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EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL FOR AN EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY CENTRALIZED LEADERSHIP CENTER

By

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A DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE

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Abstract

East Carolina University is a large national research university located in Greenville, North Carolina. The University’s Strategic Plan calls for establishing leadership education as a central tenet of the university. Following approval of the strategic plan, a number of leadership programs were developed in the many colleges, schools, and departments within the university. However, no overarching structure to ensure commonality among programs, central leadership themes, core values, the sharing of lessons learned or best practices was established. The purpose of this qualitative and quantitative study was to explore the feasibility of and current support for a Centralized Leadership Center at East Carolina University and to assess the potential positive effects of such a center. To determine the feasibility of a leadership center, this paper explored the similarities and differences among leadership programs currently established at East Carolina University. In addition, a review of leadership centers at major universities around the nation and a review of current literature describing leadership principles and themes was conducted to create potential models for a centralized center that includes level of education, potential curriculum, themes, and activities. A mixed methods research methodology was used to determine the level of support for a centralized leadership center among department heads and senior leaders at East Carolina University. Finally, recommendations for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University based on a multidisciplinary leadership education approach were presented.

Keywords: Leadership, Leadership Education, Leadership Center, Leadership Approaches, University Leadership, East Carolina University
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to J. Worth Carter Sr., who inspired my love of education.

One of the great unsung leaders of education in North Carolina from 1951 to 1981, he left our earth far too soon at the age of 59.
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Many individuals provided instrumental and critical support for this project. Committee Chair Dr. John Hudson and Committee member Dr. Steve Duncan (East Carolina University) were excellent mentors, providing guidance and suggestions throughout this project. Dr. James Martin, Creighton Advisor, provided the foundation for this project and Dr. Peggy Hawkins provided the initial idea to combine my interest in my original alma mater, East Carolina University, with my terminal degree from Creighton University. The Survey Study Team at East Carolina, led by Mandee Lancaster, was also critical in moving this project across the finish line. Major General (Retired) Dutch Holland, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Mike Myrick and MAJOR (Retired) Jeff James provided valuable input and suggestions throughout the process. The Creighton Writing Center and Editors for Students also provided support for this project. Finally, my beautiful wife of almost 40 years, Dolores, has supported me in every endeavor for my entire adult life, and this latest journey was not an exception.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

East Carolina University is a large state-supported national research institution located in eastern North Carolina. The university was established in 1907 as East Carolina Teacher’s College in an effort to improve teacher education and increase the number of educators in the region. From these humble beginnings, the once rural teacher training school has grown to over 27,000 students, offering many extensive graduate and undergraduate programs (East Carolina University, 2014c), including education, business, nursing, allied health, medicine, music, art, and military science. As the number of programs and graduates increased over the years, so has the number of alumni recognized as leaders in their respective fields.

East Carolina University developed distinguished leaders in a wide variety of disciplines. Nationally recognized and accomplished leaders included Sandra Bullock (actor), Vince McMahon (business entrepreneur), Senator Robert Morgan, James Maynard (Chief Executive Officer Golden Corral Corporation), General Gary North, and Pulitzer Prize winning author Rick Atkinson (East Carolina University, 2014b). While these leaders graduated from East Carolina University and benefited from an excellent, well-rounded education, they graduated before the development of the university’s formal leadership programs. Without formal leadership education at their alma mater, they developed their leadership skills through formal and informal training in their respective fields.

Recognizing that many exceptional leaders earned degrees from East Carolina University and that formal leadership education should be an important part of a
university’s ethos, East Carolina University established leadership education and
development as a core component of its strategic mission and plan in 2007. East Carolina
University Chancellor, Dr. Steve Ballard, spoke clearly regarding his vision for East
Carolina University, which included “new directions [that] emphasize integration,
efficiency, the whole student, the concept of a leadership university, and new signature
programs that speak to the core mission of East Carolina University” (Hutson, 2007).
The 2014-2019 Strategic plan states, “ECU is a Leadership University, so we will expand
leadership opportunities for students, faculty, and staff. Our graduates will be known as
leaders in the workplace and community” (East Carolina University, 2014e). Endorsed
by the Board of Trustees and the faculty and staff of the university, this emphasis on
leadership education permeates many of the colleges and schools in the university today.

As a direct result of Chancellor Steve Ballard’s vision and guidance, many of East
Carolina’s colleges, schools, and departments developed and supported leadership
programs. The College of Education, the College of Business, the Honors College, the
School of Allied Health, the College of Engineering and Technology, the Department of
Student Affairs, and a number of other schools and departments all maintain some type of
leadership program (ECU Colleges and Schools, 2014). From 2007 to the present, the
development of leadership programs for students was significant, but it was also
disparate, since programs were developed in isolation within specific colleges and
schools. There was, and, remains no overarching guidance or organizational structure
ensuring the development of leadership programs with core themes, values, and
principles. This lack of an overarching organizational structure impedes the systematic
sharing of lessons learned and best practices among schools, colleges, and departments.
East Carolina University’s programs are varied: Some colleges, schools, and departments provide in-depth courses and curricula or embedded leadership education with clear developmental milestones and desired outcomes, while others provide limited formal leadership education. However, most of the programs in the undergraduate catalog share commonalities in the types of opportunities they provide and the principles and themes that students and faculty study (East Carolina University, 2013).

**Introduction and Statement of the Problem**

This Dissertation in Practice examined the support for a Centralized Leadership Center at East Carolina University and the potential benefits that such a Center could provide to leadership education throughout the university in comparison to the current, decentralized approach. In addition, the study explored the levels of education (e.g., pre-college, undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate), leadership themes and commonalities, and types of leadership activities and programs that could be supported while recognizing the potential need for differences between some disciplines. A mixed methods multidisciplinary research approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods, was employed. The study participants included department heads for the quantitative portion of the study and senior faculty and staff leadership (Vice Chancellors and Deans) for the qualitative portion.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine the potential faculty and staff support for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University as well as existing levels of support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. An explanatory sequential design aided in the collection and analysis of quantitative and
qualitative data. Quantitative methods determined the overall level of support from faculty and staff leadership. The research also explored levels of awareness on the part of university leaders of leadership programs outside their specific disciplines. A quantitative survey was provided to all faculty department heads. Qualitative interviews with deans and vice chancellors following the initial quantitative analysis explored their levels of support for a centralized leadership center. Quantitative and qualitative statistical methods were used to compare and validate results and to provide greater insight into the research questions than would have been possible using only one form of research and analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Research Questions

Exploring the Potential for an East Carolina University Centralized Leadership Center was developed and written as a Dissertation in Practice and was intended to explore and provide recommended courses of action for a current policy issue. However, the foundations of the research were theoretical. The hypotheses below explored these theoretical foundations.

Hypothesis 1: There is significant support among faculty and staff leadership at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center.

Understanding faculty and staff support was critical to the development of recommendations for a centralized leadership center. Hypothesis 1 was developed to explore the level of support as well as determine if specific demographics influenced this support. In addition, the hypothesis examined the relationship between independent variables and support for a centralized leadership center (the dependent variable).
Hypothesis #2: East Carolina University faculty and staff leadership prefer a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were considered interrelated since support for a Centralized Leadership Center and support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education were expected to show a high correlation and similar distribution. It seemed intuitive that faculty leadership supporting a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education would also prefer a centralized leadership center to promote the sharing of leadership education ideas and processes throughout the University.

Hypothesis #3: Overlap exists in the leadership programs among various colleges and schools within East Carolina University.

Determining the existence of overlap in the existing leadership programs was important to the development of recommendations for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. Sharing resources between leadership programs and promoting best practices could create efficiencies for East Carolina University’s leadership education efforts.

Significance of the Study

If the hypotheses were supported, a multidisciplinary centralized leadership center at East Carolina was feasible and practical and would potentially improve leadership education throughout the university. In addition, such an integrated approach could improve the effectiveness and efficiency of financial and human resources, as suggested by the third hypothesis. Finally, a Centralized Leadership Center would support the institution’s goal of becoming a leadership university as stated in the University’s Strategic Plan.
Support for a centralized leadership center was found to be statistically significant based upon quantitative statistical analysis, but support was widespread among Department Heads as well as Vice Chancellors and Deans. A multidisciplinary approach received widespread support from faculty and staff leaders as well as senior leadership and there was ample evidence of common themes and activities between leadership programs that would allow the sharing of resources and potentially promote efficiencies in leadership education.

The research findings and recommendations also suggest guidance to individual schools and colleges for better defining and improving their respective leadership programs and fostering cooperation for educational leadership within the university. Finally, it is expected that this study will inspire additional research into the potential benefits and structure of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University and the use of a multidisciplinary approach for leadership education.

**Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study, as noted, was to measure the support for a Centralized Leadership Center at East Carolina University and to provide recommendations for defining and developing the vision, focus, mission, and organizational structure for such a center. Fostering further research and cultivating the desire for additional exploration of improved leadership education at East Carolina were also aims of the study.

**Methodology Overview**

This study used an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The need to determine the level of general support for a centralized leadership center and to delineate
this support made an explanatory sequential model well suited for the project (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The quantitative portion of the study used questionnaires distributed electronically to the population of university department heads and their equivalents. A statistically significant sample size required a response rate of approximately 65% for a 95% confidence level. A response rate of 65% was achieved, yielding a 95% confidence level and a 6% error rate. The survey consisted of 13 questions and was designed to elicit easily discernible answers to the research questions. Data were collected for the qualitative portion of the study through face-to-face interviews conducted by the primary researcher with senior leaders at East Carolina University’s thirteen colleges and schools (East Carolina University, 2014c). A straw-man protocol was developed for the interviews (see Appendix C). The purpose of the data collection for the qualitative portion of the study was to refine and clarify quantitative results in a manner consistent with a sequential explanatory study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). While the questions in the quantitative survey and the qualitative interviews were not identical, the interview questions were developed as broad generalized questions to allow interviewees to expand on the results of the quantitative survey questions.

Definition of Relevant Terms

Since it was important to have a common understanding of the terms used in this research, the following terms, which lack common definitions, were defined for use in the study.

*Centralized Leadership Center:* A Centralized Leadership Center, which would support leadership education throughout the university, provides overarching guidance and support to leadership programs for the inclusion of core leadership curricula, a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education, and the sharing
resources and lessons learned among schools and colleges. A center could include a physical structure or could simply be a virtual organization for sharing ideas, best practices, seminars, and guest speakers.

*Leadership Principles:* A core set of guiding doctrines found in most or all professional disciplines.

*Leadership Themes:* A recurring set of leadership subjects found in most or all disciplines.

*Department Heads:* Department Heads are individuals filling faculty and staff leadership positions. East Carolina University’s Department of Human Resources provided a list of Department Heads throughout the university.

*Multidisciplinary Approach:* The process or method of using multiple disciplines (e.g., business, education, psychology, health sciences, engineering, etc.) to teach and further the university community’s understanding of leadership. This dissertation does not differentiate between “interdisciplinary” and “multidisciplinary” and views the terms as synonymous.

**Assumptions**

The following assumptions guided this study:

1. Potential efficiencies already existed that would support the development and implementation of a centralized approach to leadership education.

2. There were common leadership principles and themes across disciplines and career fields at East Carolina University.

3. East Carolina University faculty and staff leadership are familiar with East Carolina University’s Strategic Plan and the strategic goals of the University.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

The following are the delimitations and limitations of this research. First, this study focused on support for and the potential benefits of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University in particular. Thus, the conclusions and recommendations were not applicable to institutions of higher learning in general or necessarily to any other
college or university. Second, the useful life of this study is limited since changes in leadership at East Carolina University occur frequently. Third, the findings and recommendations were based on the views of faculty and staff leadership, so that the results were not necessarily indicative of the general faculty or the student body.

Fourth, the limitations include the general nature of the recommendations and findings since East Carolina University has not clearly defined a specific plan for a central leadership center while study was designed to provide general recommendations. The study was also not designed to provide a specific blueprint for such a center. Finally, additional study will be needed to define such a specific organizational structure further, as well as the funding sources for a center or the programs it would provide.

**Leader’s Role and Responsibility in Relation to the Problem**

The role and responsibility of East Carolina’s leaders is to clearly define the vision, mission, implementation, and timing of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. This study demonstrated both support for a center among stakeholders and general support for a multidisciplinary approach and a common set of themes and principles. The leadership of East Carolina University, including the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, Deans, and Department Heads, must next create clear development and implementation plans for a leadership education at East Carolina University as well determine the purposes and roles of a centralized leadership center at the university. It is also important for senior leadership at East Carolina University to involve mid-level leadership, as well as faculty and alumni, in defining the path forward and deciding how to gain buy-in from all parties. The Chancellor of East Carolina University stated that a centralized Center for Leadership and Service should be a goal in
the University’s Strategic Plan, and the goals and purposes implied in the Center’s name now remain to be adequately specified. To move forward, specific objectives and milestones will need to be developed and these should be communicated to the university community.

