAOs' professional experiences, by reviewing their contributions to research literature. While Duree (2007) found that a majority of community college presidents had not recently published, previous studies found correlations between research and publication with traits of outstanding community college leaders (McFarlin, Crittenden, & Ebbers, 1999).

Competencies for community college leaders. The sixth phase of the survey was based on the six domains established in the *AACC Competencies* (2005). This phase asked respondents to rate the importance of and their level of preparedness for the 45 individual leadership competencies connected to organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism. Data collected during this section of the instrument was used to assess the overall preparedness and to identify areas of greater importance, where greater emphasis should be made to prepare future CCSSAOs.

Conclusion. The final survey section asked CCSSAOs to recall how prepared they felt when they assumed their first CCSAO positions. Respondents were also given the opportunity to reflect on what leadership development experiences they valued most as preparation for their first CCSSAO positions. Following this reflection, respondents could provide a narrative description of what they wish they had done differently to prepare for their first CCSSAO position.

Administration of Survey Instrument

Once the survey items were finalized, the instrument was programmed for online administration via a secure Web application and was juried by a group of 10 CCSSAOs.

Revisions were made based on feedback from the jury. In addition to these modifications, the Web survey instrument was tested prior to distribution. To protect the study's integrity, the results were stored in a secure, password-protected online database that could only be accessed by the researcher and would not contain any identifiable fields, including an Internet Protocol (IP) address.

On Tuesday, January 11, 2011, an email was sent to the sample of 1,038 eligible individuals to explain the study and to invite them to participate. This email contained the letter on NCSD letterhead, signed by Dr. Walter, and affirmed NCSD's support of the study. The following Thursday, January 20, 2011, a follow-up email containing identical information was sent to the entire the sample, less individuals who asked to be removed from the email list. The third and final email reminder was sent on Wednesday, February 2, 2011, to the entire sample, less those who had requested no further contact.

Each email contained complete instructions for accessing the online survey, including a hyperlink. A phone number and return email address were also provided, so members of the sample could ask any questions they had about the study or the instrument. The final reminder also included the survey closing date (February 11, 2011), after which no further responses would be collected.

Surveys were completed from January 11 until February 11, 2011. A total of 342 responses were collected. Data were downloaded from the online database and organized into a spreadsheet. A coding manual was developed that identified categorical variable names and response codes for the survey. Open-ended text responses were recorded in a separate spreadsheet.

Results

Of the 1,038 email addresses for the sample, 63 email addresses failed due to soft bounces, technical failures, invalid users, or content blocks, reducing the sample to 975. The final 342 respondents included 19 respondents who stated that they were not CCSSAOs; these were classified as ineligible, reducing the sample to 956 (Table 3-1). The responses also included 28 cases with partially completed instruments. Fifteen of the partially completed cases did not provide enough information to justify including them in the data set. However, 13 partially completed cases did provide sufficient information in their responses to include them in the data set. Adding these 13 to the 295 fully completed cases who identified themselves as CCSSAOs increased the total number of acceptable completions to 308. Based on the eligible sample of 956, the final response rate was 32.2% (Table 3-2).

Data Analysis Procedures

Using the IBM® Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)® version 19, several statistical data analyses were performed, including *t* tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and tests of reliability. Content analysis was performed to analyze data collected from the open-ended responses. The *t* tests are performed to compare the means of two groups, to determine if the differences between the groups are significant (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Paired *t* tests were used to determine differences between importance and preparedness ratings for the each of six leadership competency domains. Independent sample *t* tests were used were used to determine whether participation in a mentoring relationship or leadership development programs had an impact on the perceived preparedness for each of the six leadership competency domains, and to determine if institutional structure impacted how CCSSAOs rated the importance of the leadership competencies.

In conjunction with the *t* tests, ANOVA procedures are used to compare the means of more than two groups, to determine if the differences among them are significant (Shavelson, 1996). ANOVA procedures assume that the variable groups are independent of the population, have a normal distribution, and have equal variances (Frankel & Wallen, 1996). Significant findings were further examined by Tukey post hoc tests to determine the direction and strength of each significant difference.

Correlation analysis is used to explain the relationship among two or more variables, with the correlation coefficient expressing in mathematical terms the directions and strength of that relationship (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Cronbach's alpha (α) is a coefficient of reliability, and was used to test internal consistency in this study. Along with correlation analysis, Content analysis is a qualitative research technique used to analyze the contents of a communication (Frankel & Wallen, 1996). Glesne (2006) explained that content analysis allows a researcher to synthesize the raw data, develop hypotheses and theories, explore patterns, and ultimately interpret the collected data.

For research question one, descriptive statistics were used to examine all respondents' self-reported demographics, educational backgrounds, career pathways, leadership development experiences, and professional and community experiences. These included questions in the first five sections of the instrument. Frequencies and percentages were reported as appropriate.

For research question two, descriptive statistics were used to examine the preparedness level and importance of each of the 45 individual leadership competencies found within the AACC *Competencies*, as reported by CCSSAOs. Frequencies and percentages were reported as appropriate. A correlation analysis was conducted to determine if any coherence existed for the 45 individual leadership competencies, as related to the six domains defined by the AACC

Competencies (2005). Assuming the variables within each competency domain were found to be significantly correlated, research questions three, four, and five examined the six domains, instead of all 45 individual leadership competencies.

Research question three explored the impact of formal education on leadership skill preparation. By grouping respondents based on highest degree earned, ANOVA procedures were conducted to detect significant differences in preparedness among each group. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted to determine the direction and strength of each significant difference found by the ANOVA procedures.

For research question four, which looked at leadership preparation outside of formal education, a combination of *t* tests and ANOVA procedures were conducted to detect significant differences in preparedness among each group. Groupings were based on involvement with mentoring relationships, GYOL programs, and leadership programs sponsored by professional organizations. The *t* tests were used to test the groups based on involvement with mentoring and institution-based leadership programs; ANOVA procedures were used to analyze groups based on peer networks and leadership programs sponsored by professional associations. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted to examine significant findings based on the mentors' genders.

Research question five explored the assessment of the importance of the AACC *Competencies* based on differences in institutional characteristics, specifically institutional size, setting, structure, and highest degree offering. Descriptive statistics were used to report on respondents' institutional characteristics. A combination of *t* tests and one-way ANOVA procedures were conducted to detect significant differences in importance of the AACC *Competencies* based on each institutional characteristic group. Tukey post hoc tests were

conducted to determine the direction and strength of each significant difference found by the ANOVA procedures.

Research question six was answered using content analysis on the open-ended questions that explored the types of experiences CCSSAOs found most valuable in preparation for their first CCSSAO positions. In addition to the reality of their preparations, respondents were also asked to speculate about what they wish they had done differently to prepare for their first CCSSAO positions. Frequencies and percentages were reported as appropriate.

Summary

Chapter three provided an explanation of the research design, methodology, data collection, and data analysis procedures used in this study. The sample population was CCSSAOs listed in either the *2010 Higher Education Directory* or the *2010 NCSD Membership Directory*. Data were collected using a Web-based instrument called *The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer: Demographics and Leadership Survey*. This instrument was based on an instrument used in a 2007 study on community college presidents. Prior to implementation, the survey was reviewed by researchers, and a pilot study was conducted. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, *t* tests, ANOVA, and content analysis. Chapter four presents the statistics and findings from the data analysis for the research study. Chapter five includes a summary of the study, discussion of the conclusions, implications of the findings, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Table 3-1. Eligible sample for *The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer: Demographics and Leadership Survey*

Sample information	Cases
Sample	1,038
Not reachable	63
Not eligible	19
Eligible sample	956

Table 3-2. Response rate for *The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer: Demographics and Leadership Survey*

Response rate	Cases
No response / Refuse	633
Partial response – Not included	15
Partial response – Included	13
Completed surveys	295
Percent	32.2%

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to assess CCSSAOs' demographics, educational backgrounds, and leadership development experiences, as related to their mastery of the leadership skills outlined in the *AACC Competencies* (2005), and to determine what leadership skills are deemed most critical for CCSSAOs to perform their jobs effectively. As discussed in the previous chapter, a variety of statistical analyses were employed to assess the data. Chapter four presents an overview of these findings, as they pertain to this study's research questions.

Research Question One

Research question one explored the general demographic characteristics, professional backgrounds, and leadership development experiences of CCSSAOs. Frequency analysis was used to examine the demographics of the sample, respondents' their educational backgrounds, career pathways, leadership development experiences, professional experiences, and community involvement. These details provided a broad overview of the sample's general characteristics.

General Demographics

Respondents' ages, genders, and races/ethnicities were examined to gain a greater understanding of the status of CCSSAOs at the time of the study (Table 4-1). The majority of CCSSAOs in the study sample were aged 40 – 59 years. Of 308 respondents, 29.4% ($n = 90$) were 40 – 49 years old, and 41.5% ($n = 127$) were 50 – 59 years old. The average age of the survey respondents was 51.7 years. There was not a significant difference in average age of CCSSAOs when compared by gender. The average age male respondent was 51.2; the average age of female respondent was 52.1.

Just over half of respondents were female (52.3%, $n = 161$), and just under half were male (47.7%, $n = 147$). No respondents indicated they were transgendered. Findings from a cross

tabulation of all groups by gender and race/ethnicity revealed that the one category where males CCSSAOs outnumbered their female counterparts was Hispanic/Latino males (54.5% vs. 45.5%). Among all race/ethnicity groups by gender, White/Caucasian females comprised the greatest percentage (38.9%, $n = 119$).

Of the 308 CCSSAO respondents, 74.5% were White/Caucasian. Among other race/ethnicity groups, Black/African American CCSSAOs comprised 14.1% of respondents; Hispanic/Latino CCSSAOs 7.2%; American Indian/Native American CCSSAOs 2.0%; and Asian/Pacific Islander CCSSAOs 1.3%. Multiracial CCSSAOs comprised 1.0% of the sample. Findings from a cross tabulation of all groups by age and race/ethnicity revealed that among all race/ethnicity groups by age, White/Caucasian males aged 50 – 59 years comprised the greatest percentage (30.9%, $n = 94$).

Educational Backgrounds

The educational backgrounds of study participants were examined by reviewing their highest degree earned and the major field of study in that degree (Table 4-2). The findings showed that about half of respondents (49.7%, $n = 153$) possessed a master's degree. A similar percentage of respondents (46.6%, $n = 144$) had earned a doctorate. Only 2.9% ($n = 9$) of respondents had an educational specialist degree. Less than 1% of respondents claimed an associate's degree or bachelor's degree as their highest degrees earned. The majority (59.7%) of doctorate-holding CCSSAOs possessed a doctorate of education (EdD). Findings from a cross tabulation of all groups by gender and highest degree earned revealed the one category where male CCSSAOs outnumbered their female counterparts was possession of a JD (100% vs. 0%). Among all highest degrees earned groups by gender, females with master's degree comprised the greatest percentage (26.6%, $n = 82$).

CCSSAOs in the sample overwhelmingly (79.7%, $n = 235$) selected an education-related major field of study for highest degree. Higher education with an emphasis other than community college leadership was selected by 29.2% ($n = 86$) respondents. Other education-related major fields of study identified were higher education (183%, $n = 18$). Major fields of study not related to education were selected by 20.3% ($n = 60$) of respondents.

Findings from a cross tabulation of all groups by highest degree earned and major field of study in the highest degree earned revealed that 75.0% ($n = 60$) of EdD holders and 58.6% ($n = 34$) of PhD holders earned their doctorates in higher education, without or without a community college emphasis. Among all highest degree earned groups by major field of study in the highest degree earned, master's degree earned in fields outside education comprised the highest percentage (14.5%, $n = 43$). The next highest percentage was an EdD in higher education, without a concentration in community college leadership (13.2%, $n = 39$).

Career Pathways

The career pathways section explored information about respondents' current positions. In addition, the CCSSAOs were asked for information providing insight to the paths they took to their current positions, as well as where they hoped those paths would take them in the future. To develop a profile of responding CCSSAOs through the lens of their employment, questions were asked about their current titles, how long they had held their current positions, how long they had worked in student affairs and in community colleges, their previous positions, teaching experiences, and their career aspirations (Tables 4-3 and 4-4).

The majority of CCSSAOs who responded to the survey had the title vice president or vice chancellor (54.5%, $n = 168$). The second most popular responses were dean or director (34.7%, $n = 107$). The average length of time respondents had worked in their current positions was 6.5 years. The average number of years respondents had worked in student affairs was 19.8 years.

On average, respondents had held 4.1 different positions in student affairs, including their positions at the time they completed the survey.

Respondents were asked about the position titles they held immediately prior to their CCSSAO positions at the time they completed the survey. The most common previous position was a dean/director position within student affairs, with 30.2% ($n = 93$) of respondents having served in this capacity. Half as many respondents (15.6%, $n = 48$) had served as an associate/assistant vice president for student affairs. The second-largest group of respondents' previous positions was as a senior student affairs officer position (28.6%, $n = 88$). The overwhelming majority of respondents (80.7%, $n = 246$) stated that their previous positions were at a community college. A cross tabulation of previous position titles and previous positions at community colleges revealed that of the 88 respondents whose previous positions were as a senior student affairs officer, 88.6% ($n = 78$) of them previously had worked at a community college. Only 11.4% ($n = 10$) entered the CCSSAO position from other types of higher education.

The responding CCSSAOs were likely to have taught at least part-time at a community college, though they were unlikely to be teaching during the spring 2011 semester, when they responded to the survey. Three-fifths of respondents ($n = 187$) had experience teaching part-time at a community college. Only 7.8% ($n = 24$) had taught full-time at a community college, and fewer still (3.2%, $n = 70$) had both full-time and part-time teaching experience. Over one-fourth of respondents (28.2%, $n = 87$) had no community college teaching experience. At the time of the survey, about two-thirds of respondents (67%, $n = 201$) reported that they were not teaching. Of those who were teaching, the majority (23.7%, $n = 71$) were teaching at a community college. The remainder (9.3%, $n = 28$) were teaching at other institutions of higher education.

Most respondents were either interested in remaining in their current role or becoming a community college president. The career aspirations of the largest group (48.1%, $n = 127$) was to be a senior student affairs administrator. Over one-third of respondents (36.0%, $n = 95$) aspired to the presidency. Five respondents (1.9%) wished to be full-time faculty. The remainder were interested in other educational positions (8.3%, $n = 83$) or positions outside higher education (5.7%, $n = 15$). A cross tabulation of education levels and career aspirations demonstrated that those CCSSAOs who were interested in becoming a community college president were likely to have earned a doctoral degree. Just over half of all respondents with doctoral degrees (51.9%, $n = 68$) indicated an interested in becoming a community college president.

Leadership Development Experiences

Leadership development experiences examined in this study included mentoring relationships, leadership development programs, and a variety of peer networks. CCSSAOs were asked to reflect on the importance of these experiences. Ultimately, respondents indicated the perceived impact these experiences had on their leadership development (Tables 4-5 and 4-6).

When rating the importance of peer networks in helping prepare them to serve as CCSSAOs, respondents rated coworkers at community colleges as most important among the five groups examined, with 88.8% ($n = 270$) rating them very important or important. Just over half of respondents rated graduate program faculty and social networks as important or very important, with 50.6% ($n = 154$) and 50.3% ($n = 153$) respectively. Just under half of respondents rated business networks as important to their preparation, with 49.0% ($n = 149$) rating them very important or important. Compared to the other peer groups, a graduate program

cohort was deemed least important, with only 37.1% ($n = 113$) rating that network as very important or important.

Just over half of respondents (51.2%, $n = 153$) acknowledged that they participated in a mentoring relationship as a protégé. Just under one-fourth of these relationships (24.7%, $n = 39$) were formal mentoring relationships; the rest were ranked as informal. Respondents' mentoring relationships were largely developed within the setting of community college employment, with 82.6% ($n = 129$) of relationships developed this way. About one-fourth of these relationships (21.5% of the total, $n = 34$) were developed while the protégé was enrolled in a graduate program and working at a community college. Another 4.4% ($n = 7$) of the relationships were developed while the protégé was enrolled in a graduate program but not employed at a community college. The remainder of the mentoring relationships (13.9%, $n = 22$) were developed in a variety of settings, including through university employment, professional associations, and involvement in formal leadership development programs. Almost three-fifths of respondents (59.4%, $n = 95$) stated that they had more than one mentor, and just over half of respondents (53.2%, $n = 141$) had male mentors. Female respondents were more likely to have mentors than males (54.1% vs. 47.9%), though this difference is not significant ($n = .062$).