Summary

This dissertation examined faculty and staff leadership support for, as well as the potential benefits of, a centralized Leadership Center at East Carolina University. In addition, the study measured the support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. This study used an explanatory, sequential, mixed methods design and tested three hypotheses. All three hypotheses were proven and indicated significant support for a centralized Leadership Center at East Carolina University that would use a multidisciplinary educational approach and provide core themes and principles. The results of the study have limited application outside of East Carolina University. Finally, to realize the goals of its Strategic Plan, East Carolina University’s leadership should further refine the goals and processes needed to begin creating a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This research study included a detailed review of the literature relevant to the subject of the benefits of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. Three distinct categories of literature were reviewed. The first category was literature relevant to the history and current state of leadership programs at East Carolina University. The historical portion of the review focused upon the three major books detailing East Carolina University’s development and history. In addition, the university website contained significant information, both current and historical.

The first portion of the review was designed to gain a thorough understanding of the historical development of East Carolina University and the current state of its leadership programs. The second category of literature reviewed was that of periodicals and websites detailing the efforts of other national major research universities that have established leadership as a focus, developed leadership programs, and created leadership centers.

The second section of this review focused upon the state of leadership centers at similar doctoral research universities around the nation. The effort in the second section of the literature review was to understand successful university leadership programs and potentially benchmark best practices from research institutions around the nation.

A third category of the literature reviewed targeted scholarly journal articles dedicated to multidisciplinary educational leadership approaches and core leadership themes and principles. This final section examined scholarly articles addressing
leadership education and revealed common themes and principles that cross disciplines and are the basic ingredients of leadership education in most disciplines.

In order for a centralized leadership center to be successful, East Carolina University faculty and administrators must recognize there are commonalities in the teaching of leadership principles across university disciplines, which is why a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education is plausible and beneficial. In addition, faculty leaders and administrators should recognize the potential benefits of a center, such as the development of core leadership themes and principles to follow, the sharing of lessons learned, and more effective and efficient use of resources.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine the potential for faculty and staff support for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University as well as support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected in succession. In this study, quantitative methods were used to determine the overall degree of support from faculty for the use of a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education at the university.

**Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to determine the overall support of the university leadership for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University and to provide a recommended fully detailed path forward based upon additional findings from the study.

**A Review of East Carolina University’s Leadership Endeavors**

The three most recognized, detailed, and scholarly books portraying the history of East Carolina University are *East Carolina University: The Formative Years 1907-1982*
(Bratton, 1982), *No Time for Ivy East Carolina University* (Ferrell, 2006a), and *Promises Kept: East Carolina University 1980-2007* (Ferrell, 2006b). The university website contains descriptions of the leadership programs found in the colleges, schools, and departments throughout the university as well as historical narratives of the growth and development of its academic programs.

East Carolina University has experienced tremendous growth in both its student population and quantity of programs, moving from a small college with less than 2,000 fledgling student teachers in the 1930s to a large, vibrant university offering over 100 majors, including degrees in business, education, allied health, medicine, the social sciences, and the arts (Bratton, 1986). The university also evolved as an economic force and academic leader in the region and state, but not without significant struggles for funding and approval of programs by the University of North Carolina System (Ferrell, 2006a). Further, the social and cultural development of the university as well its physical and program development have been substantial. Programs in business, education, allied health, music, and theater gained national recognition and the University became the single largest employer in the Greenville area, with over 15,000 employees. By 2006, the University served over 25,000 graduate and undergraduate students per year and had over 150,000 living alumni (Ferrell, 2006a). In 2007, the economic impact of East Carolina University on eastern North Carolina exceeded $3 billion dollars per year (*East Magazine*, 2007). Few universities have experienced such levels of growth in the diversity of their programs, stature, or importance to a region (Ferrell, 2006a).
As East Carolina University began to grow in the 1950s and early 1960s, a brash and driven College President, Dr. Leo Jenkins, developed and implemented a vision for the college that upset the legislative status quo and traditional higher education authorities as well as the Governor. The extraordinary leadership of Chancellor Leo Jenkins, however, energized the college and raised expectations throughout the college and the region (Ferrell, 2006a). Jenkins welcomed a political fight and, through skill and perseverance, overcame the obstacles erected by legislators from the central part of the state of North Carolina, who were led by the faculty and administration of the University of North Carolina (Bratton, 1982).

First, Jenkins fought for university status for the College. After a struggle of three years, East Carolina College became East Carolina University in 1967, along additional state supported North Carolina colleges that became universities as the Governor and legislature created the University of North Carolina system. Governor Moore and the legislature originally proposed this system to Jenkins as a compromise, fully expecting him to rebuke the offer, but he embraced the idea and welcomed a statewide university system that extended the resources of UNC across the state (Bratton, 1986).

A second significant struggle faced Jenkins and the infant East Carolina University when Jenkins developed a plan for a medical school on the Greenville campus. Again, East Carolina University’s energetic Chancellor took on the traditional power brokers, this time facing a new University Board of Governors that was dominated by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill supporters. Jenkins recognized the need for more doctors and improved medical care in the poorest regions of the state (Bratton, 1986), ramped up political support and convinced eastern North Carolina legislators of
the importance and economic benefits that a medical school would provide. Battling the
UNC System President, William Friday, Jenkins at one point threatened to run for
governor of the state of North Carolina if necessary. In 1974, Jenkins and East Carolina
University persevered and the North Carolina state legislature approved a medical school
for East Carolina (Ferrell, 2006a).

While the medical school and university status were major struggles, there were
additional ones during and after Jenkins tenure. The Board of Governors and state
legislature funded East Carolina University at significantly lower levels than Chapel Hill
and North Carolina State University, for example. Despite those types of impediments,
Jenkins’ leadership and managerial skills allowed East Carolina to produce graduates at a
lower cost than similar institutions like UNC Chapel Hill and North Carolina State
University (Bratton, 1982). State funding continued to be a problem at East Carolina,
though, as it has become for all North Carolina universities since 2010. As of 2014,
funding for all the state’s universities has remained below pre-recession levels with no
anticipated funding increases to the public universities. Therefore, the need to be
efficient is more critical than ever (Mitchell, Palacios, & Leachman, 2014).

Following Jenkins’ term as Chancellor, East Carolina University grew and
prospered through innovative and efficient programs driven by dynamic, dedicated
leadership (Ferrell, 2006b). A number of the individuals, like-minded leaders, took
responsibility for East Carolina’s growth and rise in excellence and remained at the
university in their respective programs and disciplines (Ferrell, 2006b). Similar
leadership could be instrumental in furthering the cause of a centralized leadership center.
The history and tradition of East Carolina University provide a precedent for just such efficient and innovative programs.

While historical background is important for understanding the development of leadership programs, this study also reviewed East Carolina University’s current leadership programs. An examination of the ECU academic catalogue (2013) revealed leadership programs at East Carolina University in The College of Education, the College of Business, the Honors College, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering and Technology, and the College of Human Ecology (to be consolidated 1 Jul, 2015 in a cost savings initiative, reducing the number of Colleges and Schools to twelve). Programs varied from degree and licensure-only programs in the College of Education to a speaker series in the School of Science and Technology (East Carolina University, 2013). The College of Business contained the largest and most comprehensive leadership program in conjunction with the Branch Banking and Trust (BB&T) Leadership Center. Not only has the BB&T Center helped provide leadership development for the College of Business, it has also provided funding for many of the leadership programs across the university (ECU Leadership Collaborative, 2012). The BB&T Center was the closest entity to a comprehensive and centralized leadership center found at the university, but this Center has not provided core themes or principles to programs throughout the university and has not acted as a centralized leadership center.

In addition to the aforementioned leadership programs and centers within specific schools and colleges, East Carolina also established a Chancellor’s Leadership Academy. The Academy was developed to foster leadership development, promote a culture of leadership, build networks, and further the strategic leadership goals of the university.
The Academy was designed to provide leadership enhancement to faculty and staff members that performed well on their most recent personnel evaluations (ECU Leadership, 2014). The Chancellor’s Academy could also be a significant part of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University.

East Carolina has called for the creation and expansion of leadership opportunities in the University’s 2014-2019 Strategic Plan. Specifically, the strategic plan described the need for a Center for Student Success, a Transformational Center supporting economic development in the region surrounding the University, and for the Chancellor’s Academy and the BB&T Center to expand their efforts (ECU Tomorrow, 2014).

Also important to note was the effort East Carolina made to design a leadership framework for use in all colleges and schools at the University. Representatives from throughout the ECU community of stakeholders have developed a framework intended to serve as the guiding principles underpinning leadership education and development efforts. The final product was titled “The Integrated Leadership Framework,” and it was developed based on the research of Julie Owen from George Mason University. East Carolina was the first university to use an Integrated Leadership Framework approach (Holster, 2011). The framework was created to guide leadership development among faculty, staff, and administration. The foundations of the framework are knowledge, relationships, ethics, well-being, and service (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006). Intended for use throughout the university, the literature review did not reveal widespread use of the framework at the University.

East Carolina University established two additional leadership programs that were worthy of study in the literature review. The Center for Student Leadership and
Engagement, developed under the Division of Student Affairs, was designed to further the leadership skills of students. The Center designed an array of leadership workshops, speaker’s series, community involvement opportunities, and self-improvement activities (Center for Student Leadership and Engagement, 2015). In addition to the Center for Student Leadership, East Carolina also instituted leadership training for precollege students. The leadership program was developed as a satellite program in conjunction with the Hugh Shelton Leadership Center at North Carolina State University. Conducted during the summer months for students in middle school and high school, the program conducts a variety of leadership experiences, including workshops, leadership speakers, and practical leadership opportunities for precollege students (Shelton Leadership Challenge, 2014).

Review of East Carolina University leadership programs did not uncover substantial research on the topic of leadership. In East Carolina University’s Strategic Framework for Comprehensive Facilities the Strategic for Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan a leadership observation highlighted the need for leadership research and to be known as the leadership university required nationally known programs (Klein, 2010).

The literature review revealed that while East Carolina University has many leadership programs throughout the university for both students and faculty, there was no standardized or recommended leadership core curriculum, themes, or principles and the majority of individual leadership programs were affiliated with a specific school or college. A centralized leadership center could provide standardization and core principles, with a basic structure incorporating leadership programs such as the BB&T Leadership Development Center (ECU Leadership Collaborative, 2012) the Chancellor’s
Academy (ECU Leadership, 2014), and the planned Transformation Center and the Center of Student Success (ECU Tomorrow, 2014).

**A Review of University Leadership Education and Leadership Centers**

The second category of literature reviewed included websites and periodicals dedicated to university leadership centers or leadership education in the United States. The literature, along with university leadership center websites, described and assessed leadership centers and provided insight into the diverse types of leadership education at universities around the nation. Leadership study boomed at college campuses across the nation in nearly all fields and disciplines starting in the 1990s. Doh (2007) described the proliferation of leadership study in business and management schools. Using a sample of 50 top rated business schools, Doh found that 60% contained a leadership center, leadership program, or leadership major (Doh, 2007). However, Doh also found that the means and tools used to teach leadership varied significantly. Further, Doh’s qualitative research revealed that most leadership educators thought that leadership was more of a personal quality than a learned skill and, therefore, that heuristic approaches were the best means for teaching leadership (Doh, 2007). Leadership education has also grown in schools and departments of engineering, as Bernard M. Gordon’s (2009) White Paper entitled “Engineering Leadership Education: A Snapshot Review of International Good Practice” qualitatively showed, highlighting the commonality of teaching themes among eight engineering leadership programs and depicting some of their differences. Gordon found that most engineering leadership programs were housed within the school or college of engineering, while a significant minority of leadership programs was in schools of business (Gordon, 2009).
Barry Posner’s work on student leadership behavior pointed out the large number of leadership programs at colleges and universities in the United States that lack an objective study and assessment. In an effort to provide such an objective assessment, Posner measured the improvement in leadership skills for students enrolled in a business school leadership program from their freshmen year to their senior year and compared the results to students not enrolled in leadership programs. The results showed statistically significant improvement for those enrolled in a leadership program (Posner, 2009).

Leadership education assessment was also the topic of a study by David M. Rosch and Leslie M. Schwartz (2009), specifically focused on student leadership development, postulating an increased use of multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary programs to teach leadership at the university level. The two researchers further detailed the problems of assessing leadership education, beginning with a basic lack of clarity about the meaning of the key term, “leadership.” In addition to leadership definition, the study found the timing of assessments and the use of participant observations as potential problems. For example, assessments completed immediately after a leadership course or program often revealed improvement in leadership skills while assessments further removed from a course or program often did not reveal such improvement. Self-assessment of leadership improvement also provided inconsistent and questionable results. A preferred technique for leadership assessment yielded by their research at the University of Illinois Leadership Center was the use of 360 degree (subordinates, peers, and supervisors) assessments (Rosch & Schwartz, 2009).

A web search of university leadership centers yielded a plethora of national doctoral universities with leadership centers. Based on their titles, many appeared to be
university wide leadership centers. However, a more detailed examination of them revealed that most of these were more narrowly focused than their titles suggested. For example, Stanford, Duke, and Harvard all had two or more leadership centers within their universities, but these centers were contained within and focused on specific disciplines. The Stanford Center for Leadership Development and Research appeared to be a university wide center, but it was actually part of the Graduate School of Business and emphasized leadership education for corporate executives (Stanford Business Corporate Governance, 2013). Duke’s Fuquay School of Business (Fuqua, 2014) and the Kennedy School at Harvard yielded examples of single discipline leadership centers (Harvard Center for Public Leadership, 2014). The Fuqua Center on Leadership and Ethics was specifically for MBA students (Fuqua Center on Leadership and Ethics, 2014). The Kennedy School Center for Public Leadership focused on public service and the public sector (Harvard CPL, 2014). In addition, both Duke and Harvard contained multiple leadership programs in their various schools and colleges similar to East Carolina University’s programs.

Jack McCoy (2005) studied the design, administration, and governance of leadership studies through a case study dissertation using the Ohio State University, Duke University, and the University of Maryland Leadership Centers. All three centers were affiliated with specific disciplines. Ohio State’s (OSU’s) Leadership Center was within the College of Agriculture. The University of Maryland’s Academy of Leadership was housed in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences. While all three of these leadership centers were contained within a college or school, they did serve the university
community marginally; in the case of OSU, the Leadership Center served the university as well as the surrounding communities (McCoy, 2005).

McCoy’s (2005) study concluded that the placement of a center organizationally within a university could influence the culture and mission of each center. Based on Gray and Walters (1998) research, McCoy recognized that leadership or research centers placed near the top of the university organizational structure were less likely to encounter organizational turf battles among colleges and schools. In addition, centers higher in the university organization chain tended to maintain more autonomy (McCoy, 2005). Finally, McCoy postulated, “Responsibility for leadership development should not be limited to specific programs or curriculums, but should be integrated into the day-to-day activities of the institution” (2005, p.5).

While most leadership centers found in the literature review were affiliated with a particular school or college, leadership centers were discovered that focused on student leadership development at the undergraduate level. In a majority of cases, a Provost or Vice Chancellor directed or provided oversight for these student leadership centers. Student development leadership centers exist at the University of Illinois (ILC, 2014), the University of Missouri (Missouri, 2013), and the University of Florida (Florida, 2014). The University of Illinois Leadership Center was the most comprehensive, as it provided leadership development programs to students, faculty, and staff. The center offered workshops, certificate programs, and a leadership studies minor (ILC, 2014). The centers uncovered were generally not university-wide and centralized, and they generally did not provide guidance on centralized leadership approaches to colleges, schools, and departments.
Despite the dearth of centralized leadership centers around the nation, the reviewed centers provided potential ideas and benchmarks. The Kennedy School at Harvard is world renowned as an integral part of Harvard University. Duke’s business school leadership center was well known and brought recognition and acclaim to the university. These and other centralized centers, such as those in Illinois, Missouri, and Florida, were focused on student development and serving the entire student population with a focus on improving undergraduates’ leadership skills through speaker engagements, workshops, and practical experience.

A centralized leadership center that reached undergraduates in all colleges and schools throughout the university similar to that at Illinois, Missouri, and Florida combined with the depth of academic rigor at graduate level centers such as those at Harvard and Stanford could suggest a synergistic combination. The literature review revealed that East Carolina University contained many of the same types of leadership education programs found at these universities. A centralized center could bring together these disparate programs in a multidisciplinary environment at East Carolina University.

**Leadership Themes and Principles and a Multidisciplinary Approach**

The third literature category reviewed focused upon a multidisciplinary approach to leadership and common leadership principles and themes. Two basic themes evolved from the literature review: Many researchers recommend a multidisciplinary approach (Connaughton, Lawrence, & Rubin, 2003) and common elements of leadership exist across disciplines and careers (Mallinger, 1998).

Based upon reviews of articles such as Connaughton, Lawrence, and Ruben’s (2003) *Leadership Development as a Systematic and Multidisciplinary Enterprise*, it
appeared that there was clearly an advantage to using a multidisciplinary approach to improving leadership programs at the university level. Rich Lyons in *Paths to Innovative Leadership* (Lyons, 2011) made the case for a better understanding among business schools of the dynamic and changing nature of business innovation and culture. Lyons focused upon the need for business schools to differentiate between types of leaders produced based upon local circumstances. The tenets described by Lyons apply to multiple disciplines (Lyons, 2011). Julie Owens’ (2011), meanwhile, detailed the importance of student development theories on leadership education and advocated a multidisciplinary, integrative approach to leadership education. In short, there was considerable support in the literature for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education.

Connaughton, Lawrence, and Rubin (2003), to consider another example, made a compelling case for the use of a multidisciplinary approach in leadership education. Connaughton et al.’s research detailed the often short-term view and single discipline approaches taken to this problem by industry and academia. One such misplaced emphasis included the widespread use of short-term results-focused seminars and conferences in industry and academia. Instead, the authors advocated a long-term recurring and reflective process for developing leadership education. Universities must become more systematic and focused, they concluded, in developing their leadership, and this included defining the necessary competencies for effective leadership and distilling best practices and theories for teaching leadership (Connaughton, 2003).

Further exploring leadership, Connaughton (2003) defined ten theoretical foundations for leadership: complexity, other oriented, dynamic and interactive,
contextual, emergent (in the sense that leaders emerge in varying roles and not necessarily for a designated leadership position), being in touch with art and a science, communication (face-to-face and virtual), and that leadership can be learned and taught. While Connaughton’s list of theoretical foundations may not be all-inclusive, his research provided an excellent example of a theoretical framework for leadership studies.

The reviewed scholarly articles also detailed leadership principles for differing professions and disciplines. The articles provided common themes for leadership education and application across fields. The importance of relationships in developing leadership emerged as a prominent theme as well. Haslam, Reicher, and Platow, in *The New Psychology of Leadership* (2011), detailed the importance of relationships and shared values in leading. Extensive research supported the importance of followers recognizing leaders as part of their group (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011). Focused on the importance of group acceptance and the relationship between leaders and followers, Haslam, Reicher, and Platow demonstrated that successful leaders must gain acceptance from followers in their group. Leaders that did not share the values, norms, and goals of the group and were therefore not accepted by the group demonstrated a much lower success rate than leaders accepted by the group (Haslam et al., 2011).

Robert Waterman (2011) also recognized the importance of interpersonal relationships and the benefits of using servant-based leadership in the health care industry. In Waterman’s research, by building personal relationships and practicing the principles of servant-based leadership, health care workers increased the quality of their service and their productivity. Finally, Howard Behar (2010), in his article “Real Life
Leadership Principles,” advocated relationships and shared values in business interactions and everyday life.

The aforementioned are a small sample of scholarly articles and books that emphasized and documented the importance of personal relationships to leadership. Other researchers, such as Robert Greenleaf (2014), developed leadership programs and philosophies based upon the concept of servant leadership and interpersonal relationships. Greenleaf created a wide array of leadership materials and programs based upon the concept of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2014). A similar model for an East Carolina University Leadership Center focused on interpersonal relationships and servant leadership would be wholly consistent with East Carolina University’s motto of “Service.”

Communication was also a common principle found in the educational leadership literature, with a plethora of articles referring to communication as a basic leadership principle for leaders in business (Mallinger, 1998), the military (Lorenz), education, and the health professions (Ennis, Broadbent, & Reid-Searl, 2013). Mark Mallinger (1998), for instance, in “Management Skills for the 21st Century,” ranked interpersonal communication as the number one skill needed by business leaders. Mallinger surveyed 62 business leaders and business faculty members. These interviewees were asked to provide the attributes most needed by managers in the 21st Century. Using the results from the 62 interviews, 72 educators and business persons were divided into groups of six or eight and were asked to determine the top five attributes. Communication skills and interpersonal relationships ranked highest across the groups (Mallinger, 1998).
Stephen R. Lorenz (2010), Air Force General, characterized communication as a critical skill for military leaders as well as leaders in general. Openness to feedback and the ability to communicate a vision were central to leadership, in his view (Lorenz, 2010). Lorenz underscored the need for leaders to solicit negative feedback from subordinates, peers, and superiors in order to improve personal and organizational processes. A well-communicated vision can only be accomplished by continual repetition in an effort to instill this vision in the organization (Lorenz, 2010).

Communication was also essential in the mental health professions, according to the research of Gary Ennis, Brenda Happel, Marc Broadbent, and Kerry Reid-Searl (2013). Ennis et al. conducted a grounded theory study based upon extensive interviews and found communication to be an essential part of quality mental health care. When practitioners used excellent communication skills, the relationships among staff members increased and the quality of care provided to patients improved. Listening, non-verbal communication, language, and relevance emerged as dominant leadership qualities (Ennis et al., 2013).

More common principles in leadership education exist than those detailed above. Accountability, vision, and teamwork were prevalent principles in leadership articles on the military (Lorenz, 2010), industry (Carter, 2012), and academia (Institute for Transformational Leadership, 2014), with common principles found across disciplines and career tracks. Not only were common principles evident in books and scholarly journals, but they were also evident in a review of the leadership programs around the nation and at East Carolina University. One of the objectives of this research was to identify those commonalities that could create the centerpiece of an East Carolina
University leadership center. One example of common leadership themes and values in a university leadership setting included the George Mason University Committee on Leadership, which advocates eight core leadership values for programs throughout the university: respect, making a difference, integrity, authenticity, courage, service, humility, and wisdom (Leads, 2014).

A reasonable foundation for a leadership center at ECU would include a multidisciplinary approach emphasizing the importance of personal relationships and service based leadership as a potential theme for the center. Such foundational themes are consistent with East Carolina’s history of service, innovation, and leadership. From this literature review, a number of testable hypotheses emerged, presented in the next section.

**Hypotheses**

This study quantified and qualified the level of support for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. The research and statistical analysis included an examination of the level of support for a center as well as the demographics of this support. The research also examined the level of support in specific colleges, schools, and departments. The following hypotheses were tested.

**Hypothesis #1: There is statistically significant support among faculty and staff leadership at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center.**

In addition, the research was designed to determine whether the prevalence of common leadership principles and themes that existed in the colleges, schools, and departments at East Carolina University. Since the literature review indicated that central
leadership principles and themes exist in multiple areas and disciplines, the second hypothesis was developed as follows.

**Hypothesis #2: East Carolina University faculty and staff leadership prefer a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education.**

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were considered interrelated since a centralized leadership center could be expected to have the support of faculty and staff leadership that preferred a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education.

While hypotheses 1 and 2 were interrelated and complementary, the third hypothesis explored and clarified hypothesis 2.

**Hypothesis #3: Overlap exists in the leadership programs among various colleges and schools within East Carolina University.**

For example, the College of Business and the College of Nursing may use some of the same speakers or the same type of workshops in their leadership programs. A centralized program would promote the sharing of speakers and combine similar workshops to promote efficiency.

**Summary**

A review of the literature relevant to the subject of the benefits of a leadership center at East Carolina was conducted based upon three distinct categories, which revealed the dominant research themes. The first category included literature relevant to the history and current state of leadership programs at East Carolina University. Historical books (e.g., Bratton, 1982; Ferrell, 2006a; Ferrell, 2006b) detailing East Carolina’s tradition and growth were reviewed as well the university website and the websites of colleges and schools within the university. The review revealed a significant
history of leaders at East Carolina University committed to leadership education and that many leadership programs exist throughout the university at multiple levels, including pre-college, undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate, and faculty programs. No overarching organizational guidance or direction was evident, however, for leadership programs university-wide.