CCSSAOs developed leadership skills through attending a variety of leadership development programs sponsored by professional associations, individual institutions, and state associations. The most commonly attended formal leadership program was the institution-based GYOL program. About one-fifth of respondents (22.2%, $n = 68$) indicated attending a GYOL at a community college. State-based leadership programs attracted 15.9% ($n = 27$) of respondents. The most popular professional organization leadership program attended by respondents was the AACC's Future Leaders Institute, which 11.8% ($n = 20$) of respondents attended. This was

followed by the NCSD's Community College Leadership Institute, which was attended by 8.8% ($n = 15$) of respondents. Close to one-fourth of respondents (23.5%, $n = 40$) indicated they attended at least one of four different leadership programs presented by NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, including the Institute for Aspiring Senior Student Affairs Officers, the Mid-Managers Institute, the Institute for Community/Two-Year Colleges, and the Alice Manicur Symposium.

Professional Activities and Community Leadership Experiences

Professional activities that contributed to the field of student affairs and community leadership experiences rounded out the leadership experiences of CCSSAOs (Table 4-7). CCSSAOs were asked to list the number of books, articles, chapters, or book reviews they had published within the past five years. The most common professional activity was having articles published in professional journals, with over one-fifth of respondents (21.7%, $n = 56$) saying they had published at least one article. About half as many (11.5%, $n = 30$) had contributed a chapter to a published book. Less than 10% of respondents had published a monograph or book (6.6%, $n = 17$) or had a book review published (3.1%, $n = 8$).

In terms of community leadership, CCSSAO participants indicated their involvement in a variety of boards. At the time they completed the survey, over a third of respondents (36.0%, $n = 111$) served on boards of professional organizations. CCSSAOs were also active in civic organizations and other nonprofit organization boards, with 44.2% ($n = 137$) and 39.0% ($n = 120$) of respondents indicating membership, respectively. Over one-fourth of respondents (28.2%, $n = 87$) indicated they were members of more than one civic or other nonprofit organization boards. Membership on college/university boards was less common, with only 17.5% ($n = 54$) of respondents indicating this membership. The least common community

leadership was membership on a corporate board, with only 6.5% ($n = 20$) of respondents indicating such a membership.

Research Question Two

Research question two explored the relationship between CCSSAOs' perceptions of importance of the 45 leadership competencies included in the AACC *Competencies* (2005). Additionally, respondents were asked to provide perceptions of their preparedness for those competencies when they assumed their first CCSSAO positions. Table 4-8 presents the findings, with the 45 leadership competencies divided into six competency domains based on the structure of the AACC *Competencies*: organizational strategy, resource management, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism.

Leadership Skills

Organizational strategy. More than four of out five CCSSAOs who participated in the study rated themselves as very prepared or prepared on four of the six leadership competencies within the organizational strategy domain. The competency in which respondents felt most prepared was to develop a positive environment that supports innovation, teamwork, and successful outcomes (96.1%, $n = 294$). This competency was also identified as most important, with 99.7% ($n = 304$) of respondents rating it as very important or important.

Close to 90% of respondents rated themselves as very prepared or prepared to develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to improve the quality of education at their institutions (89.5%, $n = 274$) and align organizational mission, structures, and resources with the college master plan (88.9%, $n = 271$). Both of these competencies were rated very important or important by more than 95% of respondents (95.7% ($n = 292$) and 96.1% ($n = 292$), respectively). However, fewer respondents rated themselves very prepared or prepared to use data-driven decision-making practices to plan strategically (83.0%, $n = 254$). Nevertheless, this

competency yielded the second-highest importance, with 98.0% ($n = 299$) rating it is very important or important.

About three-fourths of respondents felt that they were very prepared or prepared to maintain and grow college personnel, fiscal resources, and assets (74.8%, $n = 229$). With 95.7% ($n = 292$) of respondents rating this competency very important or important rating, this item had a 20.9% differential in preparedness rating and importance rating. While CCSSAOs expressed confidence with managing college fiscal and human resources, this same confidence did not apply to systems perspectives. Within the organizational strategy domain, the competency that respondents felt least prepared for was to use a systems perspective to assess and respond to the needs of students and the community (71.1%, $n = 216$). This competency was also lowest-rated in the importance, with only 86.5% ($n = 262$) of respondents rating it very important or important.

Resource management. As a whole, the competencies found within the resource management domain were rated lower in both preparedness and importance scales. The resource management skill in which participating CCSSAOs felt best prepared was employing organizational, time management, planning, and delegations skills, with 86.8% ($n = 262$) of respondents rating themselves as very prepared or prepared. This skill was rated very important or important by 97.3% ($n = 293$) of respondents, making it the second-highest rated skill, in terms of importance.

The resource management skill rated highest on the importance scale was manage conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the organization, seen as very important or important by 99.0% ($n = 298$) of respondents. Only 74.0% of CCSSAO study participants ($n = 223$) rated themselves very prepared to prepared for this skill. Along with

contributing to their organizations' long-term success, close to 80% of respondents rated themselves very prepared or prepared to develop and manage resources consistent with the college master plan (79.9%, $n = 241$) and ensure accountability in reporting (78.5%, $n = 237$). Far more study participants determined that the competencies were very important or important (95.0% ($n = 285$) and 95.4% ($n = 288$), respectively).

Just over 70% of CCSSAOs perceived themselves as very prepared or prepared to support operational decisions by managing information resources (71.6%, $n = 216$). Close to 90% of CCSSAOs (89.7%, $n = 255$) rated this skill as very important or important. Aligned with information resources, about three-fifths of respondents rated themselves very prepared or prepared to implement a human resources system that fosters the professional development and advancement of all staff (61.5%, $n = 186$) and to implement financial strategies to support programs, services, staff, and facilities (59.0%, $n = 178$). Both competencies were rated very important or important by 91.0% ($n = 274$) of respondents, resulting in a 29.5% and 32% rating differential, respectively.

The resource management competency the study participants felt least prepared for was taking an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources. With only 36.6% ($n = 111$) of CCSSAOs rating themselves as very prepared or prepared, this skill had the lowest preparedness rating and was only one of two of the 45 competencies for which less than half of respondents felt very prepared or prepared. Despite the lower preparedness rating, two-thirds (67.1%, $n = 202$) of respondents rated this skill very important or important, creating a 30.8% rating differential.

Communication. Communication must be a strength for CCSSAOs, as over 90% of respondents reported being very prepared or prepared for the six competencies listed in this

domain. For four of the items, over 94% of respondents rated themselves very prepared or prepared: listen actively to understand, analyze, engage, and act (97.0%, $n = 294$); create and maintain open communication regarding resources, priorities, and expectations (96.0%, $n = 290$); project confidence and respond responsibly and tactfully (95.0%, $n = 288$); and effectively convey ideas and information to all constituents (94.4%, $n = 286$). All four items were rated very important or important by at least 97% of respondents (99.3% ($n = 300$), 98.7% ($n = 297$), 98.0% ($n = 295$), and 97.7% ($n = 295$), respectively).

While 94.0% ($n = 286$) of participating CCSSAOs felt very prepared or prepared to disseminate and support policies and strategies, only 93.7% ($n = 282$) rated this skill very important or important. This item was one of only six in the study that yielded a higher score on importance than preparedness, though the 0.3% differential was not significant. In contrast, the item that yielded the lowest preparedness rating (92.1%, $n = 279$) for the communication domain was the ability to articulate and champion shared mission, vision, and values to internal and external audiences. However, the item was rated very important or important by 96.3% ($n = 290$) of respondents. Overall, the communication domain ranked highest in importance rating, with an average very important/important rating of 97.3%.

Collaboration. More than 9 of 10 participating CCSSAOs rated themselves very prepared or prepared on five of the eight competencies in the collaboration domain: develop, enhance and sustain teamwork and cooperation (97.2%, $n = 280$); facilitate shared problem solving and decision making (95.8%, $n = 276$); manage conflict and change by building and maintaining productive relationships (94.4%, $n = 272$); embrace and employ the diversity of individuals, cultures, values, ideas, and communication style (93.8%, $n = 271$); and involve students, faculty,

staff, and community members to work for the common good (91.7%, $n = 264$). At least 94% of respondents rated five competencies as very important or important.

Only two-thirds of respondents felt very prepared or prepared on two competencies within the collaboration domain (demonstrate cultural competence in a global society [72.7%, $n = 210$] and work effectively and diplomatically with legislators, board members, business leaders, accreditation organizations, and others [63.8%, $n = 183$]). However, over 85% of respondents felt the competencies were very important or important (86.4% ($n = 248$) and 87.6% ($n = 248$), respectively). The ratings differential on these two items was 13.7% and 23.9%.

The collaboration skill for which CCSSAOs felt least prepared was establishing networks and partnerships to advance the community college's mission. Only 43.8% ($n = 132$) reported being very prepared or prepared, making this skill one of two with less than 50% of respondents feeling very prepared or prepared. The item was rated very important or important by 90.6% ($n = 259$) of respondents, creating a 46.8% differential between the two ratings, the largest differential in the study.

Community college advocacy. About 9 of 10 respondents rated themselves very prepared or prepared in five of the six competencies in the community college advocacy domain: value and promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and academic excellence (91.6%, $n = 262$); promote equity, open access, teaching, learning, and innovation as primary goals for the college (90.9%, $n = 260$); represent the community college in a variety of settings as a model of higher education (89.1%, $n = 254$); advocate the community college mission to all constituents and empower them to do the same, and advance lifelong learning and support a learning-centered environment (both at 88.5%, $n = 253$). Each of the five community college advocacy competencies was rated very

important or important by over 90% of respondents, with the highest rating (96.5%, $n = 275$) received by value and promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and academic excellence.

The last skill in this domain, demonstrate commitment to the mission of community colleges and student success through the scholarship of teaching and learning, yielded a 82.5% ($n = 235$) preparedness rating. Finally, one of the community college advocacy competencies, advocate the community college mission to all constituents and empower them to do the same, was unusual in that its importance rating (88.1%, $n = 251$) was lower than its preparedness rating (88.5%, $n = 253$)—one of only six competencies where this occurred.

Professionalism. The largest domain, with 11 competencies, was rated least important by the responding CCSSAOs. This domain had four of six total items where the importance rating was lower than the preparedness rating, including two where the differential was greater than 10%. The skill in which the most respondents indicated they were very prepared or prepared was promote and maintain high standards for personal and organizational integrity, honesty, and respect for people (97.2%, $n = 278$). This item was also scored highest on the importance scale, with 98.9% ($n = 282$) of respondents identifying it as very important or important.

More than 9 of 10 respondents rated themselves very prepared or prepared in five other competencies in the professionalism domain: weigh short-term and long-term goals in decision making (94.7%, $n = 270$); demonstrate the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility (93.4%, $n = 267$); support lifelong learning for self and others (93.0%, $n = 268$); regularly self-assess one's performance using feedback, reflection, goal setting, and evaluation (91.6%, $n = 262$); and demonstrate an understanding of the history, philosophy, and culture of the community college (90.2%, $n = 258$). However, the importance ratings varied for these five competencies. Over 90% of respondents felt three of the items were very important or

important: demonstrate the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility (98.6%, $n = 281$); regularly self-assess one's performance using feedback, reflection, goal setting, and evaluation (96.5%, $n = 275$); and support lifelong learning for self and others (91.9%, $n = 262$).

Only 77.2% of respondents ($n = 220$) rated demonstrate an understanding of the history, philosophy, and culture of the community college as very important or important, as did only 70.3% ($n = 188$) on weigh short-term and long-term goals in decision making. These last two ratings were notable in that the importance score was far lower than the preparedness score. The former had a 13.0% rating differential, and the latter's 24.5% rating differential was, by far, the largest in the study. Beyond the confines of their individual institutions, CCSSAOs explored broader perspectives, and just fewer than 9 of 10 respondents felt very prepared or prepared to understand the impact of perceptions, worldviews, and emotions on self and others. An almost equivalent percentage of respondents (88.0%, $n = 250$) rated this skill very important or important.

About four-fifths of respondents rated themselves very prepared or prepared in three professionalism categories: use influence and power wisely in facilitating the teaching-learning process and the exchange of knowledge (82.9%, $n = 237$); manage stress through self-care, balance, adaptability, flexibility, and humor (80.4%, $n = 230$); and demonstrate transformational leadership (80.1%, $n = 226$). The preparedness scores for these categories were lower, at 88.8% ($n = 253$), 96.5% ($n = 275$), and 88.6% ($n = 249$). Nevertheless, CCSSAOs rated these items very important or important, respectively.

The professional domain in which respondents felt least prepared was contribute to the profession through professional development programs, professional organizational leadership,

and research/publications. Only 70.3% ($n = 201$) of respondents indicated they were very prepared or prepared in this competency. This competency was rated second-lowest of the 45 competencies, and lowest within the professional domain, with only 68.8% ($n = 196$) of respondents identifying it as very important or important. This competency was the sixth one where the preparedness rating was higher than the importance rating, with a 1.5% rating differential.

As a summary of respondents' perceptions of their preparedness, they were asked to assess their overall preparation for their first CCSSAO position (Table 4-9). Just over one-tenth of respondents (11.8%, $n = 35$) felt they were very prepared for their first CCSSAO position. The largest grouping of respondents (45.6%, $n = 135$) felt prepared for the first CCSSAO position. Just over one-third of respondents (37.5%, $n = 111$) felt slightly prepared. The smallest group of respondents (5.1%, $n = 14$) felt they were not prepared to assume the CCSSAO position.

Internal Consistency of AACC *Competency* Domains

The AACC *Competencies* are divided into six domains: organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism. A correlation analysis was conducted to determine if CCSSAOs' responses to questions about their preparedness levels and the importance of each of the 45 competencies were significantly related within each competency domain (Table 4-10). The correlation analysis used Cronbach's Alpha (α) to look at internal consistency for both preparedness and importance for each AACC *Competencies* domain. With the exception of the organizational strategy/importance domain ($\alpha = 0.689$), the domains were found to be significantly correlated ($\alpha > 0.700$). The eleven domains with significant correlations had α ranging from 0.747 to 0.851, with professional/preparedness having the strongest correlation.

Therefore, when looking at how educational backgrounds, leadership development experiences, and institutional characteristics may have impacted CCSSAOs' perceptions of their preparedness and of the importance of the AACC *Competencies* (research questions three, four, and five), the findings were examined as 12 composite domain variables, instead of as 90 individual competency ratings. This analysis included the organization strategy/importance domain, even though the responses for six competencies within the domain were not found to be significantly correlated.

Each of the six competency domains were evaluated by CCSSAOs based on preparedness and importance, creating 12 matched variables. To determine if there was a difference in the competency domain assessments, paired sample *t* tests were conducted on each of the six domains (Table 4-11). For each competency domain, respondents rated their own preparedness significantly lower than they rated the importance.

Organizational strategy. Regarding organizational strategy, findings indicated a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs felt, as compared to the importance they placed on the competencies within the domain. The preparedness mean ($M = 3.18, SD = 0.47$) was significantly lower than the importance mean ($M = 3.56, SD = 0.36$); $t(304) = 13.99, p = 0.000$.

Resource management. With regards to resource management, findings showed a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs felt, compared to the importance they placed on the domain competencies. The preparedness mean ($M = 3.01, SD = 0.48$) was significantly lower than the importance mean ($M = 3.32, SD = 0.38$); $t(302) = 11.02, p = 0.000$.

Communication. Pertaining to communication, findings indicated a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs felt they were, compared to the importance they placed on the

competencies within the domain. The preparedness mean ($M = 3.43, SD = 0.42$) was significantly lower than the importance mean ($M = 3.54, SD = 0.40$); $t(301) = 1.16, p = 0.000$.