The second category of literature reviewed included periodicals and websites that detailed the efforts of major national research universities that have established leadership and leadership development programs. This research focused on universities with leadership centers. The literature review found many leadership centers at universities throughout the United States that incorporated the word “Center” into their titles, but few university wide leadership centers provided leadership education guidance throughout their respective universities. In addition, the research discovered excellent leadership programs in specific disciplines at universities around the country and noted worthy examples of university-wide student development programs.

The third category of literature reviewed was scholarly journal articles by educational leaders and scholars across multiple disciplines as well as general leadership education that were dedicated to core leadership themes and principles. The review indicated that there are common themes and principles that cross disciplines and that these are essential ingredients to leadership education.

Chapter Three describes the design and methodology used for testing the hypotheses, gathering the data, and analyzing the results.
Chapter III Methodology

Introduction

East Carolina University (ECU) was established in 1907 as a small teacher’s college in Greenville, NC. Today, it is a large national research institution with over 27,000 undergraduate and graduate students. It is a central source of pride and an economic engine for much of eastern North Carolina. Thirteen colleges and schools make up the university, which is dedicated to serving the region and the nation. One of the university’s strategic goals is to become recognized as a leadership university. Championed by Chancellor Steve Ballard, many of the colleges and schools developed and incorporated leadership programs into their respective programs (ECU Leadership Collaborative, 2012). However, no over-arching organizational structure existed to provide standardization, consistency, lessons learned, or the sharing of resources to these many somewhat disparate programs. In addition, no mechanism exists for sharing resources, sharing lessons learned, or ensuring that the programs are not redundant (Carter, 2014a).

Research Questions/Research Hypotheses

The fundamental research question for this study was, “Would there be statistically significant support at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center using a multidisciplinary approach?” A centralized leadership center could potentially enhance the existing leadership programs at ECU, provide efficiencies, and save precious resources in an austere fiscal public university environment. While the first question delved into overall support for a leadership center, the type of educational approach to such a center was a secondary question. In other words, would a
multidisciplinary leadership approach be seen as beneficial? If commonalities existed and support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education was found at East Carolina University then, according to the third hypothesis, a centralized leadership center could be beneficial. *Exploring the Potential for an ECU Centralized Leadership Center* is a Dissertation in Practice and is therefore intended to solve a current policy issue.

**Research Method**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine the need for and potential benefits of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected in succession. In this study, quantitative methods were used to determine the overall degree of support by faculty and staff of the University for a Centralized Leadership Center, to identify common themes across current leadership programs, and to determine the support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. In addition to understanding the overall level of support, knowledge of support among differing demographics was explored using qualitative interviews with senior faculty and staff following the initial quantitative analysis. The purpose of a quantitative and qualitative mixed methods approach was to compare and validate results and provide greater insight into the research questions than would have been possible using only one form of data analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

**Population and Sample**

The population for the quantitative portion of the study comprised department heads within the 13 schools and colleges (East Carolina University, 2014c). Broad
demographic and background data were collected from East Carolina University’s human relations department and registrar to better understand the populations and an appropriate sample size and to represent university leadership in numbers adequate for a quantitative analysis. In addition, data were collected from the university catalog, administrative offices, and the respective schools’ curricula and leadership program documents for an understanding of current leadership-related programs. A review of the aforementioned documents provided depth of understanding to the current leadership programs at East Carolina University and supplemented the quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews.

A representative probabilistic sample of the research population was determined as a percentage of the faculty department heads from the 13 colleges and schools throughout the university (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). East Carolina’s Survey Center was contracted to conduct the quantitative survey and to transcribe the qualitative interviews. As part of the contract, a list of department heads was provided. The population of department heads representing university leadership was 140 individuals. A sample of 50% of the population (70) was needed to attain a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error of 5% (Research Advisors, 2006). A total of 140 invitations were electronically distributed. For the qualitative portion of the study, voluntary interviews with select faculty leaders were conducted from throughout the thirteen colleges and schools within the university. Faculty leadership for this study consisted of Deans and Vice Chancellors. There are approximately twenty-five Vice Chancellors and Deans at ECU (Locklear, 2013). The intent of the qualitative portion of the study was to conduct face-to-face interviews with approximately thirteen Vice Chancellors and Deans. Invitations were provided to all Deans and Vice Chancellors.
Only full time faculty department heads were surveyed in the quantitative portion of this study; part time and visiting faculty were excluded to help ensure a manageable sample and to focus upon individuals who are most likely to have the best understanding of East Carolina’s strategic goals. In addition, full time faculty leaders employed by the university for less than six months were excluded. Excluding these categories of personnel from the research had minimal impact on the population and sample sizes. The research letter of invitation is contained in Appendix A.

**Data Collection Tools**

As previously noted, an explanatory sequential mixed methods study design was used for this research. The need to initially determine general support for the center and to further define that support made an explanatory sequential model well suited for the project (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Widely distributed in-depth quantitative surveys were designed to provide a clear indication of the level of support for a Centralized Leadership Center among faculty and staff categorized by college, school, and department. In addition, the design was developed to determine the level of support for a multidisciplinary method of leadership study and questions were written to determine the current amount of overlap and commonality among ECU’s leadership programs. After completion of the quantitative survey (Appendix B) and following the initial analysis, senior leader interviews were conducted using the developed template (Appendix C) in an effort to further refine and explain the quantitative study results.

**Variables (Quantitative)/The Researcher’s Role (Qualitative)**

In an effort to determine the level of support for a centralized leadership program, the dependent variable in the quantitative survey and analysis was leadership support as
demonstrated through the survey of Department Heads. A number of independent variables were tested in an effort to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The independent variables tested included gender, age, and years of experience at East Carolina University. In addition, tests of correlation were used for pairing the independent variables, which included: support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education, fulfillment of the goal of becoming a leadership university, resource savings, and leadership program similarities.

The qualitative portion of the study was designed to add depth and clarity to the quantitative results. The primary researcher conducted all but one of the fifteen interviews with Deans and Vice Chancellors. All interviews were digitally recorded and the primary reviewed all 15 recordings and their transcriptions in an effort to determine central themes in them. Six potential themes were identified and all interviews were reviewed and scored for support, neutrality, or non-support of these themes. In addition, key words for each theme were identified and these key words were tabulated for their number of occurrences in all interviews. Each theme was rated as “supported” or “not-supported.” The primary researcher reviewed the results and drew deductive conclusions from the data.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected in the quantitative portion of the study primarily by questionnaires distributed electronically to a sample of the overall population. The survey consisted of thirteen questions and was designed to illicit easily discernible and clear answers to the research questions. The majority of questions were based upon a
five point Likert Scale. The plan was to email potential respondents, explain the design and intent of the study, and to elicit their responses to a portal based survey. The questionnaire gathered information on the demographic variables of age, gender, and associated school or department. The questions sought respondent’s views on the need for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education and asked respondents to rate the importance of particular leadership themes or principles such as integrity, communication, interpersonal relationships, vision, technical proficiency, and flexibility.

The quantitative portion was the first portion of the research and it employed a 13-question survey (see Appendix C). A letter of introduction and request to complete the survey was sent to 140 East Carolina University Department Heads. The research survey team obtained a list of department heads and email addresses from the East Carolina University Human Resources office. The sample was determined based upon a size adequate for a high level of confidence in a total population of approximately 140. Appendix B contains the draft quantitative survey. Quantitative data were recorded and stored by electronic means using Qualtrix software modified for this research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Collection of the data for the qualitative portion of the study was completed through face-to-face interviews of senior leaders at East Carolina University from throughout the thirteen colleges and schools (East Carolina University, 2014c). A strawman protocol was developed for the interviews (see Appendix C). The focus of data collection for the qualitative portion of the study, consistent with a sequential explanatory study, was on refining and clarifying the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The qualitative interviews were recorded.
The interview protocol included a list of standardized questions with space to record responses and observations during the interview (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The primary researcher conducted and recorded all of the interviews, for which the draft questions can be found in Appendix C. The data were coded in numeric values for analysis. An initial analysis was done by reviewing the data for trends and distributions and was followed by statistical tests using SPSS software to identify statistically significant relationships and correlations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The audio for all the qualitative interviews was digitally recorded, transcribed, and reviewed for recurring themes.

**Data Analysis Plan**

For analysis, the results of the data were coded in numeric values. An initial analysis was done by reviewing the data for trends and distributions and was followed by statistical tests using SPSS to identify dependent and independent variables (Creswell & Plano Clark, 201). All information provided was protected as confidential throughout and at the conclusion of the study.

**Assumptions**

There were a number of assumptions applicable to this research. First, it was assumed that the Department Heads who completed the online survey provided honest answers to the best of their ability. In addition, the study assumed that interviewees (Deans and Vice Chancellors) provided honest answers in their responses to the interview questions. Interviewees and survey respondents were both assured that all responses would be confidential and that no names or employment positions would be associated with their responses.
Generalization was also assumed to be limited in the study. While the study may have limited applicability for research at other universities pursuing leadership centers or leadership education, the study focused specifically upon East Carolina University and the potential for a centralized leadership center at the Greenville campus.

**Ethical Considerations**

The potential for ethical issues was limited in this research. The study did not involve research on human behavior, for example. However, gain permission at multiple levels to gather the quantitative and qualitative data required was required and obtained systematically and thoroughly (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The Survey Team requested and was granted permission through the Survey Council at East Carolina University to distribute the survey. The Creighton University Internal Review Board approved the methodology, research processes, and procedures under a requested expedited review. East Carolina University’s Internal Review Board accepted the Creighton University Internal Review Board’s assessment and both universities entered into a letter of agreement. All Vice Chancellors and Deans at ECU were contacted and asked to grant interview access. All participants were informed of the purpose and intent of the research and that participation was completely voluntary. The specific identities of individuals were not used in the preliminary or final results. Information reported identified individuals only by organization.

**Summary**

This ECU Leadership Center Dissertation in Practice explains and defines the potential support for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. A sequential mixed methods explanatory design was suited for the project and adequately
tested the associated hypotheses and research questions. Quantitative questionnaire research was important to testing and determining levels of support for a centralized leadership center and an inter-disciplinary teaching methodology as well as to demonstrating potential commonalities among current programs. Qualitative based interviews with ECU’s senior leaders further elucidated the results of the quantitative portion of the study from a senior educational leadership perspective. An adequate sample size, standardized data collection procedures, data collection permissions, and privacy protection ensured meaningful research.
Chapter Four: Findings and the Evidence-Based Solution

Introduction

East Carolina University is a large, national research institution with over 27,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Thirteen colleges and schools make up the university, which is dedicated to serving the region and the nation. One of the university's strategic goals, described in the 2014 to 2019 Strategic Plan (ECU, 2014d), was to be recognized as a leadership university. In addition, the Strategic Plan called for the establishment of a center for leadership and service. Championed by Chancellor Steve Ballard, many colleges and schools developed and incorporated leadership programs into their respective programs (ECU, 2014e). However, no over-arching organizational structure or guidance has provided definition, standardization, or consistency to the many, somewhat disparate leadership programs. In addition, no mechanism existed and none was established for sharing resources, sharing lessons learned, or ensuring the programs were not redundant (Carter, 2014a).

Research Question

The fundamental research question for this study was, was there statistically significant support at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center using a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education? A centralized leadership center could potentially enhance leadership programs at East Carolina University, provide efficiencies, and save precious resources in an austere fiscal public university environment. While the first question explored overall support for a leadership center, the type of educational approach for a center was a secondary
question. In essence, would a multidisciplinary leadership approach be supported and beneficial? In order to be beneficial, commonalities among programs must have been recognized in order to produce resource savings and synergies.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the mixed-methods, sequentially designed study was to determine the support for a centralized leadership center and the benefits of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. The explanatory, sequential, mixed-methods design study used quantitative and qualitative data, collected in succession. Quantitative methods determined the overall degree of support by faculty and staff of the University for a Centralized Leadership Center, identified common themes across current leadership programs, and quantified the support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. Qualitative interviews conducted with senior faculty and staff (Deans and Vice Chancellors) followed the initial quantitative analysis and further explored the support for a centralized leadership center and the benefits a centralized leadership center offered. Quantitative and qualitative methods compared and validated results and provided greater insight into the research questions than would have been possible using only one form of data analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

**Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to determine the level of support for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University among senior leaders and department heads throughout the university and to provide a recommended path forward based upon the research and analysis.
Hypotheses

Exploring the Potential for an East Carolina University Centralized Leadership Center is a Dissertation in Practice and is intended to solve a current policy issue. The foundations of the research were theoretical, and the hypotheses below further explore the foundations.