Collaboration. With regards to collaboration, findings showed a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs felt, compared to the importance they placed on the domain competencies. The preparedness mean ($M = 3.18, SD = 0.44$) was significantly lower than the importance mean ($M = 3.42, SD = 0.39$); $t(286) = 9.02, p = 0.000$.

Community college advocacy. Regarding community college advocacy, findings indicated a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs felt, compared to the importance they placed on the competencies within the domain. The preparedness mean ($M = 3.26, SD = 0.50$) was significantly lower than the importance mean ($M = 3.34, SD = 0.46$); $t(284) = 2.98, p = 0.003$.

Professionalism. With regards to professionalism, findings showed a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs felt, compared to the importance they placed on the domain competencies. The preparedness mean ($M = 3.22, SD = 0.42$) was significantly lower than the importance mean ($M = 3.32, SD = 0.39$); $t(284) = 3.73, p = 0.000$.

Research Question Three

Research question three examined the extent to which the highest degrees earned by CCSSAOs influenced how they rated their preparedness on the AACC *Competencies* when they assumed their first CCSSAO position. As previously discussed, 95.7% of CCSSAOs who participated in this study had earned, as their highest degree, a master's degree, a doctorate in education (EdD), or a doctorate in philosophy (PhD). The remaining 4.3% of respondents' highest degrees were split into four categories, creating samples too small to analyze with any statistical significance. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, only the responses from

CCSSAOs whose highest degrees earned were master's degrees, EdDs, or PhDs were examined. The independent variables used in this analysis were master's degree, EdD, and PhD.

To determine if the highest degree earned by CCSSAOs impacted how they perceived their preparedness in the AACC *Competencies*, a one-way ANOVA was performed on the composite domain variables. The dependent variables were organizational strategy preparation, resource management preparation, communication preparation, collaboration preparation, community college advocacy preparation, and professionalism preparation. A p value of $< .05$ was established to determine statistical significance. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted to explain any statistically significant findings (Tables 4-12 and 4-13).

Organizational strategy. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 3.23$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 1.62$), f ratio ($F = 7.78$), and significance ($p = .001$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in organizational strategy competencies based on their highest degree earned. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference ($p = .035$) between responses of those whose highest degree earned was a master's degree and those with PhDs, and a significant difference ($p = .001$) between responses of those whose highest degree earned was a master's degree and those with EdDs. In both cases, compared to respondents whose highest degree earned was a master's degree, respondents with doctoral degrees reported higher levels of preparedness for the organizational strategy competencies.

Resource management. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 1.75$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.87$), f ratio ($F = 3.92$), and significance ($p = .021$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in resource management competencies based on their highest

degree earned. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference ($p = .017$) between responses of those whose highest degree earned was a master's degree and those with EdDs. Compared to respondents whose highest degree earned was a master's degree, respondents with EdDs reported higher levels of preparedness for the resource management competencies.

Communication. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.40$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 2.20$), f ratio ($F = 1.15$), and significance ($p = .318$). Because the $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rate their preparedness in communication competencies based on their highest degree earned. Due to the lack of significant difference, Tukey post hoc tests were not conducted.

Collaboration. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 2.32$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 1.16$), f ratio ($F = 6.28$), and significance ($p = .002$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in collaboration competencies based on their highest degree earned. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference ($p = .001$) between responses of those whose highest degree earned was a master's degree and those with EdDs. Compared to respondents whose highest degree earned was a master's degree, respondents with EdDs reported higher levels of preparedness for the collaboration competencies.

Community college advocacy. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 2.97$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 1.49$), f ratio ($F = 6.23$), and significance ($p = .002$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in community college advocacy competencies, based on their highest degree earned. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference ($p = .001$) between responses of those whose highest degree earned is a master's degree and those with EdDs.

Compared to respondents whose highest degree earned was a master's degree, respondents with EdDs reported higher levels of preparedness for the community college advocacy competencies.

Professionalism. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 2.56$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 1.28$), f ratio ($F = 7.80$), and significance ($p = .001$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in professionalism competencies based on their highest degree earned. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference ($p = .001$) between responses of those whose highest degree earned was a master's degree and those with EdDs, and a significant difference ($p = .002$) between responses of those with PhDs and those with EdDs. In both cases, compared to respondents whose highest degrees earned were either master's degrees or PhDs, respondents with EdDs reported higher levels of preparedness for the professional competencies.

Research Question Four

Research question four explored differences in leadership preparation outside of formal education. Specifically, the question examined whether or not these differences influenced how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness on the AACC *Competencies* when they assumed their first CCSSAO positions. The types of leadership preparation examined included participation in mentoring relationships, the gender of the mentor, and participation in formal leadership development programs.

Mentoring Relationship

To determine if CCSSAOs who were/are protégés in mentoring relationships reported higher levels of preparedness than respondents who were not in such a relationship (nonprotégés). For each of the competency domains, an independent sample t test was performed on the six composite domain variables. The dependent variables were organizational strategy preparation, resource management preparation, communication preparation,

collaboration preparation, community college advocacy preparation, and professionalism preparation. A p value of $< .05$ was established to determine statistical significance (Table 4-14).

Organizational strategy. With regards to organizational strategy, findings showed a significant difference in preparedness of CCSSAOs who were/are protégés in mentoring relationships perceived themselves, compared to nonprotégés. The protégés' mean ($M = 3.25$; $SD = 0.49$) was significantly higher than the nonprotégés' mean ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 0.44$); $t(295) = 2.87$, $p = .004$. Therefore, respondents who participated in a mentoring relationship indicated a higher level of preparedness for the competencies in this domain than their nonparticipating peers.

Resource management. Pertaining to resource management, findings indicated there was not a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs who were/are protégés in mentoring relationships perceived themselves, compared to nonprotégés. The protégés' mean ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.52$) was not significantly higher than the nonprotégés' mean ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.44$); $t(293) = 1.95$, $p = .052$. Therefore, respondents who participated in a mentoring relationship indicated the same level of preparedness for the competencies in this domain as their nonparticipating peers.

Communication. Regarding communication, findings showed there was not a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs who were/are protégés in mentoring relationships perceived themselves, compared to nonprotégés. The protégés' mean ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.41$) was not significantly higher than the nonprotégés' mean ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.43$); $t(292) = 1.21$, $p = .224$. Therefore, respondents who participated in a mentoring relationship indicated the same level of preparedness for the competencies in this domain as their nonparticipating peers.

Collaboration. With regards to collaboration, findings indicated there was a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs who were/ are protégés in mentoring relationships perceived themselves, compared to nonprotégés. The protégés' mean ($M = 3.24, SD = 0.44$) was significantly higher than the nonprotégés' mean ($M = 3.11, SD = 0.44$); $t(278) = 2.41, p = .016$. Therefore, respondents who participated in a mentoring relationship indicated a higher level of preparedness for the competencies in this domain than their nonparticipating peers.

Community college advocacy. Pertaining to community college advocacy, findings showed a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs who were/are protégés in mentoring relationships perceived themselves, compared to nonprotégés. The protégés' mean ($M = 3.33, SD = 0.49$) was significantly higher than the nonprotégés' mean ($M = 3.18, SD = 0.50$); $t(275) = 2.43, p = .016$. Therefore, respondents who participated in a mentoring relationship indicated a higher level of preparedness for the competencies in this domain than their nonparticipating peers.

Professionalism. With regards to professionalism, findings indicated a significant difference in how prepared CCSSAOs who were/are protégés in mentoring relationships perceived themselves, compared to nonprotégés. The protégés' mean ($M = 3.29, SD = 0.40$) was significantly higher than the nonprotégés' mean ($M = 3.15, SD = 0.43$); $t(275) = 2.93, p = .004$. Therefore, respondents who participated in a mentoring relationship indicated a higher level of preparedness for the competencies in this domain than their nonparticipating peers.

To determine the effect of a CCSSAO mentor's gender on the protégé's preparedness in the AACC *Competencies*, a one-way ANOVA was performed on the six composite domain variables. The dependent variables were organizational strategy preparation, resource management preparation, communication preparation, collaboration preparation, community

college advocacy preparation, and professionalism preparation. The dependent variables were male mentor only, female mentor only, and both male and female mentors. A p value of $< .05$ was established to determine statistical significance. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted to explain any statistically significant findings (Tables 4-15 and 4-16).

Organizational strategy. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.53$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.260$), f ratio ($F = 1.18$), and significance ($p = .309$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in organizational strategy competencies based on the mentor's/mentors' gender.

Resource management. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.45$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.23$), f ratio ($F = 0.87$), and significance ($p = .421$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in resource management competencies based on the mentor's/mentors' gender.

Communication. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.52$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.26$), f ratio ($F = 1.57$), and significance ($p = .212$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in communication competencies based on the mentor's/mentors' gender.

Collaboration. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 1.33$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.67$), f ratio ($F = 3.62$), and significance ($p = .029$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in collaboration competencies based on the mentor's/mentors' gender. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference ($p = .045$) between responses of CCSSAOs who

had male mentors and those who had both male and female mentors. Respondents with both male and female mentors reported higher levels of preparedness in collaboration competencies than respondents who only had male mentors.

Community college advocacy. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 1.16$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.58$), f ratio ($F = 2.45$), and significance ($p = .090$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in community college advocacy competencies based on the mentor's/mentors' gender.

Professionalism. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.19$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.10$), f ratio ($F = 0.59$), and the significance ($p = .559$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness in professionalism competencies based on the mentor's/mentors' gender.

Leadership Development Programs

To determine the effect of attending formal leadership development programs on CCSSAOs' preparedness for the AACCC *Competencies*, an independent sample t test was performed on the six composite domains. As previously discussed, the number of respondents attending any one type workshop was insufficient for conducting statistical analyses. Therefore, the independent variables were identified as "attending any workshop" and "not attending any workshop." The dependent variables were organizational strategy preparation, resource management preparation, communication preparation, collaboration preparation, community college advocacy preparation, and professionalism preparation. A p value of $< .05$ was established to determine statistical significance (Table 4-17).

Organizational strategy. With regards to organizational strategy, findings showed there was not a significant difference in CCSSAO preparedness between those who attended a formal leadership development program and those who did not. The attendees' mean ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.46$) was not significantly higher than the nonattendees' mean ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.49$); $t(304) = 1.56$, $p = .114$.

Resource management. Pertaining to resource management, findings showed there was not a significant difference in CCSSAO preparedness between those who attended a formal leadership development program and those who did not. The attendees' mean ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 0.44$) was not significantly higher than the nonattendees' mean ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.52$); $t(302) = 1.74$, $p = .084$.

Communication. With regards to communication, findings showed there was not a significant difference in CCSSAO preparedness between those who attended a formal leadership development program and those who did not. The attendees' mean ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.43$) was not significantly higher than the nonattendees' mean ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.41$); $t(301) = 0.94$, $p = .348$.

Collaboration. Regarding collaboration, findings showed there was not a significant difference in CCSSAO preparedness between those who attended a formal leadership development program and those who did not. The attendees' mean ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.45$) was not significantly higher than the nonattendees' mean ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 0.44$); $t(287) = 0.70$, $p = .484$.

Community college advocacy. With regards to community college advocacy, findings showed there was not a significant difference in CCSSAO preparedness between those who attended a formal leadership development program and those who did not. The attendees' mean

($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.49$) was not significantly higher than the nonattendees' mean ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.51$); $t(284) = 1.61$, $p = .108$.

Professionalism. Pertaining to professionalism, findings showed there was not a significant difference in CCSSAO preparedness between those who attended a formal leadership development program and those who did not. The attendees' mean ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.41$) was not significantly higher than the nonattendees' mean ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.43$); $t(284) = 0.98$, $p = .329$.

Research Question Five

Research question five explored the extent to which differences in institutional characteristics (specifically, institution size, setting, structure, and highest degree offering) affected the perceived importance of the AACC *Competencies* by CCSSAOs. These four institutional characteristics were examined to see if differences in perceived importance of the AACC *Competencies* could be attributed to institution type. First, frequency analyses were performed for each of the four institutional characteristics (Table 4-18).

The majority of CCSSAOs who participated in the study worked at colleges with more than 10,000 students (30.1%). The next largest group came from colleges with 5,000 – 10,000 students (26.1%). Combining these two groups, more than half of respondents worked colleges with more than 5,000 students. After the two largest groups, 17.3% of respondents worked at colleges with 3,001 – 5,000 students. About one-fourth of respondents worked at colleges with 3,000 or less students. Less than one in ten (9.8%) worked at colleges with 2,001 – 3,000 students, and 11.1% worked at colleges with 1,000 – 2,000 students. Only 5.6% of respondents worked at colleges with less than 1,000 students.

Almost half of respondents stated that they worked for rural community colleges (45.3%). Close to one-third of respondents (31.3%) were employed at suburban institutions. Just one-

fourth of CCSSAOs (23.5%) worked at urban institutions. Almost two-thirds (64.1%) of CCSSAOs who participated in the study worked at community colleges with multiple campuses. The remainder (35.9%) worked at single-campus institutions. The overwhelming majority of respondents (96.1%) reported that they worked at institutions at which the highest degree awarded is an associate's degree. Bachelor's degree-awarding colleges accounted for 3.2% of study participants. Only 0.3% of respondents worked at institutions offering master's degrees, or whose degree offerings were limited to a certificate. These findings did not allow statistical analyses to be conducted on highest degree awarded, because the responses were too homogenous to detect any significant differences.

Institutional Size

To determine if the size of the institutions where CCSSAOs worked at the time they completed the survey impacted how important they rated the competency domain, a one-way ANOVA was performed on the composite domain variables. The dependent variables were organizational strategy importance, resource management importance, communication importance, collaboration importance, community college advocacy importance, and professionalism importance. A p value of $< .05$ was established to determine statistical significance. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted to explain any statistically significant findings (Tables 4-19 and 4-20).

Organizational strategy. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 2.26$), degree of freedom ($df = 5$), mean square ($MS = 0.45$), f ratio ($F = 3.62$), and significance ($p = .003$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of organizational strategy competencies based on the sizes of their institutions. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference between respondents who worked at institutions with 1,000 – 2,000 students, and those who worked at institutions with

5,000 – 10,000 students ($p = .004$) and those who worked at institutions with more than 10,000 students ($p = .027$). In both cases, compared to those who worked at smaller institutions, respondents who worked at larger institutions felt that the organization strategy competencies were more important.

Resource management. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 1.21$), degree of freedom ($df = 5$), mean square ($MS = 0.24$), f ratio ($F = 1.67$), and significance ($p = .143$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of resource management competencies based on the sizes of their institutions.

Communication. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.56$), degree of freedom ($df = 5$), mean square ($MS = 0.11$), f ratio ($F = 0.78$), and significance ($p = .566$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of communication competencies based on the sizes of their institutions.

Collaboration. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.94$), degree of freedom ($df = 5$), mean square ($MS = 0.19$), f ratio ($F = 1.25$), and significance ($p = .284$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of collaboration competencies based on the sizes of their institutions.

Community college advocacy. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.94$) degree of freedom ($df = 5$), the mean square ($MS = 0.30$), f ratio ($F = 1.42$), and the significance ($p = .217$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of community college advocacy competencies based on the sizes of their institutions.

Professionalism. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares (SS) = 0.99 degree of freedom (df) = 5, the mean square (MS) = 0.19, f ratio (F) = 1.32, and the significance (p) = .257. Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of professionalism competencies based on the sizes of their institutions.

Institutional Setting

To determine if the institutional setting where CCSSAOs worked at the time they completed the survey impacted how important they rated the competency domain, a one-way ANOVA was performed on the composite domain variables. The dependent variables were organizational strategy importance, resource management importance, communication importance, collaboration importance, community college advocacy importance, and professionalism importance. A p value of $< .05$ was established to determine statistical significance. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted to explain any statistically significant findings (Tables 4-21 and 4-22).

Organizational strategy. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 1.03$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.54$), f ratio ($F = 4.21$), and significance ($p = .016$). Because $p < .05$, there was a significant difference between how study participants rated the importance of organizational strategy competencies based on the settings of their institutions. Tukey post hoc tests showed a significant difference between responses of those who worked at rural institutions and those who worked at urban institutions ($p = .004$). Compared to respondents who worked at rural institutions, respondents who worked at urban institutions felt the organization strategy competencies were more important.

Resource management. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.36$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.18$), f ratio ($F = 1.22$), and

significance ($p = .297$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of resource management competencies based on the settings of their institutions.

Communication. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.37$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.18$), f ratio ($F = 1.28$), and significance ($p = .279$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of communication competencies based on the settings of their institutions.

Collaboration. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.32$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.16$), f ratio ($F = 1.05$), and significance ($p = .350$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of collaboration competencies based on the settings of their institutions.

Community college advocacy. Findings showed the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.11$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.55$), f ratio ($F = 0.25$), and significance ($p = .776$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of community college advocacy competencies based on the settings of their institutions.

Professionalism. Findings indicated the following between groups: sum of squares ($SS = 0.70$), degree of freedom ($df = 2$), mean square ($MS = 0.39$), f ratio ($F = 2.32$), and significance ($p = .101$). Because $p > .05$, there was no significant difference between how CCSSAOs rated the importance of professionalism competencies based on the settings of their institutions.

Institutional Structure

To determine if the structures of the institutions where CCSSAOs worked at the time of completing the survey impacted how important they rated the competency domain, an independent sample t test was performed on the six composite domain variables. The dependent

variables were organizational strategy importance, resource management importance, communication importance, collaboration importance, community college advocacy importance, and professionalism importance. A p value of $< .05$ was established to determine statistical significance (Table 4-23).

Organizational strategy. Findings showed there was not a significant difference in how CCSSAOs rated the importance of organizational strategy competencies based on the structures of the institutions. The single campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.55, SD = 0.35$) was not significantly different from the multiple campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.58, SD = 0.37$); $t(301) = 0.747, p = .455$.

Resource management. Findings indicated there was not a significant difference in how CCSSAOs rated the importance of resource management competencies based on the structures of the institutions. The single campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.30, SD = 0.36$) was not significantly different from the multiple campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.33, SD = 0.39$); $t(300) = 0.488, p = .626$.

Communication. Findings showed there was not a significant difference in how CCSSAOs rated the importance of communication competencies based on the structures of the institutions. The single campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.50, SD = 0.38$) was not significantly different from the multiple campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.56, SD = 0.38$); $t(299) = 1.32, p = .187$.

Collaboration. Findings indicated there was not a significant difference in how CCSSAOs rated the importance of collaboration competencies based on the structures of the institutions. The single campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.37, SD = 0.39$) was not significantly

different from the multiple campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.39$); $t(284) = 1.42$, $p = .157$.

Community college advocacy. Findings showed there was not a significant difference in how CCSSAOs rated the importance of community college advocacy competencies based on the structures of the institutions. The single campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.43$) was not significantly different from the multiple campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 0.48$); $t(282) = 0.847$, $p = .398$.

Professionalism. Findings indicated there was not a significant difference in how CCSSAOs rated the importance of professionalism competencies based on the structures of the institutions. The single campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.37$) was not significantly different from the multiple campus respondents' mean ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.39$); $t(282) = 1.76$, $p = .084$.

Research Question Six

Research question six asked what leadership experiences current community college senior student affairs officers believed best prepared them to serve in that capacity, and what they wish they had done differently to prepare for their first senior student affairs positions. Respondents were asked open-ended questions, to allow various responses. Content analyses were conducted to determine the most common responses (Tables 4-22 and 4-23).

Most Valuable Leadership Development Experience

More than 8 of 10 respondents ($N = 254$) reported on the leadership experiences they found most valuable in preparing for their first CCSSAO positions. The most valuable leadership development experiences identified by respondents were previous employment within student affairs (41.7%, $n = 106$). Included in this were a small number of respondents who cited their experiences in the counseling field (2.4%, $n = 6$), their experiences in the broad realm of student

affairs outside their functional area of specialization (1.6%, $n = 4$), and their opportunities to work with both academic and student affairs (1.6%, $n = 4$) as being especially critical to their preparedness.

Close to 20% of respondents ($n = 50$) cited leadership development programs as the most valuable leadership development experiences. Respondents listed 16 different professional association workshops, as well as numerous state-based leadership programs, local leadership programs, and institution-based GYOL programs. The most-cited workshop was The Chair Academy's leadership conference (2% $n = 5$).

Mentoring relationships were designated by a good number of the sample (17.7%, $n = 45$) as the most valuable leadership development experiences. In their open-ended responses, respondents described their mentors as other CCSSAOs, community college presidents, and previous supervisors, who had taken particular interest in assisting with their professional development. The next most frequent response, formal education, was perceived as the most valuable leadership development experience by just over 12% ($n = 32$) of respondents. While a small number of these respondents (0.8%, $n = 2$) cited coursework leading to a Masters of Business Administration degree as most valuable, the majority of respondents who wrote about formal education (11.8%, $n = 30$) claimed that their graduate work and doctoral degree work in education proved most valuable. Beyond employment, leadership development workshops, mentoring relationships, and formal education, no other responses were cited by more than 10% of the sample, though the importance of networking (7.5%, $n = 19$), state association peer groups (5.9% $n = 15$), and having a good relationship with college presidents (5.9% $n = 15$) are worth mentioning, as they were common responses.

What They Wish They Had Done Differently

Of the 308 CCSSAOs who participated in the study, about 70% ($N = 216$) wrote about what they wish they had done differently to prepare for their first CCSSAO positions. The most frequent response (15.3%, $n = 33$) was a desire to have earned a doctorate prior to assuming the position. Several respondents indicated they were pursuing doctoral degrees at the time they completed the survey, and these individuals had difficulty balancing their jobs and educations. Others discussed how the failure to complete the doctorate when they assumed the CCSSAO position led to an extensive delay before the degree was finished. Still others stated that they felt having a terminal degree would have brought instant credibility in their new positions or would have enhanced the standing of student affairs in the eyes of faculty.

Just over 10% of respondents identified two knowledge gaps they wished they had addressed before assuming their first CCSSAO positions. With one of these knowledge gaps, 11.1% of respondents ($n = 24$) stated that they wished they had known more about the various components of student affairs for which they would become responsible. Specific areas emphasized included financial aid, enrollment management, student conduct, residence life, and athletics. With the second knowledge gap, 10.6% of respondents ($n = 23$) said that they wished they had known more about the financial aspects of higher education. Particularly, they wished they had more formal training in accounting and budgeting, especially zero-based budgeting, and that they had more knowledge about public funding of community colleges.

About 10% of respondents emphasized two areas of leadership development they wished they had focused on prior to their first CCSSAO position, with 10.2% ($n = 22$) wishing they had placed more emphasis on professional development activities. This included attending professional association conferences, accepting leadership roles in professional associations, emphasizing research and publications, and enhancing networks with peers at similar

institutions. Another 9.7% ($n = 21$) of respondents wished they had developed at least one strong mentoring relationships as a protégé. A couple of respondents wrote that they wished they had a mentor, while others expressed a desire to have had cultivated multiple mentoring relationships. A few study participants reported wishing they had a mentor at a different institution, while others simply mentioned using their mentors more often to aid their learning and development.

Chapter Summary

Chapter four provided a description of how the data were collected and the findings of the statistical analyses. Several significant findings were presented in relation to each research question. Overall, the leadership skills contained in the AACC *Competencies* were rated as important or very important by the majority of responding CCSSAOs. The participants rated each of the six competency domains significantly higher in the importance scale than they rated their own preparedness.

The highest degree earned impacted the preparedness rating, as respondents with EdDs reported a significantly higher level of preparedness for the AACC *Competencies* in five of the six domains than respondents with master's degrees, and in one of the six domains than those with PhDs. Also, respondents who participated in mentoring relationships as a protégé reported a significantly higher level of preparedness for the AACC *Competencies* on four of six domains than respondents who did not participate in a mentoring relationship. Conversely, participation in leadership development programs did not result in significantly higher levels of preparedness for the AACC *Competencies*. In general, institutional characteristics had minimal impact on the perceived importance of the AACC *Competencies*. Institutional structure yielded no significant differences.

The leadership development experiences deemed most valuable by the respondents in terms of preparing them to be a CCSSAO was their previous work experience in student affairs. Other commonly cited experiences include participation in leadership development programs, participation in mentoring relationships, and formal education—specifically, their graduate and doctoral work in education. When discussing what they wish they had done differently, respondents wrote about completing a doctorate prior to becoming a CCSSAO, learning more about specific areas of students affairs, participating in leadership development workshops, and developing at least one strong mentoring relationship.

Based on the findings presented in chapter four, chapter five presents a summary of the study, and the conclusions drawn are discussed. In addition, the implications these findings have on CCSSAOs' leadership preparedness is examined. Finally, the study's limitations are addressed, and recommendations for future research are provided.

Table 4-1. Demographics of CCSSAO sample

Variable	%
Age	
20 – 29	0.7
30 – 39	8.5
40 – 49	29.4
50 – 59	41.5
60 – 69	19.3
70 – 79	0.7
Gender	
Female	52.3
Male	47.7
Race / Ethnicity	
American Indian / Native American	2.0
Asian / Pacific Islander	1.3
Black / African American	14.1
Hispanic / Latino	7.2
White / Caucasian	74.5
Multiracial	1.0

Table 4-2. Educational backgrounds of CCSSAO sample

Variable	%
Highest degree earned	
Associate's	0.3
Bachelor's	0.3
Master's	49.7
Ed. Specialist	2.9
EdD	26.5
PhD	19.5
JD	0.6
Major field of study in highest degree	
Student personnel in higher education	12.2
Higher education with emphasis on community college leadership	16.3
Higher education with other emphasis	29.2
K – 12 administration	3.7
Other educational field	18.3
Other	20.3

Table 4-3. Career pathways of CCSSAO sample – Part 1

Variable	%
Current title	
Vice President / Vice Chancellor	54.5
Associate / Assistant Vice President / Vice Chancellor	4.8
Dean / Director	34.7
Associate / Assistant Dean / Director	2.9
Other	2.6
Previous position held	
Senior Student Affairs Officer	28.6
Vice President, Non-Student Affairs	2.9
Associate / Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs	15.6
Dean / Director, Student Affairs	30.2
Director, Other	9.7
Assistant Dean / Director, Student Affairs	3.2
Counselor	1.9
Faculty	1.6
Other	6.1
Previous position at a community college	
Yes	80.7
No	19.3
Teaching experience at community college	
Yes, full-time	7.8
Yes, part-time	60.7
Yes, full-time and part-time	3.2
No	28.2
Currently teaching	
Community college	23.7
Other higher education	9.3
Not currently teaching	67.0
Career aspirations	
Community College President	36.0
Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer	48.1
Faculty	1.9
Other educational position	8.3
Other position outside education	5.7

Table 4-4. Career pathways of CCSSAO sample – Part 2

Variable	<i>M</i>
Years in present position	6.45
Years working in student affairs	19.75
Number of different positions in student affairs	4.12

Table 4-5. CCSSAO survey respondents' perceptions of peer network importance in preparing for CCSSAO position

Variable	%
Graduate program cohort	
Very important	15.1
Important	22.0
Slightly important	30.5
Not important	32.5
Graduate program faculty	
Very important	17.4
Important	33.2
Slightly important	25.7
Not important	23.7
Coworkers at community colleges	
Very important	60.5
Important	28.3
Slightly important	5.3
Not important	5.9
Social networks	
Very important	14.8
Important	35.5
Slightly important	28.3
Not important	21.4
Business networks	
Very important	17.4
Important	31.6
Slightly important	29.3
Not important	21.7

Table 4-6. Leadership development experiences of CCSSAO sample

Variable	%
Participation in a mentoring relationship as a protégé	
Yes	51.2
No	48.8
Formality of mentoring relationship	
Formal	24.7
Informal	75.3
Setting in which mentoring relationship developed	
During graduate program	4.4
During community college employment	60.5
Both	21.5
Other	13.9
Gender of mentors	
Female	46.8
Male	53.2
Formal leadership program participation	
Institution-based grow your own leader program	22.2
State-based leadership programs	15.9
Local leadership programs	4.1
AACC's Future Leaders Institute	11.8
ACPA's Mid-Level Management Institute	0.6
ACPA's SSAO Symposium	4.7
NASPA's Institute for Aspiring SSAO Officers	4.7
NASPA's Mid-Manager Institutes	4.1
NASPA's Institute for Community / 2-Year Colleges	8.2
NCSD's Community College Leadership Institute	8.8
NASPA's Manicur Women's Leadership Symposium	6.5
The Chair Academy Workshop	4.7
National Institute for Leadership Development Workshop	2.9
Other formal leadership programs	23.0

Table 4-7. Professional and community experiences of CCSSAO sample

Variable	%
Professional experiences in past five years	
Book reviews published	3.1
Articles published in professional journals	21.7
Monographs or books published	6.6
Chapters contributed to published books	11.5
Membership on external boards	
Corporate boards	6.5
College or university boards	17.5
Professional organization boards	36.0
Civic organization boards	44.2
Other nonprofit boards	39.0

Table 4-8. AACC *Competencies* – CCSSAO perceptions of preparation and levels of importance

Variable	%	
	Prepared/ Very Prepared	Important/ Very Important
Organizational strategy		
Develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to improve the quality of education at your institution	89.5	95.7
Use a data-driven decision making practices to plan strategically	83.0	98.0
Use a systems perspective to assess and respond to the needs of students and the community	71.1	86.5
Develop a positive environment that supports innovation, teamwork, and successful outcomes	96.1	99.7
Maintain and grow college personnel, fiscal resources and assets	74.8	95.7
Align organizational mission, structures, and resources with the college master plan	88.9	96.1
Resource management		
Ensure accountability in reporting	78.5	95.4
Support operational decisions by managing information resources	71.6	89.7
Develop and manage resources consistent with the college master plan	79.9	95.0
Take an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources	36.6	67.1
Implement financial strategies to support programs, services, staff, and facilities	59.0	91.0
Implement a human resources system that fosters the professional development and advancement of all staff	61.5	91.0
Employ organizational, time management, planning, and delegations skills	86.8	97.3
Manage conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the organization	74.0	99.0
Communication		
Articulate and champion shared mission, vision, and values to internal and external audiences	92.1	96.3
Disseminate and support policies and strategies	94.0	93.7
Create and maintain open communication regarding resources, priorities, and expectations	96.0	98.7
Effectively convey ideas and information to all constituents	94.4	97.7
Listen actively to understand, analyze, engage, and act	97.0	99.3
Project confidence and respond responsibly and tactfully	95.0	98.0
Collaboration		
Embrace and employ the diversity of individuals, cultures, values, ideas, and communication styles	93.8	96.9
Demonstrate cultural competence in a global society	72.7	86.4
Involve students, faculty, staff, and community members to work for the common good	91.7	94.0
Establish networks and partnerships to advance the mission of the community college	43.8	90.6

Table 4-8. Continued.