Hypothesis 1: There is significant support among faculty and staff leadership at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center. Understanding faculty and staff support was critical to the development of recommendations for a centralized leadership center. Hypothesis 1 was developed to explore the level of support as well as to determine if specific demographics influenced this support. In addition, the hypothesis examined the relationship between independent variables and support for a centralized leadership center (the dependent variable).

Hypothesis 2: East Carolina University faculty and staff leadership prefer a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were considered interrelated, since support for a centralized leadership center and support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education were expected to show a high correlation and similar distribution. It seemed intuitive that faculty leadership that supported a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education would also prefer a centralized leadership center to promote the sharing of leadership education ideas and processes throughout the University.

Hypothesis 3: Overlap exists in the leadership programs among various colleges and schools within East Carolina University. Determining the existence of overlap in the existing leadership programs was important to the development of
recommendations for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. Sharing resources between leadership programs and promoting best practices could create efficiencies for East Carolina University’s leadership education efforts.

**Summary and Presentation of the Findings**

The data gathered from the survey was noteworthy and consistent. A total of 92 surveys were completed from a population of 140 distributed surveys to university leaders (department heads or equivalents as defined by the East Carolina University Human Resources department). Two respondents completed some but not all of the questions; therefore, there were minor differences in total responses for a number of questions. The questions answered by the respondents for the two incomplete surveys were included in the results and analysis. A total of 13 questions made up the quantitative survey (see Appendix B).

The survey started with three demographic-related questions. Demographics of survey respondents included 67% male respondents and 33% female respondents. The age of respondents varied from the mid-thirties to over 55. Over 55 (59%) comprised the majority of respondents, while 36-45 made up 18%, and 23% of respondents fell in the 46-55 category. No respondents were younger than 35 years old (See Figure 1, p. 44). The demographics were not surprising, given the target population and sample focused upon university leadership. Older populations dominate leadership positions at universities, and while great strides have been made in increasing female leadership roles at universities, males remain in a majority of university leadership positions at both East Carolina University and universities around the nation (Dominici, Fried, & Zeger, 2009). Persons in
leadership positions at East Carolina University tended to be characterized by many years of experience at the university.

![Pie chart showing the age distribution of ECU Department Heads.]

*Figure 1. Age of ECU Department Heads.*

Approximately 75% of department heads had ten or more years of experience, while 36% had more than 20 years of experience. Only 25% had less than 10 years as an ECU employee, and 11% had less than 5 years of experience at ECU. (See Figure 2, p. 45)

Following the demographic questions, participants responded to ten questions focused on leadership principles in general and specifically at leadership programs at East Carolina University. The questions used a five point Likert Scale. The Likert Scale required respondents to answer strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.
Figure 2. Department Heads Length of Full Time Employment at ECU.

The ten questions were as follows: 1. East Carolina is fulfilling its goal as a leadership university. 2. Leadership education has many similarities among disciplines and career areas. 3. Leadership education is best taught using a multidisciplinary approach. 4. East Carolina University has many separate leadership programs. 5. A core leadership curricula would benefit leadership education at East Carolina University. 6. Common leadership themes and principles exist in leadership education. 7. These common leadership themes and principles are common in most disciplines. 8. Organizations and educational institutions often provide a set of common leadership principles and values. As an example, the below values are derived from George Mason’s Committee on Leadership (Mason Leads, 2014). Are these principles and values (respect, making a difference, integrity,
authenticity, courage, service, humility) applicable at ECU? 9. A centralized leadership center would promote a more effective and efficient use of resources supporting leadership education. 10. A centralized leadership center would benefit leadership education at East Carolina University

Question one was an overarching question and asked department heads if East Carolina was fulfilling its goal as a leadership university. Over 47% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that East Carolina is fulfilling its goal as a leadership university. Only 20% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that East Carolina is fulfilling its goal as a leadership university. Thirty-three percent of respondents were neutral (see Figure 3, p. 46).

Question ten related directly to hypothesis one. Questions two, three, six, and eight related to hypothesis two. Question nine related directly to hypothesis three.

![Figure 3. Responses to Question One.](image-url)
Question ten asked respondents if a centralized leadership center would benefit leadership education at East Carolina University. Thirty-seven percent agreed (31%) or strongly agreed (6%) while 39% were neutral and 24% disagreed (14%) or strongly disagreed (10%).

Questions related to hypothesis two showed similar results. Over 77% of those questioned agreed that leadership education had many similarities among disciplines and career areas (question two), with 16% neutral and 7% disagreeing (see Figure 4, p. 49). Seventy-seven percent of respondents also agreed that leadership education was best taught using a multidisciplinary approach (question three), while 23% were neutral and no respondent disagreed. Slightly more than 73% of respondents agreed that common leadership principles and themes exist in leadership education (question six), with 20% and 6% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing (See Table 2, p. 51).

Question four’s results showed that 60% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that ECU had many separate leadership programs, while 37% were neutral and less than 4% disagreed (See Table 1, p. 48). The results of question five showed 42% of respondents supported a core leadership curriculum, while 41% were neutral and 17% disagreed with a core leadership curriculum (Figure 5, p. 50).

Question seven had 68% of respondents agreeing that leadership themes and principles were common in most disciplines, while 12% disagreed and 20% were neutral (See Figure 6, p. 51). Question eight asked respondents if George Mason University’s Committee on Leadership (Mason Leads, 2014) leadership principles and values were applicable to East Carolina University. Service received the highest
percentage of support as 90% of respondents rated service as applicable. Respect, making a difference, and integrity were selected by 83%, while 68% chose authenticity; 65% and 64% of respondents picked courage and humility respectively.

Table 1.

East Carolina Has Many Separate Leadership Programs (Question Four)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>95.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalid Responses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4. Question Five Results Compared to a Normal Distribution

Common leadership themes and principles exist in leadership education.

1-Strongly Agree, 2- Agree, 3-Neutral, 4-Disagree, 5- Strongly Disagree
Figure 5. Question Seven Results Compared to a normal distribution

A core leadership curricula would benefit leadership education at East Carolina University.

1-Strongly Agree, 2- Agree, 3-Neutral, 4-Disagree, 5- Strongly Disagree

Mean = 2.74
Std. Dev. = 0.76
N = 91
Table 2

*Question Six Results Compared to a Normal Distribution*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>75.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 6. Results of Question Seven*
Question nine directly related to hypothesis three. A total of 91 valid responses were received. Thirty-five percent of respondents agreed (29%) or strongly agreed (6%) that a Centralized Leadership Center would promote a more effective and efficient use of resources supporting leadership education. However, 28% disagreed (18%) or strongly disagreed (10%) and 28% were neutral.

Table 3

Results of Question Nine (A Centralized Leadership Center would promote a more effective and efficient use of resources supporting leadership education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative Data Analysis

A review of the raw data revealed interesting and potentially important information, but to demonstrate statistical significance the results required further
analysis using statistical software. Specifically, for this research, IBM’s Statistical Package for the Social Sciences predictive analysis software was used to determine statistical significance. The population of the quantitative survey consisted of 140 department heads. E-mails requesting survey participation were distributed to the 140 department heads. An outstanding response rate of 62% accounted for the 92 completed surveys. The original intent of the methodology was to use parametric statistical tests and software to determine statistical significance. However, despite the very high response rate for surveys distributed, using the sample size available (92) for the small population size (140) provided a slightly less than desired 95% confidence level and 6% potential error rate. As a result of the slightly less than desired confidence level using parametric statistics, nonparametric statistics were also used for the analysis.

The survey results provided a view of the demographics of leadership demographics at East Carolina University. Department heads were, by a wide margin, male (almost 2 to 1), over 55 years of age (59%), and over 75% had more than ten years of experience at ECU. Understandably, older and experienced educators filled most leadership positions. Given that the design of the study focused upon leadership support for a centralized leadership center, the resulting demographics provided high confidence that the sample represented the population. Using a 95% confidence level and a 6% potential error rate, our sample size of 92 was adequate for drawing conclusions from the sample to the population through both parametric and nonparametric statistical tests.
The primary researcher conducted a detailed analysis of the hypotheses. Hypothesis 1: There is significant support among faculty and staff at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center. Question ten of the survey directly asked respondents if a centralized leadership center would benefit East Carolina University. Thirtyseven percent of department heads agreed a centralized leadership center would be beneficial, while 24% disagreed. Interestingly, 39% of surveyed leaders answered neutral. Question ten demonstrated somewhat mixed support for a centralized leadership center. Questions one and seven also provided mixed results, as department heads by an over two-to-one ratio agreed ECU was fulfilling its goal as a leadership university, but fully one-third of respondents answered neutral. Question four demonstrated that most East Carolina University leaders (60%) perceived that there were many separate leadership programs throughout the university. Again, a high neutral response rate (37%) surfaced in the sample, and less than 4% disagreed.

The research found support for a centralized leadership center among department heads at East Carolina University, but a large percentage of department heads also perceived that ECU had many separate leadership programs and agreed East Carolina University was fulfilling its goal as a leadership university. In an effort to further determine statistical significance, and the reason or reasons behind support for a centralized leadership center, the researcher performed both parametric and nonparametric statistical tests on the data.

Each demographic variable (age, gender, years of service at East Carolina University) was tested against the dependent variable (support for a centralized
leadership center) measured by question ten of the survey. The researcher conducted means tests using linear regression and scatter diagrams to test for normal distribution of each of the variables and to test for significance between the independent and dependent variables. The demographic variables as well as the dependent variable all tested for normal distribution at the 95% confidence level. When comparing distributions between each demographic (independent variables) and the dependent variable, there was no statistically significant relationship at the 95% confidence level. For example, when age was compared with answers to question ten of the online survey (Would East Carolina University benefit from a centralized leadership center?), there was no significant statistical difference between answers based upon age. The mean for the answers between ages was 2.88, 2.85, and 2.87 for the age groups 36-45, 46-55, and over 55 respectively. (For a visual representation of the distribution of support for a centralized leadership center by age group see Table 4, p. 56) A Chi Square two sided asymptotic test produced a value of 2.52 with 8 degrees of freedom and demonstrated no significant statistical relationship between age and respondents answers to the question of East Carolina University fulfilling its goal as a leadership university. The researcher tested at a confidence level of 95% and 99%.
Table 4

*Age Cross tabbed With “East Carolina is fulfilling its goal as a leadership university?”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36 - 45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 - 55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 55</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parametric quantitative statistical tests of the means and a normal distribution for gender and length of experience rendered similar results to age, with no statistical difference in support for a centralized leadership center based upon gender or based upon years of faculty or staff experience at East Carolina University. In addition differences in support based upon gender were unremarkable. The mean male response was 2.92, while the female response mean was 2.76. There was no statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level with an error rate of 6%.

In addition to parametric statistical tests, nonparametric statistical tests were used to detect correlation between variables in the survey. Again, the research failed to find a statistically significant relationship between gender, age, time of
service at East Carolina University, and support for a centralized leadership center. The researcher used chi square and Pearson’s correlation statistical tests to test for relationships between independent and dependent variables. Both tests failed to reject the null hypothesis. Chi square tests revealed Pearson coefficients of .758, .758, and .906 for age, longevity at East Carolina University, and gender respectively. The research used an error rate of .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis could not be rejected and no statistically significant relationship existed between age, longevity, or gender and the dependent variable (East Carolina fulfilling its strategic goal) tested. Spearman correlation tests yielded similar results with coefficients of -.063 (longevity), -.059 (age), and .044 (gender). The Spearman correlation coefficient indicated a .004 dependence for longevity, a .003 dependence for age, and a .001 dependence for gender.

In addition to testing demographic independent variables against the dependent variable (support for a centralized leadership center), the research tested the relationship of answers to additional survey questions against the dependent variable. The answers to question ten were assumed to be the dependent variable, and the answers to questions one, four, and five represented dependent variables. Because of a relatively small cell when comparing two Likert Scale survey questions with a total sample size of 92, the research used Pearson and Spearman correlation tests. Question one and question ten did have a high correlation coefficient in both the Pearson and Spearman tests and were significant at the .01 confidence level (See Table 5, p. 58 and Table 6, p. 59).
Table 5

*Correlation Test of Question One and Question Ten*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Centralized leadership center would benefit leadership education at East Carolina University.</th>
<th>Question 10</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.289**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East Carolina is fulfilling its goal as a leadership university.</th>
<th>Question 10</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.289**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The same tests conducted for questions four and five yielded similar results, as correlation was significant at the .01 level. Responses to question five and question ten, when tested, failed to reveal statistically significant correlation. In addition, the research determined a statistically significant relationship existed between question three responses (leadership is best taught using a multidisciplinary approach) and questions two and six. Indeed, a strong correlation did exist between respondents that favored a multidisciplinary approach and respondents who believed that leadership education had many similarities among disciplines and career areas (See Table 7, p. 60 and Table 8, p.61) The same positive correlation existed with responses that favored a multidisciplinary approach, and respondents that agreed
leadership themes and principles were common in most disciplines (See Table 9 and 10, p. 62). Results were significant at the .01 level.