Variable	%	
	Prepared/ Very Prepared	Important/ Very Important
Work effectively and diplomatically with legislators, board members, business leaders, accreditation organizations, and others	63.8	87.6
Manage conflict and change by building and maintaining productive relationships	94.4	98.6
Develop, enhance and sustain teamwork and cooperation	97.2	99.3
Facilitate shared problem solving and decision making	95.8	97.6
Community college advocacy		
Value and promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and academic excellence	91.6	96.5
Demonstrate commitment to the mission of community colleges and student success through the scholarship of teaching and learning	82.5	90.1
Promote equity, open access, teaching, learning, and innovation as primary goals for the college	90.9	93.3
Advocate the community college mission to all constituents and empower them to do the same	88.5	88.1
Advance lifelong learning and support a learning-centered environment	88.5	91.9
Represent the community college in a variety of settings as a model of higher education	89.1	90.1
Professionalism		
Demonstrate transformational leadership	80.1	88.6
Demonstrate an understanding of the history, philosophy, and culture of the community college	90.2	77.2
Regularly self assess one's own performance using feedback, reflection, goal setting, and evaluation	91.6	96.5
Support lifelong learning for self and others	93.0	91.9
Manage stress through self-care, balance, adaptability, flexibility, and humor	80.4	96.5
Demonstrate the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility	93.4	98.6
Understand the impact of perceptions, worldviews, and emotions on self and others	87.7	88.0
Promote and maintain high standards for personal and organizational integrity, honesty, and respect for people	97.2	98.9
Use influence and power wisely in facilitating the teaching-learning process and the exchange of knowledge	82.9	88.8
Weigh short-term and long-term goals in decision making	94.7	70.3
Contribute to the profession through professional development programs, professional organizational leadership, and research/publications	70.3	68.8

Table 4-9. Level of preparedness for first CCSSAO position

Variable	%
Very prepared	11.8
Prepared	45.6
Slightly prepared	37.5
Not prepared	5.1

Table 4-10. Internal consistency analysis of AACC *Competencies* domains

Competency domains	α
Organizational strategy	
Preparedness	0.747
Importance	0.689
Resource management	
Preparedness	0.810
Importance	0.761
Communication	
Preparedness	0.807
Importance	0.761
Collaboration	
Preparedness	0.822
Importance	0.802
Community college advocacy	
Preparedness	0.829
Importance	0.824
Professionalism	
Preparedness	0.851
Importance	0.848

Table 4-11. Paired sample *t* tests for AACC *Competencies* domains

Dependent variable	Preparedness		Importance		<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Organizational strategy	3.18	0.47	3.56	0.36	304	13.99	.000
Resource management	3.01	0.48	3.32	0.38	302	11.02	.000
Communication	3.43	0.42	3.54	0.40	301	4.16	.000
Collaboration	3.18	0.44	3.42	0.39	286	9.02	.000
Community college advocacy	3.26	0.50	3.34	0.46	284	2.98	.003
Professionalism	3.22	0.42	3.32	0.39	284	3.73	.000

Table 4-12. One-way ANOVA of preparedness for leadership competencies of CCSSAO sample by highest degree earned

Dependent variable	Groups	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Organizational strategy	Between	3.23	2	1.62	7.78	.001
	Within	60.28	290	0.21		
	Total	63.52	292			
Resource management	Between	1.75	2	0.87	3.92	.021
	Within	64.40	289	2.22		
	Total	66.15	291			
Communication	Between	0.40	2	2.20	1.15	.318
	Within	50.31	288	0.18		
	Total	50.71	290			
Collaboration	Between	2.32	2	1.16	6.28	.002
	Within	50.87	275	0.19		
	Total	53.19	277			
Community college advocacy	Between	2.97	2	1.49	6.23	.002
	Within	64.80	272	0.24		
	Total	67.77	274			
Professionalism	Between	2.56	2	1.28	7.80	.001
	Within	44.62	272	0.16		
	Total	47.17	274			

Table 4-13. Tukey post hoc tests conducted on significant ANOVA findings regarding highest degree earned

Dependent variable	Master's		PhD		EdD		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Organizational strategy	3.09	0.47	3.26	0.40			.035
	3.09	0.47			3.32	0.46	
Resource management	2.95	0.49			3.13	0.45	.017
Collaboration	3.12	0.43			3.34	0.48	.001
Community college advocacy	3.17	0.49			3.42	0.51	.001
Professionalism	3.41	0.40			3.49	0.42	.001
			3.42		3.49	0.42	

Table 4-14. *T* tests of preparedness for leadership competencies of CCSSAO sample by participation in a mentoring relationship as a protégé

Dependent variable	Yes		No		<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Organizational strategy	3.25	0.49	3.10	0.44	295	2.87	.004
Resource management	3.07	0.52	2.96	0.44	293	1.95	0.52
Communication	3.46	0.41	3.40	0.43	292	1.21	.224
Collaboration	3.24	0.44	3.11	0.44	278	2.41	.016
Community college advocacy	3.33	0.49	3.18	0.50	275	2.43	.016
Professionalism	3.29	0.40	3.15	0.43	275	2.93	.004

Table 4-15. One-way ANOVA of preparedness for leadership competencies of CCSSAO sample by mentor gender

Dependent variable	Groups	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Organizational strategy	Between	0.53	2	0.26	1.18	.309
	Within	34.71	156	0.22		
	Total	35.23	158			
Resource management	Between	0.45	2	0.23	0.87	.421
	Within	40.62	156	0.26		
	Total	41.07	158			
Communication	Between	0.52	2	0.26	1.57	.212
	Within	25.92	155	0.17		
	Total	26.44	157			
Collaboration	Between	1.33	2	0.67	3.62	.029
	Within	27.06	147	0.18		
	Total	28.39	149			
Community college advocacy	Between	1.16	2	0.58	2.45	.090
	Within	34.16	145	0.24		
	Total	35.32	147			
Professionalism	Between	0.19	2	0.10	0.59	.559
	Within	23.63	145	0.16		
	Total	23.82	147			

Table 4-16. Tukey post hoc tests conducted on significant ANOVA findings regarding mentor gender

Dependent variable	Male only		Male & Female		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Collaboration	3.38	0.44	3.48	0.39	.045

Table 4-17. *T* tests of preparedness for leadership competencies of CCSSAO sample by participation in formal leadership development programs

Dependent variable	Yes		No		<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Organizational strategy	3.22	0.46	3.13	0.49	304	1.56	.114
Resource management	3.05	0.44	2.96	0.52	302	1.74	.084
Communication	3.45	0.43	3.40	0.41	301	0.94	.348
Collaboration	3.20	0.45	3.16	0.44	287	0.70	.484
Community college advocacy	3.30	0.49	3.20	0.51	284	1.61	.108
Professionalism	3.24	0.41	3.19	0.43	284	0.98	.329

Table 4-18. Community college institutional characteristics of CCSSAO sample

Variable	%
Institution size	
Less than 1,000	5.6
1,001 – 2,000	11.1
2,001 – 3,000	9.8
3,001 – 5,000	17.3
5,001 – 10,000	26.1
More than 10,000	30.1
Institution setting	
Rural	45.3
Suburban	31.3
Urban	23.5
Institution structure	
Single campus	35.9
Multiple campuses	64.1
Highest degree awarded	
Certification	0.3
Associate's degree	96.1
Bachelor's degree	3.2
Master's degree	0.3

Table 4-19. One-way ANOVA of importance for leadership competencies of CCSSAO sample by institutional size

Dependent variable	Groups	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Organizational strategy	Between	2.26	5	0.45	3.62	.003
	Within	37.16	297	0.13		
Resource management	Between	1.21	5	0.24	1.67	.143
	Within	42.82	295	0.15		
	Total	44.02	299			
Communication	Between	0.56	5	0.11	0.78	.566
	Within	42.34	294	0.14		
	Total	42.91	299			
Collaboration	Between	0.94	5	0.19	1.25	.284
	Within	41.63	279	0.15		
	Total	42.57	284			
Community college advocacy	Between	1.51	5	0.30	1.42	.217
	Within	59.08	277	0.21		
	Total	60.59	282			
Professionalism	Between	0.99	5	0.19	1.32	.257
	Within	41.78	277	0.15		
	Total	42.77	282			

Table 4-20. Tukey post hoc tests conducted on significant ANOVA findings regarding CCSSAO sample's institutional size

Dependent variable	1,001 - 2,000		5,001 - 10,000		10,001 +		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Organizational strategy	3.38	0.40	3.65	0.34			.004
	3.38	0.40			3.60	0.36	.027

Table 4.21. One-way ANOVA of importance of leadership competencies of CCSSAO sample by institutional settings

Dependent variable	Groups	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Organizational strategy	Between	1.03	2	0.54	4.21	.016
	Within	38.72	301	0.13		
	Total	39.80	303			
Resource management	Between	0.36	2	0.18	1.22	.297
	Within	43.80	299	0.15		
	Total	44.16	301			
Communication	Between	0.37	2	0.18	1.28	.279
	Within	42.91	298	0.14		
	Total	43.28	300			
Collaboration	Between	0.32	2	0.16	1.05	.350
	Within	42.43	283	0.15		
	Total	42.75	285			
Community college advocacy	Between	0.11	2	0.55	0.25	.776
	Within	60.59	281	0.22		
	Total	60.70	283			
Professionalism	Between	0.70	2	0.39	2.32	.101
	Within	42.23	281	0.15		
	Total	42.93	283			

Table 4-22. Tukey post hoc tests conducted on significant ANOVA findings regarding CCSSAO sample's institutional settings

Dependent variable	Rural		Urban		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Organizational strategy	3.51	0.38	3.65	0.33	.004

Table 4-23. *T* tests of importance for leadership competencies of CCSSAO sample by institutional structure

Dependent variable	Single campus		Multiple campus		<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Organizational strategy	3.55	0.35	3.58	0.37	301	.747	.455
Resource management	3.30	0.36	3.33	0.39	300	.488	.626
Communication	3.50	0.38	3.56	0.38	299	1.32	.187
Collaboration	3.37	0.39	3.44	0.39	284	1.42	.157
Community college advocacy	3.31	0.43	3.36	0.48	282	0.85	.398
Professionalism	3.27	0.37	3.35	0.39	282	1.76	.084

Table 4-24. Most effective leadership experiences of CCSSAO sample

Variable	%
Student affairs employment experience	41.7
Specific leadership development workshop	19.7
Mentoring relationships	17.7
Graduate school / doctoral program	11.8
Networking	7.5
State association peer groups	5.9
Working with college presidents	5.9
Observing different leaders and learning from them	4.7
Professional associations	4.3
On-the-job training	3.9

Table 4-25. How CCSSAO survey respondents wish they had prepared for first senior-level positions

Variable	%
Completed a doctoral degree	15.3
Acquired greater knowledge of each area of student affairs	11.1
Acquired greater knowledge about accounting, budgets, and budgeting processes	10.6
Emphasized professional development	10.2
Better developed at least one mentoring relationship	9.7
Enrolled in a leadership development institute	5.6

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS OF CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of chapter five is to present a summary of the study. Also, the study's conclusions and implications are discussed. The study's limitations are addressed, and recommendations for future research are provided.

The purpose of this study was to assess CCSSAOs' demographics, educational backgrounds, and leadership development experiences as related to their mastery of the leadership skills outlined in the *AACC Competencies*, and to determine which of these leadership skills is deemed most critical for CCSSAOs to perform their jobs effectively. Furthermore, the study examined how CCSSAOs' perceptions of their preparedness for the *AACC Competencies*, and explore the means of providing leadership development. Related to the study's purpose, the desired outcomes of this study were to determine which of the *AACC Competencies* were deemed most important to CCSSAOs, which *AACC Competencies* CCSSAOs felt the least prepared for, and which existing leadership development experiences were most effective in preparing CCSSAOs for their roles.

Specifically, this study addressed the following six research questions:

1. What are the general demographic characteristics, professional backgrounds, and leadership experiences of current community college senior student affairs officers in the United States?
2. Is there a relationship between the community college senior student affairs officers' perceptions of importance of the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* and their perception of their preparedness for those skills when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?
3. To what extent do the highest degrees earned by community college senior student affairs officers influence how they rate their preparedness on the leadership skills included in the *AACC Competencies* when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?

4. To what extent do the differences in leadership preparation outside of formal education influence how they rate their preparedness on the leadership skills included in the AACC *Competencies* when they assumed their first community college senior student affairs officer position?
5. To what extent do differences in institutional characteristics (specifically, institution size, setting, structure, and highest degree offering) affect the reported importance of the AACC *Competencies*?
6. Which leadership experiences do current community college senior student affairs officers believe best prepared them to serve in this capacity, and what do they wish they had done differently to prepare for their first community college senior student affairs officer position?

Discussion of Conclusions

Based on the information presented in chapter four, this section presents conclusions drawn from this study's findings. Also, the findings are discussed in more detail. As with the findings, the conclusions relate to the six research questions.

Research Question One

To develop a profile of CCSSAOs, respondents were asked a series of questions about their general demographic characteristics, including their ages, genders, and races/ethnicities. The second type of information provided was respondents' educational backgrounds, including their highest degrees earned and major fields of study. And the last category of data collected was information pertaining to CCSSAOs' leadership development experiences—specifically, leadership development programs and mentoring relationships.

The average age of all CCSSAOs in this study, male and female, was 51.7 years old. Ages ranged from 26 – 75 years old, with 51 years old as the most reported age. More than 70% of respondents were aged 40 – 59 years. Of the 306 respondents, 29.4% were 40 – 49 years old, and 41.5% were 50 – 59 years old. These findings align with the earlier findings of Smith (2002) and Edwards (2005), whose regional studies found the average age to be 48 and mid-50s, respectively. Based on gender, there was no significant difference in average age.

The majority (52.3%) of CCSSAOs in this study were female; the rest were male (47.7%). These findings differ from Keim's (2008) study, which found the opposite, with 52% male and 48% female. This change could reflect a trend noted in the literature pertaining to senior student affairs officers at four-year institutions over the past 30 years. As Edwards (2005) reported, the percentage of female senior student affairs officers has risen from 15% in 1972 to 26% in 1984, and 39% in 1993. Logically, the majority of CCSSAOs in 2011 should be female, especially in light of Hamrick and Carlisle's (1990) report that the number of women entering the field of student affairs far exceeded the number of men pursuing that career path. In 2011, 20 years after Hamrick and Carlisle identified this transition, it stands to reason that women who entered the student affairs field at that time would currently hold senior positions.

Of the 308 CCSSAO respondents, 74.5% of them were White/Caucasian. The next two highest reported race/ethnicity groups were Black/African American (14.1%) and Hispanic/Latino (7.2%). This Caucasian-dominated result was similar to Smith's (2002) study of CCSSAOs in the Southeast United States, which reported that almost three-fourths (74.1%) of respondents were Caucasian, and 18.9% were African American. Slightly more diverse were the ethnicities reported by Edwards (2005), whose Northeast United States study included 68% Caucasians, 28% African Americans, and 4% Hispanics.

While diversity has substantially increased since the 1972 study showing that 95% of all senior student affairs officers were Caucasian (Edwards, 2005), more progress must be made before the racial/ethnic demographics of CCSSAOs reflect those of community college students. The National Center on Education Statistics (2010) reported that, at the time of their data collection, 60.2% of community college students were Caucasian, 14.4% were African

American, and 14.8% were Hispanic. Another 6.1% were Asian, and the remaining 4.5% were split among American Indian, Pacific Islander, Multiracial, and other.

Clearly, much work remains to further diversify the senior ranks of student affairs administrations. That said, this study did show ways that CCSSAOs are more ethnically diverse than community college presidents. Duree (2007) reported the race/ethnicity of community college presidents as 80.7% Caucasian, 8.2% Black/African American, 5.8% Hispanic/Latino, 2.2% Native American, and 1.9% Asian/Pacific Islander. Nevertheless, measures should be taken to promote diversity within student affairs. While undergraduates, appropriate students from various racial/ethnic groups should be encouraged to enroll in graduate preparation programs—the first step in any student affairs profession.

This study's findings showed that about just less than half (49.7%) of CCSSAO respondents possessed a master's degree as their highest degree earned. A similar percentage of respondents (46.6%) had earned a doctorate. The majority (59.7%) of doctorate-holding CCSSAOs possessed a doctorate of education. For 79.7% of respondents, the major field of study in the highest degree earned was education.

These findings were similar to those presented by Smith (2002) and Keim (2008). Smith reported that 51.2% of respondents had master's degrees, and 42.3% had earned a doctorate. Smith also reported that the majority of the doctorates earned (62%) were EdDs; the remaining 38% were PhDs. Keim reported that 48% of CCSSAOs had master's degrees, and 48% had earned a doctorate. Like Smith, Keim found that the majority (56%) of the doctorates were EdDs. Keim also noted that 81% of the doctorates were in education.

This study's findings were consistent with a trend dating back to 1981, when Piper reported that the highest degrees earned were 54% master's degrees and 39% doctorates. In

1990, Townsend and Weise reported that over 39% of senior student affairs officers had doctorates in higher education. In each study over the past 30 years, the percentage of CCSSAOs with doctorates has increased, and the number of CCSSAOs with master's degrees as their highest degree earned has decreased. The findings demonstrated that a master's degree remains the minimum degree for a CCSSAO position, though more individuals serving in or intending to serve as CCSSAOs in the future are pursuing doctoral degrees than they did in the past. Lastly, this study indicated that the appropriate doctoral degree for CCSSAOs is an EdD. This finding aligns with those of Nelson and Coorough (1994), who stated that the PhD is research-oriented, and the EdD is designed for the educational practitioner.