Table 6

Spearman Correlation Test of Question One and Question Ten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question 10</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralized</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.295**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would benefit</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education at East Carolina University.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Carolina is</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fulfilling its goal as</td>
<td>.295**</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a leadership university.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table 7

*Pearson Correlation Test of Question Three and Question Two*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership education is best taught using a multidisciplinary approach.</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: <strong>.389</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership education has many similarities among disciplines and career areas.</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: <strong>.389</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table 8

*Spearman Correlation Test of Question Three and Question Two*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership education is best taught using a multidisciplinary approach.</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.268*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.(2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership education has many similarities among disciplines and career areas.</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>.268*</th>
<th>1.000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig.(2-tailed)</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 9

*Pearson Correlation Test of Question Three and Question Six*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership education is best taught using a multidisciplinary approach.</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common leadership themes and principles exist in leadership education.</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.233*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 10

*Spearman Correlation Test of Question Three and Question Six*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership education is best taught using a multidisciplinary approach.</td>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common leadership themes and principles exist in leadership education.</td>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>.268*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
The research also tested the correlation between responses from question three and question eight but yielded insignificant results at the .01 and .05 error levels.

In addition, results of the survey of department heads clearly demonstrated a perception of common leadership principles across disciplines and career areas among faculty leaders. In all three Likert Scale-based questions relating to common themes and disciplines in leadership education, a minimum of 68% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Seventy-seven percent agreed that a multidisciplinary approach for teaching leadership is best, 73% agreed that common leadership principles and themes exist, and 68% agreed that leadership themes and principles are common in most disciplines. Overall, almost 70% of department heads agreed with using a multidisciplinary approach in leadership education, and faculty leaders agreed that commonalities exist in leadership education across disciplines and career areas. Question eight was indirectly related to Hypothesis 2 and demonstrated some degree of commonality between ECU department heads’ leadership principles and themes and those of the George Mason University Committee on Leadership (Mason Leads, 2014). Over 66% of department heads agreed that the Mason principles and themes existed in most disciplines. Twenty percent answered neutral and less than 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Department heads also rated the eight specific themes and principles. Service received the top response percentage with 87% while respect, integrity, and making a difference all received a 77% or 78% response rate.
Hypothesis 3 stated that overlap exists in the leadership programs among various colleges and schools within East Carolina University. Directly related to hypothesis 3 was question four, asking respondents if there were many leadership programs throughout the university. Approximately 60% agreed that many leadership programs exist throughout the university. As with many questions in the survey, there was a large contingent of neutral respondents (36%) and a relatively small percentage of disagreement (4%). Table 11 below displays the results of question four.

Table 11

Survey Question Four Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>95.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research for the third hypothesis was indirectly related to question nine in the survey. A total of 34% of department heads agreed that a centralized leadership center would promote a more effective and efficient use of resources supporting leadership education. However, 24% disagreed and 28% were neutral indicating, they did not know or were unsure if a centralized leadership center would promote the more effective and efficient use of resources. Table 12 below depicts the answers received for question nine.

Table 12

*Quantitative Results for Question Nine*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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The qualitative portion of the study and research consisted of interviews with Deans and Vice Chancellors at East Carolina University. All 25 Deans and Vice
Chancellors were given invitations for a face-to-face interview with the primary researcher. Fifteen accepted the invitation and participated in a face-to-face interview or a one-on-one telephone interview. Due to availability constraints, two interviews were conducted telephonically. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in the respective offices of the Vice Chancellors and Deans. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed by the contracted survey team. Interviews varied in length from approximately 15 minutes to over 40 minutes. The questions were provided to interviewees prior to the interview, although not all interviewees reviewed the questions prior to the interview. All interviewees were willing to speak candidly about the subject, and respondents fully understood no names or position titles would be used in the findings or the report. All but one interview was conducted in two separate three-day periods (3-5 March 2015 and 18-19 March 2015) on campus at East Carolina University. The final interview completed on 30 March at the request of the interviewee.

Transcription and recordings of the interviews were reviewed to identify potential themes across the interviews. The qualitative results were in general similar to the quantitative results but added depth and specifics to many of the questions in the quantitative survey. Questions for the interview were:

1. One of East Carolina University’s strategic goals is to be a leadership university. Do you think ECU is fulfilling that goal, and if so, how is the university fulfilling the goal? If you do not think the university is fulfilling its goal, what are the problems or issues?
2. Do you prefer a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education, or a single discipline approach?

3. Does East Carolina University have schools or colleges that use a multidisciplinary approach in leadership education?

4. Would East Carolina University (schools and colleges) benefit from a more centralized approach to leadership education? Why or why not?

5. If East Carolina University would benefit from a more centralized approach to leadership education, what type of organizational structure would you envision for the center?

Following transcription of the interviews, the research team developed a master theme document of key phrases from the interviews. The key phrases were cross-referenced with potential themes identified by the primary researcher and placed in an Excel document. Next, the team arranged quotes by the five interview questions and categorized each based on response types provided by the primary researcher (e.g. "Yes," "Neutral," and "No"; "Total Centralization," "Hybrid Structure," and "No Centralization"). The primary researcher used the resulting Excel spreadsheet to inductively draw conclusions and findings for the qualitative research.

In addition, the research team extracted up to three key words from each phrase. Key words were action words or major topics discussed by participants. For example, when interviewees described why centralization would benefit the university, participants used key words such as, "collaboration," "common," and "resources." When participants described why centralization would not benefit the
university, interviewees used key words such as, "situational," "artificial," and "grassroots." Rather than detailing the answers to the five questions, the remainder of the qualitative findings section will provide a detailed review of the emergent themes from the interviews with East Carolina University’s Deans and Vice Chancellors.

**Emergent Themes from Interviews**

Three identifiable themes emerged from the conducted interviews with Deans and Vice Chancellors.

**Theme One: East Carolina is fulfilling the strategic goal of becoming the leadership university.**

While the various interviewees had differing views on the degree of success, all agreed the university was pursuing the goal in schools and colleges throughout the university. Nearly all the Deans and Vice Chancellors saw the pursuit of becoming the leadership university as a journey, not a destination. Clearly positive comments included: “Leadership is a focus of what we do and we are constantly reminded of our leadership goal.” “We spent a year or two trying to define leadership, and we developed the integrated leadership framework, which was helpful.” “I think we were a leadership university before it became a goal.” Thirteen Vice Chancellor and Dean comments stressed success for East Carolina’s fulfillment as a leadership university. Only three negative comments emerged from the interviews referencing East Carolina’s success as a leadership university. However, the three comments focused on the slowness of the journey and the fact the university has not fully reached the goal.
Fifteen comments were identified as neutral, and they highlighted the varying leadership journeys among schools and colleges. Neutral comments from Vice Chancellors and Deans recognized that the leadership journey had started and some success had been demonstrated, but major differences in success existed among schools and colleges. Most schools and colleges received recognition of leadership endeavors, but the College of Business was the only college or school recognized by more than two comments. A number of comments revolved around the lack of measures of success and clear definitions. For example, one interviewee stated, “We keep saying the word leadership, but a lot of students, faculty, and staff do not understand the word.” Another senior leader said, “What I don’t see is how do we know if we are successful? What does it mean to be successful?”

Three identified comments pointed out the difference between a leadership university and the leadership university as a strategic goal. The individuals noted the significant difference between the two and that the specific desire of the Chancellor was to be the leader in providing leadership education, not simply a university similar to many others that developed leadership programs and education. The Strategic Plan and the specific goal were very clear, as Chancellor Ballard emphasized, “ECU is the Leadership University, so we will expand leadership opportunities for students, faculty, and staff” (Strategic Plan, 2014).

While none of the Deans and Vice Chancellors refuted the idea of East Carolina University eventually fulfilling the goal of the leadership university, three comments indicated concern about the progress made thus far. One interviewee commented that the “progress has been slow.” Another said, “We have not met the
goal because if we had, there would not continue to be such an emphasized element of the strategic plan.” These individuals also indicated concern about the lack of definition of success along the journey. A senior leader commented, “The leadership university is a nebulous goal and I think, as a result we have not quite reached the goal.”

Deans and Vice Chancellors also provided reasons for the inability to reach the goal of the leadership university. Limited time surfaced as an issue in a number of interviews, as interviewees indicated that faculty and students had limited time available to add leadership study.

In addition to limited time, two comments addressed strained resources. One comment stated, “Resources need to be addressed and dollars are hard to come by.” Another interviewee stated, “The Chancellor is visibly promoting leadership, but he needs cohorts of individuals who are willing to commit the time, effort, and energy to promote leadership throughout the school.” “Funding is always a major challenge because even though leadership education is an integral part of the university, our primary mission is to teach and research.” Another commented, “Time and money are the major challenges. Challenging, because of the rigid curriculum and the things we must do to meet accreditation standards.”

Culture, meaning, and understanding were major subthemes for reasons the university has not fulfilled the goal of becoming a leadership university. Four comments pointed out the need and difficulty of making a cultural change. One senior leader commented, “Becoming the leadership university is a cultural problem, not an administrative problem. It’s a major cultural change.” Another
commented, “At one end of the spectrum, we have people wondering what it means to be the leadership university.” “Not everyone buys into it or understands it,” was another interviewee’s statement. “We have great opportunities, but ECU still approaches things from a deficit mindset.” A different angle on mindset came from another interviewee, “A professor is in the mindset that they are here to teach a specific discipline.”

Finally, the importance of planning and follow through were evident. “Just saying it isn’t enough,” stated one senior leader. Another stated, “One of the difficulties with the strategic plan of being the leadership university is it didn’t provide the process or structure to make that happen.” Along the lines of structure, an interviewee stated, “We don’t have any commonality for assessing what is being done in programs throughout the university in the area of leadership.”

**Theme Two: A multidisciplinary approach is the best means of providing leadership education.**

Vice Chancellors and Deans interviewed agreed overwhelmingly that a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education was the best approach for teaching leadership and leadership development. Be that as it may, all did not share the same definition or concept of multidisciplinary. Many of the interviewees had a more narrow view of multidisciplinary to include varying areas within a broad discipline such as business or medicine. As a result of the varying definitions of multidisciplinary, many of the interviewees described single discipline leadership approaches as multidisciplinary. Despite the disparity in definition, the recognition of the need for a broad approach to leadership education was evident and
widespread. Over 50% of the interviewees described multidisciplinary approaches within their particular colleges, schools, or areas under their purview, and they extolled the virtues of such an approach. A very limited number of interviewees provided examples of multidisciplinary approaches being used at East Carolina University outside of their own schools, colleges, or areas. The only school or college mentioned by more than one interviewee was the College of Business, and the details of a multidisciplinary approach were scant.

There were sixteen notable comments by senior university leaders advocating a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education at East Carolina University. Comments included: “A lot of leadership qualities rise above discipline specificity and become common themes,” and “To be a leader you must be able to work with different disciplines and cultures.” One interviewee stated, “Leadership education has to be multidisciplinary, there is something to be learned from every discipline as far as leadership goes.” Another said, “My perspective is leadership is multidisciplinary, it’s in everything we do.” A number of comments indicated a multidisciplinary was the only option for leadership education, and a multidisciplinary approach was far superior to a single discipline approach. One person stated, “A multidisciplinary approach is the only option, if we are to be the leadership university.” Another said, “A multidisciplinary approach is much more beneficial.” Other comments included, “We need a set of common principles and a coherent system of education around leadership,” and “Leadership is truly multidisciplinary, the principles of leadership are pretty much the same.”
Two comments advocated a single discipline leadership approach to education. One leader stated, “Under the current structure, I think leadership education at East Carolina University needs to be discipline-specific.” The other comment conjectured, “If we rely on the university to make it happen, our students would not get any meaningful leadership experience.”

Six comments from senior leaders advocated a hybrid approach to leadership education. These comments included: “There needs to be a good balance between a multidisciplinary approach and discipline specific approach.” “You need generic background to understand how people conceptualize leadership, but you also must use a single discipline to get in deeper.” “There is a lot to learn from a multidiscipline approach, but there is some uniqueness is specific disciplines.” “You can’t teach leadership in isolation but clearly there are things more relevant to the profession or the context.”

Interviewees were also asked if East Carolina University had colleges or schools that used a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. Nineteen comments indicated some schools and colleges used a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education, while seven comments indicated no colleges or schools used a multidisciplinary approach and six comments indicated the interviewee was unsure. Examples of a multidisciplinary approach included the College of Business, the Student Leader’s Council, the BB&T Leadership Center, the Student Leader’s Counsel, the Student Leadership Academy, the Leadership Minor, the Center for Faculty Excellence, the College of Science and Technology, the Brody School of Medicine, the College of Nursing, and the Athletic Department.
Six comments indicated East Carolina Colleges and Schools did not provide a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. These comments included, “We have inter-professional activities but not specifically leadership.” “We really struggle between giving some autonomy and academic freedom and recognizing a need for a multidisciplinary approach.” “Our college has taken the time to build something specifically for the staff, faculty, and students, but the back and forth is not part of the model.” “Some places on campus are not willing to use an interdisciplinary approach.”

Finally, six comments provided by interviewees indicated the individuals were unsure if any of the colleges or schools used a multidisciplinary approach to education. Two of the more notable comments stated, “I would guess that if you went to every school, you would be able to identify areas that are involved in enhancing leaders,” while another interviewee stated, “I would assume you would want some component of academic leadership in every academic discipline, but I’m not sure it has happened.”

One notable interviewee advocated the need and importance of a multidisciplinary approach for leadership education but did not recognize any school, college, or area as using a true multidisciplinary approach for leadership education at East Carolina University. The individual viewed all current approaches as single disciplinary and emphasized the need and importance of leadership programs moving towards a multidisciplinary approach. In addition, the interviewee described the potential for colleges further along in attaining a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education to be a catalyst and an advocate
for other schools and colleges to move forward along the leadership education journey.

**Theme Three: A Centralized Center for Leadership would be beneficial to East Carolina University's leadership journey.**

Twenty-two comments from Vice Chancellors and Deans recognized some potential benefit of a centralized leadership center depending the definition, implementation, and execution of such a center. Comments focused upon the need to share lessons learned, best practices, and leadership engagement such as speakers and workshops throughout the university. One interviewee commented, “We might benefit from a more centralized effort in education awareness, and bringing in components of the institution to think about moving in a particular direction. I think about it like engaged scholarship from the strategic plan.” Another commented, “There should be a centralized place that has an inventory of what the campus is doing.” One candid comment revealed, “We need a common understanding of what we mean as far as being a leadership university.” Another similar comment echoed, “What does being the leadership university mean? Without a centralized approach, I don't have an answer.” Finally, one senior leader stated, “We need to have a common thread between colleges and programs and to have at least conversations attached to this common DNA as opposed to the disenfranchised or fractured pieces.”

Nine comments from interviewees indicated opposition to a centralized approach to leadership education. Seven of the nine comments focused on fear of a dictatorial entity adding a layer of non-academic requirements and directives that
would provide little value or a centralized center that simply took control away from current programs. One individual commented, “I don’t need an office that is going to say, I need a report every year about your leadership activities.” Another comment was similar, “I’m a little wary because sometimes when you centralize things, other things don’t get done at the grass roots level.” One comment focused the need for understanding of the mission, “I don’t know that we need a more centralized approach. I think we need a better institutional understanding of our leadership mission.”

A total of nine comments indicated interviewees did not know if centralization was a positive or a negative, and most of the nine indicated it depends upon the implementation and execution. Two comments captured the essence of the nine comments. The first, “I like the centralized coordination of resources and things like that. Activities that span across the disciplines can often best be handled centrally rather than having each individual pick up a piece. But it is more important that these get executed at the college level.” A second related comment stated, “It’s good if the two can exist together. For example, we have an Office of Development and Advancement on campus where we have a central office, but each college has its own development office or director of development because of the diverse degrees on campus.”

A subtheme of support for a centralization emerged as most of the Deans’ and Vice Chancellors’ comments indicated a preference for a hybrid leadership structure. Eleven comments indicated a preference for total centralization, while 19 comments preferred a hybrid structure and four comments indicated no
centralization. Four of the 11 comments advocated centralization, and four interviewee comments advocated a repository center or clearinghouse for leadership information. Four comments offered the need for an organizational structure housed in the Chancellor’s or Provost’s office, while one comment advocated for a rotating chair as the head of the center. Two comments expressed the need for resources and the need for the center director to craft a clear vision.

Nineteen comments from the Deans and Vice Chancellors depicted the need for a hybrid approach and organizational structure for a centralized leadership center. Three comments focused on the need to change minds versus the importance of physical buildings. One comment said, “The centralization should be centralization of the minds.” Another quipped, “If we make a few people change their minds and hearts, we will have made progress.” The third comment said, “It’s not an organizational thing, it’s a mental thing.” The other emergent theme from the hybrid group was the need for integration and collaboration. All 16 of the remaining comments advocated some form of integration, collaboration, and further refinement of the leadership university. One interviewee spoke about the leadership collaborative, “We should look at some of the earlier efforts around the leadership collaborative. We should try to find some lessons there so if we did it again, we can be more successful.” Another leader commented, “Maybe we could have a council or group that would provide representation and input from the colleges, like a central identity.” Three different comments advocated using outside sources for collaboration and further refinement of the leadership mission. Outside entities included other universities, the military, and the surrounding community.
Suggestions for collaboration within the university included the use of meetings and workshops on both the east and west campus, representatives from each college and school forming a group for sharing information, and two or more colleges working together on leadership projects. One comment suggested, “A centralized program must be dynamic, I’m not really excited about another central program where I don’t have much engagement.” Another suggested placing entities such as the Leadership Academy and other campus leadership endeavors in the centralized leadership center.

There were four comments from senior leaders that advocated no centralized structure. Similar comments discussed in the overall centralization section appeared. One comment, “What you don’t want is a bureaucratic structure where somebody a director] gets in and stays for a lifetime.” Another comment, “The organizational structure question starts with the fact that no one office can own leadership.” A third comment, “I’m not sure whether another center is going to accomplish a lot.” The final comment advocating no centralized structure, “I want a professor in every school to be designated a leadership professor.”

**Analysis and Synthesis of Findings**

As in most research studies, the findings of this Dissertation in Practice were somewhat complex. The use of a statistically significant sample was important and accomplished. Given the size of the sample (92) versus the total population (140), a 95% confidence rate produced a 6% error rate, more than acceptable for this study. While statistically significant the sample results proved somewhat less than definitive.
Significant support for a centralized leadership center clearly existed based upon the quantitative surveys. Thirty-seven percent of department heads agreed or strongly agreed that a centralized leadership center would benefit East Carolina University. Twenty-four percent disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 39% answered neutral.

Based on survey results, a large percentage (60%) of departments recognized East Carolina University had many different leadership programs throughout the university. Interestingly, there were no statistically significant differences in survey answers based upon demographics (gender, age, length of service) in both parametric and nonparametric tests. The survey results demonstrated proof of Hypothesis 1: there is significant support for faculty and staff at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center.

The test of Hypothesis 2 ended with similar results. Again, the sample size was statistically significant at a 95% confidence level and a 6% error rate. Seventy-six percent of respondents agreed that leadership education should be taught with a multidisciplinary approach, and 73% agreed there were similarities in leadership education between disciplines. Hypothesis 2 was clearly proven based on survey results. In addition, correlation analysis demonstrated a high positive correlation between respondents that favored a multidisciplinary and respondents that agreed there are common themes and principles in leadership education. East Carolina University faculty and staff leadership did prefer a multidisciplinary approach to education.
Hypothesis 3 also proved true based upon statistical tests. Sixty percent of department heads recognized East Carolina University had many different leadership programs, with only 3% disagreeing and 36% responding neutrally. In addition, 37% of department heads agreed a centralized leadership center would promote a more effective use of resources supporting leadership education. Analysis of the two questions demonstrated the validity of Hypothesis 3. However, given the high percentage of respondents that agreed East Carolina University had many leadership programs (60%), the lower percentage of respondents (36%) that agreed a centralized center would promote the more effective use of resources was somewhat surprising.

The large number of neutrals for many of the survey questions provided some degree of uncertainty. Determining the underlying causes for neutral responses was not part of the research and there are many potential causes. The most likely was deemed to be the lack of definition provided by university leadership for the term leadership university and the lack of a clearly define path for implementation. However, there were many other potential reasons for neutral responses such as satisfaction with the status quo, reluctance to change, fear of losing resources, and a fear of losing autonomy. Some of the potential reasons emerged in the qualitative interviews with Deans and Vice Chancellors. From the quantitative analysis, the three hypotheses were proven; in addition, the research demonstrated support did reside at East Carolina University for a centralized leadership center using a multidisciplinary approach and a leadership that could help use resources more efficiently. Qualitative analysis of the
Vice Chancellors’ and Deans’ interviews added clarity and depth to the quantitative findings.

Qualitative interviews uncovered a wide disparity of views when the Deans and Vice Chancellors were asked if East Carolina University was fulfilling its strategic goal as a leadership university. The very definition of “the leadership university,” or “a leadership university,” was not universally understood. In addition, although many interviewees indicated that East Carolina had many leadership programs, specific knowledge outside each interviewee’s specific area was limited. There was support for a centralized leadership center and for the use of a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education, but the particulars and specifics for having such a center and approach were varied and disparate. A large percentage of comments advocated a leadership center as a repository for leadership education and ideas, but a number of comments also advocated against a bureaucratic center that would add no value. In addition, comments stressed the need for more clearly defining the goal of becoming the leadership university and for more fidelity on the path towards the goal. Comments focused upon organizational structure advocated placing the center under the Chancellor or Provost.

The following findings were evident from the mixed methods study:

1. East Carolina University department heads and senior leaders indicated that the university is on the path to fulfilling the strategic goal of becoming a leadership university.
2. The specific path forward was not clear to department heads or senior leaders.

3. Significant support was found for a centralized leadership center among department heads and senior leaders.

4. Significant support existed for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education among department heads and senior leaders at East Carolina University.

5. Many leadership programs existed at East Carolina University, and a centralized leadership center could provide efficiencies.

6. Department heads and senior leaders demonstrated support for a centralized leadership center that adds value by cataloguing programs and sharing resources.

7. A centralized leadership center located under the Chancellor’s or Provost’s office was preferred by senior leaders.

8. Senior leaders and department heads had limited knowledge of leadership programs outside their specific areas at the university.

**Proposed Solution**

East Carolina University has made significant progress in becoming a leadership institution, and the university has developed many leadership programs in schools and colleges. In addition, the university leadership approved a stated goal of creating a centralized leadership center (East Carolina University, 2014e). Be that as it may, a clear, specific vision and detailed goals or plan was not developed by the university leadership. In order for East Carolina University to
fulfill its stated goal of becoming the leadership university, a better understanding of what being the leadership university means should be clearly communicated. Both quantitative survey results and qualitative interview results clearly demonstrated university leaders had varying perceptions and understanding of “the leadership university” and to what degree East Carolina had fulfilled its goal. In addition, while the research found support for a centralized leadership center, no clear vision or understanding of a center emerged.

In order to fulfill its goal as the leadership university or to continue to make progress towards that goal, East Carolina University must better define and clearly communicate with greater specificity how the university should move forward in its leadership journey and include specific requirements and goals for a centralized leadership center. An integrated and campus-wide team should be formed to further define and specify East Carolina’s path forward as the leadership university. In addition, the full leadership team of Vice Chancellors, Deans, and department heads should be involved in the development of the vision and the path forward to ensure full support from university leadership. The Chancellor’s support and involvement would be critical to the effort.

The team must be dedicated and given the time and resources to develop the vision and requirements. A dynamic, transformational leader is essential for the success of the team and the overall effort. The team should be limited to a specified time period (recommended no more than 12 months) and should report progress periodically (at least quarterly) to university senior leadership (Chancellor and Vice Chancellors). The team should first and foremost develop the definition what it
means to be “the leadership university.” (East Carolina University, 2014e) Second, the team should define the current status of East Carolina as a leadership university or the leadership university. Third, the team should begin defining the specifics and role of a centralized leadership center, as published in the university’s strategic plan. In defining a centralized leadership, the team should recommend goals for the center, an organizational structure, the university office that should oversee the center, the roles and responsibilities of the center, and the physical or virtual structure of the center. As a starting point, the team should build upon the work done by the leadership committee work completed in 2009. In addition, the team should identify and catalogue the many leadership education efforts throughout the university and recommend the relationship each of the programs should have with the centralized leadership center. Examples of programs that should be addressed include but are not limited to: Chancellor’s Leadership Academy, Student Leadership Development Center, the BB&T Center, the Shelton Leadership Challenge, the Leadership Minor, and the Leadership Programs within the Schools and Colleges throughout the university.