CCSSAOs who participated in this study acknowledged their efforts to develop leadership skills through attending a variety of leadership development programs sponsored by professional associations, individual institutions, and state associations. Just less than half of respondents (47%) reported attending such a program, compared to 56.9% of community college presidents who had participated in a leadership workshop prior to their first presidency (Duree, 2007). CCSSAOs were more likely to have participated in an institution-based GYOL program than college presidents (22.2% vs. 12.5%). Popular professional association workshops included the NCSD Community College Leadership Institute, which was attended by 8.8% of respondents, and a variety of leadership workshops presented by NASPA, including the Institute for Aspiring Senior Student Affairs Officers, the Mid-Managers Institute, the Institute for Community/Two-Year Colleges, and the Alice Manicur Symposium. Collectively, NASPA-sponsored workshops attracted 23.5% of respondents.

Just over half of respondents (51.2%) acknowledged that they had participated in a mentoring relationship as a protégé. This percentage was lower than what Twale and Jelinek

(1996) found in a study of female senior student affairs officers, mostly from four-year institutions. Controlling for gender in this study, women were more likely to have a mentor than men, with 54.1% of the 157 female participants indicating they had a mentor. This result was closer to Twale and Jelinek's findings.

The settings in which the mentoring relationships developed were largely employment based, with 82.6% of the relationships developed within the context of community college employment. This affirms the 1999 finding of Cooper and Miller, who reported that 77% of mentoring relationships were developed within the employment arena. Despite Cooper and Miller's (1999) call for formal mentoring programs within the context of student affairs employment, 75.3% of protégé respondents reported that their mentoring relationship was informal. From a community college executive perspective, Duree (2007) reported that just less than half of community college presidents (49.4%) participated in a mentoring relationship as a protégé. This result was similar to the participation rate found in this study.

Research Question Two

CCSSAOs were asked to rate their preparedness for the 45 leadership skills found within the AACC *Competencies*, at the time they entered their first CCSSAO positions. In addition, respondents indicated the importance of the leadership competencies for service as a CCSSAO. These ratings were conducted using a four-point Likert-type scale (*very prepared, prepared, slightly prepared, not prepared; very important, important, slightly important, not important*).

As a whole, CCSSAO ratings of their preparedness for the leadership skills included in the AACC *Competencies* vary. On average, 83.7% of respondents reported that they were very prepared or prepared for the leadership skills when they entered their first CCSSAO positions. To identify training priorities, the leadership skills for which respondents felt least prepared must be identified. The 10 leadership skills with the lowest preparedness ratings, and with the

percentage of respondents who stated they were prepared or very prepared in these competencies, were:

- Take an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources (36.6%);
- Establish networks and partnerships to advance the mission of the community college (43.8%);
- Implement financial strategies to support programs, services, staff, and facilities (59.0%);
- Implement a human resources system that fosters the professional development and advancement of all staff (61.5%);
- Work effectively and diplomatically with legislators, board members, business leaders, accreditation organizations, and others (63.8%);
- Contribute to the profession through professional development programs, professional organizational leadership, and research/publications (70.3%);
- Use a systems perspective to assess and respond to the needs of students and the community (71.1%);
- Support operational decisions by managing information resources (71.6%);
- Demonstrate cultural competence in a global society (72.7%); and
- Manage conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the organization (74.0%).

These leadership skills represented a skill set the responding CCSSAOs determined was missing when they entered their first senior-level position. However, CCSSAOs are not alone in lacking these skills. As Duree (2007) reported, when community college presidents rated their preparedness prior to their first presidency on these same skills, seven of the same 10 were rated lowest:

- Contribute to the profession through professional development programs, professional organizational leadership, and research/publications (60.5%);
- Take an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources (61.4%);
- Work effectively and diplomatically with legislators, board members, business leaders, and accreditation organizations (66.0%);

- Demonstrate cultural competence in a global society (66.3%);
- Use a systems perspective to assess and respond to the needs of students and the community (77.3%);
- Support operational decisions by managing information resources (71.4%); and
- Implement a human resources system that fosters the professional development and advancement of all staff (74.4%).

The rest of the presidents' bottom 10 skills were:

- Manage stress through self-care, balance, adaptability, flexibility, and humor (65.3%);
- Demonstrate transformational leadership (69.4%); and
- Understand the impact of perceptions, worldviews, and emotions on self and others (72.5%).

The similarities between CCSSAOs' and community college presidents' responses indicate gaps in graduate school training, leadership development programs, and mentoring relationships.

If this observation is isolated, one might determine that these areas are most needed in training.

However, one must first assess the importance attributed to these skills, to see if they are important enough to warrant investing time and resources in their development.

Collectively, CCSSAOs rated the AACC *Competencies* very high on the importance scale. On average, the leadership competencies were rated very important or important by 92.3% of respondents. At least 98% of respondents rated the following top 10 leadership skills very important or important:

- Develop a positive environment that supports innovation, teamwork, and successful outcomes (99.7%);
- Listen actively to understand, analyze, engage, and act (99.3%);
- Develop, enhance and sustain teamwork and cooperation (99.3%);
- Manage conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the organization (99.0%);

- Promote and maintain high standards for personal and organizational integrity, honesty, and respect for people (98.9%);
- Create and maintain open communication regarding resources, priorities, and expectations (98.7%);
- Demonstrate the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility (98.6%);
- Manage conflict and change by building and maintaining productive relationships (98.6%);
- Use a data-driven decision making practices to plan strategically (98.0%); and
- Project confidence and respond responsibly and tactfully (98.0%).

These “most important” leadership skills reflected the competencies defined elsewhere in the literature as critical traits and skills for community college leaders (Brown, Martinez, & Daniel, 2002; Duncan & Harlacher, 1991; Hockaday & Puyear, 2008).

In Duree’s (2007) report, the percentage of community college presidents who rated these leadership skills very important or important was lower overall, but not significantly so. The 10 most important skills aligned in some areas, including the top two and four of both groups’ top 10 skills. The five skills that also appeared on the presidents’ top 10 list, with the percentage of respondents who rated them very important or important, were:

- Develop a positive environment that supports innovation, teamwork, and successful outcomes (98.8%);
- Listen actively to understand, analyze, engage, and act (97.3%);
- Manage conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the organization (97.1%);
- Create and maintain open communication regarding resources, priorities, and expectations (96.6%); and
- Use a data-driven decision making practices to plan strategically (96.4%).

The rest of the presidents’ top 10 skills were:

- Maintain and grow college personnel, fiscal resources, and assets (98.0%);

- Effectively convey ideas and information to all constituents (96.9%);
- Articulate and champion shared mission, vision, and values to internal and external audiences (96.8%);
- Align organizational mission, structures, and resources with the college master plan (96.4%); and
- Ensure accountability in reporting (96.1%).

The differences and similarities in the top 10-rated leadership skills underscored the differences in roles between CCSSAOs and community college presidents. The presidents' top 10 most important leadership skills fell into one of three competency domains: organizational strategy, resource management, and communication. On the other hand, CCSSAOs' top 10 most important leadership skills included two items each from collaboration and professionalism, as well as items within the other three domains. In terms of importance, neither CCSSAOs nor community college presidents included leadership skills from the community college advocacy domain in their top 10.

When observing the domains collectively, participating CCSSAOs rated the communication competency domain the most important, followed by organizational strategy and collaboration. Community college advocacy was rated fourth most important, followed by resource management. Professionalism was deemed to be the least important competency domain. Presidents from Duree's (2007) study had the same top two domains, though in reverse order. Presidents indicated that the organizational strategy was the most important competency domain, followed by communication. Resource management was the presidents' third most important domain, followed by collaboration. Community college advocacy was rated fifth. As with CCSSAOs, the competency domain rated least important by presidents was the professionalism domain.

What can be taken away from this research question is an understanding of what skills matter most to CCSSAOs. Not only this, but CCSSAOs' skills can be compared and contrasted to their colleges' presidents. This list, combined with the items that CCSSAOs rated lowest on the preparedness scale, identify critical training needs.

Research Question Three

The percentage of CCSSAOs with doctorates has steadily increased over the past 30 years. This research question determined the extent to which the knowledge gained during the doctoral degree process impacted CCSSAOs' perceptions of their preparedness for the leadership competencies found in the *AACC Competencies*. To determine this extent, a one-way ANOVA technique was performed, using three types of degrees as the independent variable (master's, PhD, and EdD), and the preparedness ratings for each of the six competency domains as the dependent variables. For five of the six competency domains, a significant difference ($p < .05$) was found between levels of preparedness based on the highest degree earned. The only competency domain without a significant difference was the communication domain. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted on the significant findings to determine the direction and strength of each difference.

In each case, respondents with a doctoral degree reported a higher level of preparedness, though different doctoral degrees yielded different findings. For organizational strategy, respondents with both PhDs and EdDs reported significantly higher preparedness than those with master's degrees. For resource management, collaboration, and community college advocacy, the differences were between the EdDs and master's degrees. For each of the three competency domains, respondents with EdDs reported a significantly higher level of preparedness for the leadership skills in those three competency domains than respondents with master's degrees. For

the professionalism domain, EdD holders rated themselves significantly more prepared than respondents with either master's degrees or PhDs.

These findings were significant in part because of Duree's (2007) finding that highest degree earned had no impact on how community college presidents perceived their level of preparedness prior to their first presidency. Clearly, CCSSAOs who had earned EdDs valued this educational experience. Nelson and Coorough (1994) determined that the EdD was the doctoral degree designed for the educational practitioner; this study's findings indicated that earning this degree may more thoroughly prepare individuals for positions as educational practitioners.

Research Question Four

Outside of formal education, CCSSAOs also developed leadership skills by participating in mentoring relationships and attending leadership development programs. This research question sought to determine the extent to which differences in leadership preparation outside of formal education influenced how CCSSAOs rated their preparedness on the leadership skills included in the AACC *Competencies*. This influence was measured in the context of respondents' first CCSSAO positions.

To determine the extent to which mentoring relationships impacted preparedness, an independent sample *t* test was performed on the six composite domain variables. For four of the six competency domains (organizational strategy, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism), a significant difference ($p < .05$) was found between level of preparedness based on participation in a mentoring relationship as a protégé. Respondents who had participated in mentoring relationships as protégés perceived themselves as more prepared than their nonprotégé counterparts.

To determine the extent of a mentor's gender on protégé preparedness, a one-way ANOVA was performed, using three possible gender combinations as the independent variable (female only, male only, and female and male), and the preparedness ratings for each of the six competency domains as the dependent variables. For one of the six competency domains based on the mentor's/mentors' gender, a significant difference ($p < .05$) was found in levels of preparedness. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted on the significant findings to determine the direction and strength of the difference. The findings showed that respondents with both male and female mentors perceived themselves as more prepared for the leadership skills within the collaboration domain than respondents with only a male mentor.

After mentoring, leadership programs' were examined. To determine the extent to which attending leadership development programs impacted CCSSAO preparedness, an independent t test was performed on the six composite domain variables. Findings showed that attending leadership programs did not produce a significant difference ($p < .05$) in respondents' perceptions of their preparedness for the leadership skills found in the *AACC Competencies*.

A variety of literature contains several references to how mentors can assist in leadership development (Carpenter & Stimpson, 2007; Cooper & Miller, 1999; Roper, 2002; VanDerLinden, 2005). This study explored this concept more in-depth, by showing how participation in mentoring relationships impacts protégés' perceptions of their preparedness to lead. In addition, this study's findings provided evidence for the value in having multiple mentors of different genders.

Conversely, these findings indicated that participating in leadership development programs did not help participants feel more prepared to lead. Despite this finding, one should not assume that leadership development programs did not impact their participants' development. As Duree

(2007) suggested, participating in leadership development experiences may increase participants' awareness of the challenges and intricacies involved in providing community college leadership, causing participants to report lower levels of preparedness, as a result of having a more thorough understanding of their positions.

Research Question Five

A higher education institution's physical environment plays a key role in shaping and helping achieve the institution's mission (Kenney, Dumont, & Kenney, 2005). Furthermore, the environmental aspects of a college or university impacts employees' work experiences, perceptions of their jobs, and their priorities. To explore this concept, research question seven examined the extent to which institutional characteristics (specifically, institution size, setting, structure, and highest degree offering) affected the importance of the AACC *Competencies*.

The survey instrument divided institution size into six categories based on an Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) report featured on the AACC Website (2003). To determine the extent to which institution size affected the importance of the AACC *Competencies*, a one-way ANOVA procedure was performed using the six institutional size categories as independent variables, and the importance rating for each of the six competency domains as dependent variables.

For the organizational strategy competency domains, a significant difference ($p < .05$) was found between the importance ratings based on institution size. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted on the significant findings to determine the direction and strength of the difference. The post hoc tests results showed that organizational strategy competencies were rated significantly higher at colleges with 5,000 – 10,000 students and more than 10,000 students, compared to colleges with 1,000 – 2,000 students.

The instrument divided institution setting into three categories (rural, suburban, and urban). To determine the extent to which institution setting affected the reported importance of the AACC *Competencies*, a one-way ANOVA procedure was performed using the three institutional settings categories as independent variables, and the importance rating for each of the six competency domains as dependent variables. For the organizational strategy competency domains, a significant difference ($p < .05$) was found between the importance ratings based on institution setting. Tukey post hoc tests were conducted on the significant findings to determine the direction and strength of the difference. The post hoc tests results showed that organizational strategy competencies were rated significantly higher at urban colleges, compared to rural colleges.

It was noteworthy that the organizational strategy competency domain was the only one to garner any significant differences based on size or setting. As previously stated, organizational strategy was the second-highest ranked competency in terms of importance. Rather than infer that CCSSAOs working in colleges with 1,000 – 2,000 students and/or in rural colleges do not find the leadership skills found in the organizational strategy domain unimportant, it might be more accurate to say that all participants felt the leadership skills in the organizational strategy domain were important, and those at large, urban colleges found them extremely important.

The instrument divided institution structure into two categories (single-campus and multi-campus). To determine the extent to which institution structure affected the reported importance of the AACC *Competencies*, an independent sample *t* test was performed using the two institutional structure categories as independent variables, and the importance rating for each of the six competency domains as dependent variables. The findings showed no significant difference ($p > .05$) in importance rating based on institutional structure.

This finding implied that differences in institutional structure should be considered when developing curriculum for leadership development experiences. However, this did not imply that there was no value in training community college leaders to work with different types of institutional structures. Instead, this finding indicated that an institution's structure should not impact on curriculum development in reference to the *AACC Competencies*.

Over 96% of respondents worked at community colleges with associate's as the highest degree offering. In terms of highest degree awarded, the homogeneity of the sample did not allow for any statistical analysis based on this variable. The small number of respondents who worked at community colleges offering bachelor's degrees implies that the rapid expansion of the community college baccalaureate, as predicted by Floyd, Skolnik, and Walker (2005) had not yet come to fruition.

Research Question Six

The final questions in this study's survey instrument provided respondents with an opportunity to reflect on what leadership experiences were most valuable in preparing them for their first CCSSAO positions. Also, CCSSAOs could provide information regarding what they wished they had done differently to prepare for their first CCSSAO positions. A content analysis was conducted to determine the most popular responses, and these formed the bases for answering research question six.

By far, the most frequent response to what best prepared respondents was their previous student affairs work experience. Over 40% of respondents discussed work experiences in multiple roles over time, serving as a director or coordinator for specific functional roles within student affairs, or working as assistant/associate vice presidents for student affairs. Several respondents commented on how working in different student affairs departments fostered a more thorough understanding of the entire student affairs division; this sentiment was echoed by those

who had worked as assistant/associate vice presidents, who stated that those roles enabled them to see the broader vision of how student affairs relates to other aspects of the community college. A couple of respondents mentioned that working at multiple institutions was valuable, because these experiences helped them learn different institutional governance and leadership systems. A few respondents specifically referred to their counseling experience as valuable leadership development experience. The high level of preparedness reported on many of the leadership skills included in the communication competency domain may reflect respondents' counseling backgrounds.

Despite the finding that participation in leadership development programs did not significantly impact respondents' perceptions of preparedness for the *AACC Competencies*, 50 respondents identified a workshop as the leadership development experience that was most valuable to them in preparation for their first CCSSAO position. This information made leadership development programs the second most frequently cited leadership experiences. The specific workshops listed varied greatly and included 16 different professional association programs, plus state-based leadership programs, local leadership programs, and institution-based GYOL programs. The program that appeared most in the responses was The Chair Academy's leadership conference.

Mentoring relationships were the third most discussed leadership experience related to respondents' preparedness for their first CCSSAO positions. The mentors, described as CCSSAOs, community college presidents, and previous supervisors, took particular interest in their protégés' personal, professional, and career development. The findings from this study strongly suggested that midlevel CCSSAOs who are interested in serving in a senior-level capacity identify a mentor to improve their overall development. This finding supported the

assertions of Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005) and McDade (2005) that mentoring relationships helped improve administrative and social skills and prepare protégés for career advancement.

The fourth most listed leadership development experiences that helped prepare respondents for their first CCSSAO positions were their formal educations. The majority of the 12% of the sample who specifically identified formal education mentioned their graduate work in education. This supported the findings of results from research question three where, compared to respondents whose highest degrees earned were master's, respondents with EdDs reported higher levels of preparedness for all six leadership competencies.

CCSSAOs were very open about what they wished they had done differently to prepare for their first senior-level positions; 70% of respondents replied to this open-ended item. The most common response was a desire to have earned a doctorate before accepting a senior-level position. Respondents provided various reasons for this desire, from the challenges inherent in balancing academic and work requirements to the status a leader with a doctorate would generate for the student affairs division.

The next three answers all pertained to knowledge acquisition, as respondents stated that they wish they had acquired greater knowledge of each area of student affairs, acquired greater knowledge about accounting, budgets, and budgeting processes, or emphasized professional development more prior to assuming their first CCSSAO positions. Interestingly, respondents who expressed a desire for more knowledge about student affairs often did not state that their experiences in student affairs were their most valuable leadership development experiences. The comments regarding the need for additional knowledge of financial aspects of higher education reflected the findings about preparedness on the leadership skills found within the resource management competencies domain. With only three-fifths of respondents perceiving themselves

as very prepared or prepared to manage financial strategies to support programs, services, staff, and facilities, and only about one-third of respondents perceiving themselves as very prepared or prepared to take an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources, the findings indicated two areas for additional training needs.

The fifth most common response was to have developed at least one strong mentoring relationship. About 10% of respondents identified their mentoring relationships as either deficient or nonexistent. These findings supported Tunks's (2007) research, which stated that mentoring was a distinctive theme that arose when leaders were asked to reflect on what they would do differently in the future.

Implications

A number of implications may be drawn from this study, which might affect numerous facets of entities involved with educating and training individuals on the CCSSAO career path. These entities range the full spectrum of the leadership development process, from graduate school faculty and administrators, to professional organizations and community college employees charged with responsibilities for employees' professional development. Individuals who aspire to serve in senior-level positions and community college executives may also benefit from these findings.

Graduate school faculty and administrators may want to consider the EdD the more appropriate degree for those aspiring to be senior student affairs administrators. Departments offering both the PhD and the EdD should strive to track new students appropriately based on their anticipated career paths. All respondents rated these competency domains important or very important, and curricula could be created based on the leadership skills found in the AACC *Competencies*. Faculty and administrators should also ensure that EdD curricula include practical elements for active learning, including internships and practica to increase students'

exposure their intended work environments. The curricula should include at least one class on the financial aspects of higher education, including accounting, budgets, and budgeting procedures. Finally, EdD programs should include structured opportunities for students to develop mentoring relationships with professionals working in the field.

Professional organizations should renew their efforts to establish formal mentoring programs, giving new professionals opportunities to learn from more experienced colleagues. Only half of this study's respondents had participated in such a relationship, and respondents indicated that if they could alter preparations for their first CCSSAO positions, they would have developed at least one strong mentoring relationship. Professional organizations should also look at the curricula and structure of their leadership development programs. Respondents who attended leadership workshops did not perceive themselves as more prepared than nonattendees; however, attendees also felt that the workshops were valuable experiences for leadership preparedness. To improve the quality and relevancy of the programs, and to help improve participants' preparedness, leadership development program organizers should review the leadership skills in the AACC *Competencies* to ensure that the curricula are research-based. Additionally, assessments should be developed to determine if the workshop participants are successfully achieving the intended learning outcomes.

Community college student affairs divisions should invest in professional development experiences for their entry-level and mid-level employees, including cross-training and exposure to financial aspects of higher education, including budgets and budgeting processes. The leadership skills contained within the AACC *Competencies* are a solid, research-based foundation upon which to build a curriculum to training CCSSAOs. While the AACC *Competencies* were developed with community college presidents as the focus, respondents'

high importance ratings throughout this study indicated that the competencies are also relevant to student affairs leadership. Very few institutional characteristics had a significant impact on how respondents rated the importance of the *AACC Competencies*. Therefore, program designers should not emphasize institutional characteristics when developing or evaluating curricula for leadership development programs.

Those who aspire to senior-level student affairs positions may garner several important lessons from this study. First and foremost, they should begin a doctorate program (preferably an EdD), with a goal of completing it prior to assuming a senior-level position. Second, they should find at least one mentor and cultivate the relationship. They should explore opportunities to learn about multiple facets of student affairs, by working in different departments within a division, serving on committees outside the primary work area, completing internships and practica while in graduate school, or serving in an assistant/associate vice president position. Those who desire senior-level student affairs can also use this study's survey instrument as a self-assessment tool to determine areas where additional knowledge is needed, and seek out this knowledge to increase preparedness for a CCSSAO position.

Finally, community college presidents charged with hiring new CCSSAOs may benefit from using the list of competencies to determine desired competencies in candidates. The findings here effectively encapsulated competencies deemed most important by other CCSSAOs. Presidents may find value in using these competencies as an aid in during the selection process.

Recommendations for Future Research

Given that only 308 usable responses were received from the 1,045 community colleges in the United States, one recommendation for future research would be to replicate the study using every current CCSSAO at every AACC member institution as a sample. As part of this follow-up study, efforts should be made to contact the sample with methods in addition to emails.

Using a multiple mode survey design (such as adding phone calls and/or letters sent via U.S. Mail) has been shown to improve data quality by increasing response rates (Dillman, Smyrth, & Christian, 2009).

This study did not include information regarding respondents' geographic locations. With the proliferation of state organization-based GYOL programs (Carroll & Romero, 2003), the states producing more prepared administrators could be identified. State-specific results could be generalized to meet the unique needs of community college leaders in that state, and perhaps best practices could be generalized to other states.

About 40% of respondents stated that their most valuable leadership development opportunities were their prior student affairs employment work experience. The instrument did not, however, include questions that explored work history. Given these findings, additional research should be conducted to determine the career pathways that lead individuals to work as CCSSAOs, including the types of positions held, the roles and responsibilities, and how each of these helped prepare the administrator for the senior-level position.

A more thorough analysis of learning outcomes of leadership development programs is needed to assess how the programs impacted participants' preparedness to serve in senior-level positions. Although this study's findings did not indicate a significant impact from leadership development program participation, respondents indicated the programs were valuable experiences for increasing their preparedness for their first senior-level positions. Additional research on the learning outcomes of leadership development programs may address this lack of cohesion.

Differences in institutional size and setting were shown to have a significant impact on the importance placed on the organizational strategy competencies by CCSSAOs working at large,

urban institutions, compared to their counterparts at small, rural colleges. Additional research should be done to more fully explore the impact of institutional size and setting to determine the competencies needed to succeed at different types of institutions. Related research may include exploring leadership styles and job satisfaction with a goal of helping prospective job candidates find good institutional fit.

A small number of respondents indicated their community college was approved to award bachelor's degrees. If Floyd et al. (2005) were correct in their assertion that the community college baccalaureate is the future for these institutions, understanding how institutions' support of this degree and the students pursuing it will impact student affairs work and the CCSSAO's role. Research focused exclusively on senior CCSSAOs who work at community colleges that award the baccalaureate degree could be conducted, to determine how the change in highest degree offering impacts CCSSAOs' perceptions of the importance of the AACC *Competencies*, thereby affecting training models for administrators employed by bachelor's degree-granting community colleges.

This study only addressed senior-level CCSSAOs. Student affairs professionals work at a variety of hierarchical levels. A similar study based on the AACC *Competencies* could be administrated to entry-level and midlevel professionals, to determine competency-based models appropriate for each level of the profession. Along these same lines, this study examined the AACC *Competencies* model as applied to CCSSAOs in the United States. Similar studies could be replicated with other senior-level positions in the community college (e.g., academic affairs, business affairs, etc.) to develop competency-based training models based on the AACC *Competencies* for each functional area of the community college.

Summary

This study applied a competency model for training CCSSAOs, demonstrating the most important leadership skills for this population and providing a structure for their training. This study also provided an updated demographic overview of CCSSAOs in the United States. The results of the study have wide-ranging implications that may affect the approaches used by professional organizations, state associations, university graduate programs, and community college student affairs divisions use to provide training and professional development for student affairs professionals. Additionally, individuals who aspire to serve as senior-level administrators could use the results from this study to direct their professional development. Finally, community college presidents could use these results to guide their selection process when hiring a CCSSAO for their institution.

APPENDIX A
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES *COMPETENCIES FOR
COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERS*

Organizational Strategy

- Assess, develop, implement, and evaluate strategies regularly to improve the quality of education and the long-term health of the organization.
- Use data-driven evidence and proven practices from internal and external stakeholders to solve problems, make decisions, and plan strategically.
- Use a systems perspective to assess and respond to the culture of the organization, to changing demographics, and to the economic, political, and public health needs of students and the community.
- Develop a positive environment that supports innovation, teamwork, and successful outcomes.
- Maintain and grow college personnel and fiscal resources.
- Align organizational mission, structures, and resources with the college master plan.

Resource Management

- Ensure accountability in reporting.
- Support operational decisions by managing information resources and ensuring the integrity and integration of supporting systems and databases.
- Develop and manage resource assessment, planning, budgeting, acquisition and allocation processes consistent with the college master plan and local, state, and national policies.
- Take an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources.
- Implement financial strategies to support programs, services, staff, and facilities.
- Implement a human resources system that includes recruitment, hiring, reward, and performance management systems and that fosters the professional development and advancement of all staff.
- Employ organizational, time management, planning, and delegation skills.
- Manage conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the organization.

Communication

- Articulate and champion shared mission, vision, and values to internal and external audiences, appropriately matching message to audience.
- Disseminate and support policies and strategies.
- Create and maintain open communications regarding resources, priorities, and expectations.
- Convey ideas and information succinctly, frequently, and inclusively through media and verbal and nonverbal means to the board and other constituencies.

- Listen actively to understand, comprehend, analyze, and act.
- Project confidence and respond responsibly and tactfully.

Collaboration

- Embrace and employ the diversity of individuals, cultures, values, ideas, and communication styles.
- Demonstrate cultural competence relative to a global society.
- Catalyze involvement and commitment of students, faculty, staff, and community members to work for the common good.
- Build and leverage networks and partnerships to advance mission, vision, and goals of the community college.
- Work effectively and diplomatically with unique constituent groups such as legislators, board members, business leaders, accreditation organizations, and others.
- Manage conflict and change by building and maintaining productive relationships.
- Develop, enhance, and sustain teamwork and cooperation.
- Facilitate shared problem solving and decision making.

Community College Advocacy

- Value and promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and academic excellence.
- Demonstrate a passion for and commitment to the mission of community colleges and student success through the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Promote equity, open access, teaching, learning, and innovation as primary goals for the college, seeking to understand how these change over time and facilitating discussion with all stakeholders.
- Advocate the community college mission to all constituents and empower them to do the same.
- Advance lifelong learning and support a learner-centered environment.
- Represent the community college in the local community, in the broader educational community, at various levels of government, and as a model of higher education that can be replicated in international settings.

Professionalism

- Demonstrate transformational leadership through authenticity, creativity, and vision.
- Understand and endorse the history, philosophy, and culture of the community college.
- Self-assess performance regularly using feedback, reflection, goal setting, and evaluation.
- Support lifelong learning for self and others.
- Manage stress through self-care, balance, adaptability, flexibility, and humor.
- Demonstrate the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility.
- Understand the impact of perceptions, worldviews, and emotions on self and others.

- Promote and maintain high standards for personal and organizational integrity, honesty, and respect for people.
- Use influence and power wisely in facilitating the teaching-learning process and the exchange of knowledge.
- Weigh short-term and long-term goals in decision making.
- Contribute to the profession through professional development programs, professional organizational leadership, and research/publication.

APPENDIX B
THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SENIOR STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER:
DEMOGRAPHICS AND LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Informed Consent

Protocol Title: Competencies of Community College Senior Student Affairs Officers

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Purpose of the research study:

The purpose of this study was to assess current community college senior-level student affairs officers' demographics, backgrounds, career pathways, and leadership development experiences as related to their mastery of the leadership skills outlined in the *AACC Competencies for Community College Leaders*, and to determine which of these leaderships skills is deemed most critical for community college senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) to do their jobs effectively.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

You will be asked to participate in a 41-item survey designed to examine current community college senior student affairs officers' demographics, backgrounds, career pathways, and development of the leadership skills outlined in the *AACC Competencies for Community College Leader*; and to determine which of these leaderships skills is deemed most critical for senior student affairs officer to do their job effectively.

Time required:

25 minutes

Risks and Benefits:

None

Compensation:

None

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept confidential. Survey responses are anonymous. Participants will not be asked for their name or any other identifiers. No individual responses will be reported, only an aggregate of all responses.

Voluntary participation:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Who to contact if you have questions about the study:

Dan Rodkin, Graduate Student, School of Human Development and Organizational Studies in Education, University of Florida; Director for Student Life, Santa Fe College, 352-395-4171, dan.rodkin@sfcollge.edu

Dale Campbell, PhD, School of Human Development and Organizational Studies in Education College of Education, University of Florida, 352-392-2391, dfc@coe.ufl.edu

Who to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:

IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; Phone: 352-392-0433.

Agreement:

By clicking the “Next” link below, I voluntarily agree to participate in this survey.

Next

**The Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer:
Demographics and Leadership Survey**

In each section, provide the information or check the spaces as appropriate. *You do not have to answer questions if you feel uncomfortable doing so.* Your answers will be anonymous and will be kept confidential.

For this survey, *Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer* (or *SSAO*) is defined as the most senior employee in the student affairs/student services/student development division of an educational institution or system with two-year associate degrees as its primary offering.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey.

1. Are you a Community College Senior Student Affairs Officer?

Yes

No [If no, skip to Thank You page]

Section One: Individual & Institutional Demographics

2. Current position/leadership title:

Vice President/Vice Chancellor

Associate Vice President/Vice Chancellor

Assistant Vice President/Vice Chancellor

Director/Dean

Associate Director/Dean
Assistant Director/Dean
Other (please specify) [text box]

3. What is the highest degree you have earned? (Check all that apply)

Associate's
Bachelor's
Master's
Ed. Specialist
EdD
PhD
JD

4. What was the major field of study in your highest degree?

Student Personnel in Higher Education
Higher education with emphasis on community college leadership
Higher education with other emphasis
K-12 administration
Other educational field
Other

If other educational or noneducational field, please specify: [text box]

5. Current age: [numerical box]

6. Gender:

Male
Female
Transgendered

7. Race/Ethnicity:

American Indian/Native American
Asian/Pacific Islander
Black/African American
Hispanic/Latino
White/Caucasian
Multiracial

8. How many for-credit students does your current institution enroll?

Less than 1,000
1,000 – 2,000

- 2,001 – 3,000
- 3,001 – 5,000
- 5,001 – 10,000
- More than 10,000

9. How would you best describe your current institution’s setting?

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban

10. Does your current institution have a single campus or multiple campuses?

- Single
- Multiple

11. Please indicate the highest academic degree your current institution offers.

- Certifications
- Associate’s Degrees
- Bachelor’s Degrees
- Master’s Degrees

Section Two: Your Career Pathways

12. Including your current position, how many Student Affairs positions have you held?
[numerical box]

13. For how many years have you been in your present position? [numerical box]

14. What is the total number of years you have worked in Student Affairs? [numerical box]

15. What was your last position prior to your current position? [text box]

16. What was this position in a community college?

- Yes
- No

17. How many years did you spend in each of the following career tracks?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Community College student affairs | [numerical box] |
| Other Community College positions | [numerical box] |
| University student affairs | [numerical box] |
| Other positions in education | [numerical box] |

Other positions outside of education

[numerical box]

18. Have you ever taught in a community college?

Yes, Full-time

Yes, Part-time

Yes, both Full- and Part-time

No

19. Are you currently teaching in any of the following settings? (Check all that apply)

Community College

Other higher education

Not currently teaching

Other (please specify) [text box]

20. What is your career aspiration?

Community college president

Community college senior student affairs officer

Faculty

Other educational position

Other position outside education

If other educational or noneducational field, please specify: [text box]

Section Three: Leadership Preparation

21. How important were each of the following peer networks in preparing for your leadership position in community college student affairs?

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
a. Graduate program cohort				
b. Graduate program faculty				
c. Coworkers at community colleges				
d. Social networks				
e. Business networks				

22. As you develop leadership skills required of a community college leader, are you participating in or have you participated in a mentor-protégé relationship as a protégé?

Yes

No [If no, go to Q28]

23. When did you participate in a mentor-protégé relationship? (Check all that apply)

During undergraduate studies
During graduate studies
During first 5 years of career
During second 5 years of career
Other (please specify) [text box]

24. Was your mentor-protégé relationship formal or informal?

Formal
Informal

25. Was your mentor-protégé relationship developed within the academic setting of a graduate program or within the professional setting of community college employment?

During graduate program
During community college employment
Both
Other (please specify) [text box]

26. Did you participate in more than one mentor-protégé relationship as a protégé?

Yes
No

27. Please indicate the number of mentors you have had by gender.

Female mentors [numerical box]
Male mentors [numerical box]

28. Outside of your graduate program, have you participated in any professional association–sponsored leadership preparation programs prior to becoming a Senior Student Affairs Officer? (Check all that apply)

AACC’s Future Leaders Institute
ACPA’s Mid-Level Management Institute
ACPA’s Senior Student Affairs Officer Symposium
NASPA’s Institute for Aspiring Senior Student Affairs Offices
NASPA’s Mid-Manager Institutes
NASPA’s Student Services Institute for Community and Two-Year Colleges
NCSD’s Community College Student Development Leadership Institute
Other (please specify) [text box]

29. Did you participate as an attendee at an institution-sponsored “grow your own leadership” (GYOL) program?

Yes
No

Section Four: Faculty, Staff & Public Relations

30. On how many of the following external boards do you currently serve?

Corporate	[numerical box]
College or university	[numerical box]
Civic organization	[numerical box]
Professional organization	[numerical box]
Other nonprofit organization	[numerical box]

31. In your role as a Senior Student Affairs officer, on average, how many times per week do you meet with or have discussions with each of the following?

Cabinet level administrators	[numerical box]
Midlevel student affairs officers	[numerical box]
Other college staff	[numerical box]
Faculty	[numerical box]
Students	[numerical box]
College board members	[numerical box]
Other community college SSAOs	[numerical box]
Other education officials	[numerical box]
Business/Industry officials	[numerical box]
Local, state or national elected officials	[numerical box]

Section Five: Research and Publications

32. Within the past five years...

- a. How many book reviews have you published in a professional journal? [numerical box]
- b. How many articles have you published in a professional journal? [numerical box]
- c. How many monographs or books have you published? [numerical box]
- d. How many chapters have you contributed to a published book? [numerical box]

Section Six: Competencies for Community College Leaders

The next six questions address six competency domains for community college leaders that have been developed and endorsed by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

For each individual competency listed, please rate how well prepared you feel are to perform the competency, and how important each competency is to effective community college student affairs leadership.

33. Organizational Strategy

	Not Prepared	Slightly Prepared	Prepared	Very Prepared
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to improve the quality of education at you institution.				
Use a data-driven decision making practices to plan strategically.				
Use a systems perspective to assess and respond to the needs of students and the community.				
Develop a positive environment that supports innovation, teamwork, and successful outcomes.				
Maintain and grow college personnel, fiscal resources and assets.				
Align organizational mission, structures, and resources with the college master plan.				

34. Resource Management

	Not Prepared	Slightly Prepared	Prepared	Very Prepared
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Ensure accountability in reporting.				
Support operational decisions by managing information resources.				

Develop and manage resources consistent with the college master plan.				
Take an entrepreneurial stance in seeking ethical alternative funding sources.				
Implement financial strategies to support programs, services, staff, and facilities.				
Implement a human resources system that fosters the professional development and advancement of all staff.				
Employ organizational, time management, planning, and delegations skills.				
Manage conflict and change in ways that contribute to the long-term viability of the organization.				

35. Communication

	Not Prepared	Slightly Prepared	Prepared	Very Prepared
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Articulate and champion shared mission, vision, and values to internal and external audiences.				
Disseminate and support policies and strategies.				
Create and maintain open communication regarding resources, priorities, and expectations.				

Effectively convey ideas and information to all constituents.				
Listen actively to understand, analyze, engage, and act.				
Project confidence and respond responsibly and tactfully.				

36. Collaboration

	Not Prepared	Slightly Prepared	Prepared	Very Prepared
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Embrace and employ the diversity of individuals, cultures, values, ideas, and communication styles.				
Demonstrate cultural competence in a global society.				
Involve students, faculty, staff, and community members to work for the common good.				
Establish networks and partnerships to advance the mission of the community college.				
Work effectively and diplomatically with legislators, board members, business leaders, accreditation organizations, and others.				
Manage conflict and change by building and maintaining productive relationships.				

Develop, enhance and sustain teamwork and cooperation.				
Facilitate shared problem solving and decision making.				

37. Community College Advocacy

	Not Prepared	Slightly Prepared	Prepared	Very Prepared
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Value and promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and academic excellence.				
Demonstrate commitment to the mission of community colleges and student success through the scholarship of teaching and learning.				
Promote equity, open access, teaching, learning, and innovation as primary goals for the college.				
Advocate the community college mission to all constituents and empower them to do the same.				
Advance lifelong learning and support a learning-centered environment.				
Represent the community college in a variety of settings as a model of higher education.				

38. Professionalism

	Not Prepared	Slightly Prepared	Prepared	Very Prepared
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Demonstrate transformational leadership.				
Demonstrate an understanding of the history, philosophy, and culture of the community college.				
Regularly self assess one's own performance using feedback, reflection, goal setting, and evaluation.				
Support lifelong learning for self and others.				
Manage stress through self-care, balance, adaptability, flexibility, and humor.				
Demonstrate the courage to take risks, make difficult decisions, and accept responsibility.				
Understand the impact of perceptions, worldviews, and emotions on self and others.				
Promote and maintain high standards for personal and organizational integrity, honesty, and respect for people.				
Use influence and power wisely in facilitating the teaching-learning process and the exchange of knowledge.				
Weigh short-term and long-term goals in decision making.				
Contribute to the profession through professional development programs, professional organizational leadership, and research/publications.				

Section Seven: Conclusion

39. How well prepared did you feel when you assumed your first SSAO position?

- Not prepared
- Slightly prepared
- Prepared
- Very prepared

40. What leadership development experience was most valuable to you in preparation for your first SSAO position? Please explain. [text box]

41. What do you wish you had done differently to prepare for your first SSAO position, knowing what you know now? [text box]

Section Eight: Closing Message

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION. YOUR RESPONSES HAVE BEEN RECORDED.

If you would like a copy of the results of the study, please email dan.rodkin@sfcollge.edu.

APPENDIX C
PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SENIOR
STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICERS

Professional Competencies

- Assessment and evaluation
- Communication skills
- Cultural competence
- Decision making
- Environmental management
- Financial accountability
- Implementation
- Initiative
- Institutional commitment
- Organizing
- Personnel management
- Planning
- Professional self-improvement
- Supervisory ability

Personal Characteristics

- Adaptable
- Considerate
- Cooperative
- Dependable
- Energetic
- Enthusiastic
- Ethical
- Good judgment
- Hard-working
- Impartial
- Intelligent
- Loyal
- Open-minded
- Sincere
- Stable
- Well-organized

APPENDIX D
CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS STUDIED IN ARTICLES

Skills

- Administration and Management
- Human Facilitation
- Communication
- Leadership
- Student enrollment and participation
- Role of educator
- Entrepreneurial

Knowledge

- Student development theory
- Functional unit responsibilities
- Academic background
- Organizational development/behavior
- Federal policies/regulations
- Student needs, values, and behaviors

Personal Trait/Quality

- Interactive quality
- Individual trait

APPENDIX E
COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT AFFAIRS
PROFESSIONALS

Institutional Competencies

- Education Culture (including Knowledge of Higher Education, Community Colleges, & Student Affairs)
- Institutional Culture (including Institutional. Mission/Objectives and Creating an Institutional Vision)
- Legal Issues in Higher Education
- Personnel Management (including Hiring, Evaluation, Personnel Conflict, Diversity in the Workplace and Professional Mentoring)
- Budgets and Financial Resource Management
- Physical Resource Management
- Leadership Theory (including Strategic Planning, Decision Making, Responsibility and Delegation)
- Research Models & Methods
- Campus and Community Relations (including Collaboration and Coalition Building)

Student and Group Programming

- Program Design and Organization (including Programming Requests, Interpreting Student needs, Representing Students Needs to Others)
- Program Implementation
- Program Evaluation/Assessment
- Program Revision

Student Development

- Student Demographics and Characteristics (including Multicultural Awareness, Trends, and Enrollment Data)
- Advising Students
- Crisis and Conflict Management
- Adjudicate Student Conduct
- Student Outcomes Assessment

Individual Development

- Effective Oral and Written Communication Skills
- Personal Organization and Time Management
- Problem Solving
- Risk Taking
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Technology
- Ethics

APPENDIX F
CHALLENGES, ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES, AND COMPETENCIES FOR THE FUTURE

Challenges	Adaptive Strategies	Competencies
Rapid Telecommunications Developments	Human Resource Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop & administer accurate & meaningful programs of faculty evaluation & development • Ability to use technology to maximize performance • Management of change
Changing Economy	Resource Development & Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund raising • Creative management of finances • Research-trend analyses, assessing needs assessments, evaluation of outcomes which focus on our product
Increasing Competition	Focus on the Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master politician • Establishing linkages • Focus on the mission in decision making • Caring – asking the right questions • Motivating – developing & maintaining high standards and clear performance objectives
Questioning Identity	Creative Leadership & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to clear vision & mission of the comprehensive open-door philosophy • Ability to plan strategically • Integrating left & right brain skills • Working with and through trustees • Clarify image • Teacher • Commitment to professionalizing the management team

APPENDIX G
COMPETENCIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF FUTURE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

Leadership

- Delegation
- Personnel Selection
- Decision Making
- Interpersonal Skills
- Knowledge of and Commitment to Mission
- Leadership
- Planning
- Visionary
- Organizing
- Information Processing
- Public Relations
- Professionalism
- Finance/Budgeting
- Performance Appraisal
- Analysis
- Controlling
- Peer Network
- Scholarly Writing

Group Related

- Motivation
- Use of Power
- Entrepreneurship
- Integrating
- Conflict Resolution

Personal Characteristics

- Judgment
- Commitment
- Integrity
- Communication
- Flexibility
- Positive Attitude
- Energy
- Wellness
- Sense of Responsibility
- Persistence
- Risk Taking
- Emotional Balance/Control
- Time Management
- Sense of Humor
- Research
- Creativity/Stability
- Empathy
- Introspection
- Patience
- Charisma

APPENDIX H
CATEGORIES OF SKILLS, AREAS OF EXPERTISE, AND SKILLS OF COMMUNITY
COLLEGE LEADERS

Leadership

- Developing and communicating a vision
- Understanding and application of “change”
- Understanding of organizational theory and culture
- Motivation strategies
- Incorporating ethics and values in the workplace
- Understanding of leadership theory
- Mentoring practices
- Self-analysis and awareness
- Understanding of the community college mission
- Multicultural awareness
- Understanding of collaborative decision making

Communication

- Perception and impression management
- Networking skills
- Understanding of interpersonal communication
- Effective listening and feedback skills
- Effective writing skills
- Effective public speaking skills
- Understanding of small group dynamics
- Conflict resolution, mediation, and negotiation skills

Institutional Planning and Development

- Knowledge of marketing and external public relations
- Fundraising
- Grant writing
- Program development and implementation
- Institutional effectiveness: assessment and analysis
- Retention: documentation and initiatives
- Student recruitment strategies

Management

- Delegating
- Evaluation and recommendation of personnel
- Organizing and time management skills
- Enrollment management and schedule development

Policy

- Accreditation processes and procedures
- State governance policy and structure
- Board and local governance, policy, and procedure

Research Methodology and Application

- Interpretation of surveys and research
- Statistical research methodology
- Statistical software application

Legal

- Understanding of legal issues

Finance

- Local, state, and federal policy and funding formulas
- Long-range budgeting and projections
- Accounting skills

Technology

- Development of distance education mission
- Administrative integration and application of technology
- Computer proficiency: hardware and software

Faculty and Staff Development

- Curriculum development
- Teaching and learning styles and methodology
- Adjunct faculty considerations
- Customer service competencies

APPENDIX I
LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON STUDENT
DEVELOPMENT

ncsd

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
an affiliate council of the american association of community colleges

January 6, 2011

Dear Colleagues:

The National Council on Student Development (NCSD) is pleased to endorse the research project, *Competencies of Senior Student Affairs Officers at Community Colleges in the United States*, being carried out by Dan Rodkin, Director, Student Life at Santa Fe College, in partial fulfillment of his Doctor of Education Degree at the University of Florida. This research is being carried out under the direction of Dr. Dale Campbell, Professor and Director of the School of Human Development & Organizational Studies in Education at the University of Florida. NCSD believes that this research will make an important contribution to the literature on student affairs administrators at community colleges. While we realize that you are quite busy, please set aside some time to complete this survey. You have been specifically selected and your participation is vital to this project and its contribution to our profession.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to help in this way. I hope to see you at our conference next October.

Sincerely,



Tom G. Walter, Ph. D.
President
National Council on Student Development

Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment Management
Gainesville State College

NCSD, P.O. Box 3948, Parker, CO 80134, (o) 866.972.0717; (f) 303.755.7363

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Daniel M. Rodkin was born in Chicago, Illinois, but moved south when he was young. After growing up in Coral Springs, Florida (FL), he attended the University of Florida and graduated in 1995 with a Bachelor of Science in business administration. While an undergraduate, Dan discovered student affairs and decided to pursue this field as a career. In 1996, Dan enrolled at the University of South Carolina and in 1998 received a Master of Education in student personnel in higher education.

Upon graduation, Dan was hired as Area Director at the University of Tampa and later worked as Interim Assistant Director of Housing at the University of Florida. In 2000, Dan accepted a Senior Student Development Specialist position at then-Santa Fe Community College. He was named Coordinator, Student Leadership and Activities in 2001, and promoted to Associate Director, Student Life in 2005. Dan was named Director, Student Life in 2007 and continues to work in that capacity at Santa Fe College. In 2004, after encouragement from former Santa Fe Community College President Larry Tyree, Dan enrolled in the doctorate program in higher education administration at the University of Florida.

Dan met his wife, Christy, while both were undergraduate students, through their mutual co-curricular involvements. They were married in 1999, and reside in Gainesville, FL, with their children Ben and Delaney. In their spare time, Dan and Christy enjoy their children's activities and pursuits, camping, traveling, and magic of Walt Disney World. They also honor their first son's legacy by supporting other families whom have suffered the loss of infant.