Support for the Solution from Data Collected

The recommended solution detailed above is derived from the collection and data analysis described in this Dissertation in Practice. Significant support for a centralized leadership center based on a multidisciplinary educational approach at East Carolina University emerged in both the quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis. The quantitative analysis used a statistically significant sample (95% confidence level) and found 37% of department heads supported a centralized
leadership center, 150% more than the number of department heads that did not support a centralized leadership center. Qualitative analysis of the interviews with the Vice Chancellors and Deans also demonstrated a significant level of support for a centralized leadership center. Positive comments outnumbered negative comments more than two to one (22 positive, 9 negative), and interviewees made nine neutral comments. Support for a multidisciplinary approach proved even greater in both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Support for a multidisciplinary approach was above 75% for the department head surveys and the ratio of positive versus negative and neutral comments from Vice Chancellors and Deans was overwhelmingly in favor of the positive. While clear support for a centralized leadership center and multidisciplinary educational approach proved conclusive, the specifics of the structure and organizational alignment were not conclusive.

**Existing Support Structure and Resources**

While East Carolina does not currently have a centralized leadership center the foundation for such a center exists in the current leadership programs and curriculum. Detailed in the literature review leadership programs were prevalent in many of the colleges and schools although the maturity of programs varied widely. The Chancellor’s Leadership Academy, the BB&T Center and the Student Development Program and the Shelton were all found to be well developed and capable of forming the foundation for a centralized leadership center. The programs were well resourced and filled with talented individuals.

Based on the support found in both surveys and interviews, dynamic and energetic leaders dedicated to making East Carolina University the leadership
university emerged throughout the university. If provided a clear vision and path for a centralized leadership there is no doubt a dedicated team can be successful in moving East Carolina forward in its leadership journey.

**Policies Influencing the Proposed Solution**

Limited policy obstacles exist for initial implementation of the proposed solution. Depending upon the depth and breadth of the initial implementation, the proposed solution could be implemented within current policies with minor changes. The Chancellor should appoint a team lead or committee chair to develop the needed detailed vision and goals for the proposed centralized leadership center. A policy letter would be sufficient for the initial effort, while the results and contents of the effort would be incorporated into the University Strategic Plan once approved. Depending upon the results of the team’s effort and the level of implementation resource and organizational policies may need to be modified.

**Potential Barriers and Obstacles to the Proposed Solution**

Change in large organizations often results in barriers and obstacles from sub organizations and individual stakeholders. Implementation of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University would not be an exception, despite the fact such an effort is part of the University’s Strategic Plan. This study demonstrated a large number of varied and disparate leadership programs throughout the university. Some of the programs were well developed, well-funded, and relatively mature such as in the College of Business, while other programs were less mature. Creating a centralized organization can cause stakeholders concern over combining of resources and or loss of autonomy. Results of the qualitative interview comments
from the Vice Chancellors and Deans indicated some concern for the loss of authority, autonomy, and resources. In addition, while the support for a multidisciplinary approach was high, it was not universal.

Development and implementation of a centralized leadership center requires a balanced approach, providing the benefits of centralization while maintaining needed autonomy within disciplines. Such an approach is needed to ensure buy-in and acceptance throughout the university. Rather than lower the quality, efforts, and resources of the more mature programs, a centralized leadership concept should enhance all programs by sharing lessons learned, programs, and research. In addition, autonomy should remain within colleges and schools to provide discipline specific leadership education.

**Financial and Budget Issues**

Developing and implementing a centralized leadership center requires some changes in the allocation of resources. As the Chancellor’s designated team defines the vision and goals of the center, the team must consider financial and budget issues. Sharing of resources and programs should provide some savings, but additional resources will most likely be needed. The recommendations of the team will dictate the amount of financial resources needed. A virtual center with limited physical assets requires less resources than a physical structure. Be that as it may, the need to find additional finances is required. Grants, corporate financing, individual gifts, and service for fee endeavors should all be considered.

**Change Theory**

The above obstacle and barrier sections delved into change theory slightly, but the importance of change theory in developing and implementing a centralized
leadership center could not be overemphasized. The resistance to change is fundamental in human beings, and the results of this Dissertation in Practice demonstrated this change theory. While a centralized leadership center was a stated strategic goal of East Carolina University, resistance to change emerged in both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study. The research demonstrated significant support for centralized leadership center, but a large percentage of neutral answers indicated uncertainty. Qualitative interviews also showed uncertainty in comments, as well as negativity for loss of autonomy or authority. The answers and reactions were consistent with change theory. In order to overcome the issues, transformational leadership will be essential.

The Chancellor and the senior leadership of the university must clearly and frequently communicate the detailed vision and goals of becoming the leadership university, the specifics of a centralized leadership center, and the benefits of such a center. While becoming the leadership university is a journey and East Carolina University has traveled far, there is far to go. In order to continue the momentum, all levels of university leadership must understand and commit to the goals. Senior leadership’s commitment to the goals and communication of that commitment will be critical to the journey.

**External Issues Related to Proposed Solution**

No doubt university leadership is well aware of the many struggles East Carolina University has overcome in its 108-year history, some of which were documented in the literature review of this paper. Obtaining increased funding for a centralized leadership center in the journey to become the leadership university
may not be consistent with the desires of university system leadership or the state legislature. Fulfilling the goal of becoming the leadership university and developing a centralized leadership center is simply one more opportunity. Be that as it may, the effort will require the same type all-hands, all-tactics approach used by Leo Jenkins in gaining university status and med school approval.

Summary

In this chapter, the detailed analysis of the mixed methods research was presented. Quantitative interview results proved the three tested hypotheses, using both parametric and nonparametric statistics. Interviews used qualitative analysis and added depth and specificity to the quantitative results. When synthesized, the quantitative and qualitative produced the following findings:

1. East Carolina University department heads and senior leaders indicated the university is on the path to fulfilling the strategic goal of becoming a leadership university.
2. The specific path forward was not clear to department heads or senior leaders.
3. Significant support was found for a centralized leadership center among department heads and senior leaders.
4. Significant support existed for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education among department heads and senior leaders at East Carolina University.
5. Many leadership programs existed at East Carolina University, and a centralized leadership center could provide efficiencies.

6. Department heads and senior leaders demonstrated support for a centralized leadership center that adds value by cataloguing programs and sharing resources.

7. A centralized leadership center located under the Chancellor’s or Provost’s office was preferred by senior leaders.

8. Senior leaders and department heads had limited knowledge of leadership programs outside their specific areas at the university.

Using the above findings as a basis, the research proposed a solution to address the findings and develop a path forward to continue the journey of becoming the leadership university and developing and implementing a centralized leadership center. The Chancellor should appoint and energize a leadership study team to further define, with specificity, the goal of becoming the leadership university and developing a centralized leadership center. The specifics should include the organizational structure within the university, the organizational structure of the center, specific goals and principles of the center, and funding requirements and sources of funding.

University senior leadership must communicate the goals and objectives of becoming the leadership university and of developing the centralized leadership clearly and frequently in order to garner support of leadership throughout the university at all levels. In addition, university senior leadership must consider obstacles and barriers, both internal and external, and provide the same undaunted
spirit that has become synonymous with East Carolina University’s accomplishments to be successful.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this Dissertation in Practice based upon the mixed methods research conducted in an effort to determine leadership support for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. Study respondents included 92 of 140 East Carolina University faculty department heads and 16 of 25 Deans and Vice Chancellors throughout East Carolina University’s Schools and Colleges. East Carolina University’s Chancellor and Strategic Plan have a stated goal of establishing a centralized leadership center East Carolina. The 2014-2019 Strategic plan states, “ECU is a Leadership University, so we will expand leadership opportunities for students, faculty, and staff. Our graduates will be known as leaders in the workplace and community” (East Carolina University, 2014e). While the goal has been stated the specific definition for a centralized leadership center was not specified and has not been developed and communicated.

The purpose of this study was to determine leadership support for the centralized leadership center and to recommend a path forward for developing and establishing a centralized leadership center. The study found significant support for a centralized leadership center and support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education among East Carolina University’s faculty leaders. In addition the study recommended establishing a leadership team to fully develop and communicate a detailed plan for a centralized leadership center using a multidisciplinary approach. A recommended starting point for the leadership team was the work done by the leadership committee in
2009 that developed a framework intended to serve as the guiding principles underpinning leadership education and development efforts (Holster, 2011).

**Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine the support for and potential benefits of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected in succession. In this study, quantitative methods determined the overall degree of support by faculty and staff of the University for a Centralized Leadership Center, identified common themes across current leadership programs, and determined the support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education.

The population for the quantitative portion of the study comprised of department heads within the 13 schools and colleges (East Carolina University, 2014c). Broad demographic and background data were collected from East Carolina University’s human relations department and registrar to better understand the populations and an appropriate sample size and to represent university leadership in numbers adequate for a quantitative analysis.

A representative probabilistic sample of the research population was developed as a percentage of the faculty department heads from the 13 colleges and schools throughout the university (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). East Carolina’s Survey Study Team was contracted to conduct the quantitative survey and to transcribe the qualitative interviews. A total of 140 invitations were electronically distributed. For the qualitative portion of the study, voluntary interviews with select faculty leaders were conducted from throughout
the thirteen colleges and schools within the university. Faculty leadership for this study consisted of Deans and Vice Chancellors. There were approximately twenty-five Vice Chancellors and Deans at ECU (Locklear, 2013). The qualitative portion of the study conducted face-to-face interviews with sixteen Vice Chancellors and Deans. Invitations were provided to all Deans and Vice Chancellors.

In an effort to determine the level of support for a centralized leadership program, the dependent variable in the quantitative survey and analysis was leadership support as demonstrated through the survey of Department Heads. A number of independent variables were tested in an effort to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The independent variables tested included gender, age, and years of experience at East Carolina University. In addition, tests of correlation were used for pairing the independent variables, which included: support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education, fulfillment of the goal of becoming a leadership university, resource savings, and leadership program similarities.

The qualitative portion of the study was designed to add depth and clarity to the quantitative results. The primary researcher conducted all but one of the fifteen interviews with Deans and Vice Chancellors. Three dominant themes emerged from the qualitative research.

When synthesized the quantitative and qualitative produced the following findings: 1. East Carolina University Department Heads and senior leaders indicated the University is on the path to fulfilling the strategic goal of becoming a leadership university. 2. The specific path forward was not clear to Department Heads or Senior
Leaders. 3. Significant support was found for a centralized leadership center among Department Heads and senior leaders. 4. Significant support existed for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education among Department Heads and senior leaders at East Carolina University. 5. Many leadership programs existed at East Carolina University and a centralized leadership center could provide efficiencies.

6. Department heads and senior leaders demonstrated support for a centralized leadership center that adds value by cataloguing programs and sharing resources. 7. Senior leaders preferred a centralized leadership center located under the Chancellor’s or Provost’s office.

8. Senior Leaders and Department Heads demonstrated limited knowledge of leadership programs outside their specific areas at the university.

In order to fulfill its goal as the leadership university or to continue to make progress East Carolina University must better define and clearly communicate with greater specificity how the University should move forward in its leadership journey to include specific requirements and goals for a centralized leadership center. An integrated and campus wide integrated team should be formed to further define and specify East Carolina’s path forward as the leadership university.

The team must be dedicated and given the time and resources to develop the vision and requirements. A dynamic transformational leader is essential for the success of the team and the overall effort. The team should be limited to a specified time period (recommended no more than 12 months) and should report progress periodically (at least quarterly) to university senior leadership (Chancellor and Vice Chancellors). In defining a centralized leadership the team should recommend goals for the center, an
organizational structure, the university office that should oversee the center, the roles and responsibilities of the center and the physical or virtual structure of the center.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine the faculty and staff support for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University as well as existing levels of support for a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education.

**Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to determine the overall support of the university leadership for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University and to provide a recommended path forward based upon additional findings from the study.

**Implementation of Solution Processes and Considerations**

The Chancellor and senior leaders at the university are critical to the implementation of the proposed solution. The Chancellor consulting with his senior leaders should appoint an integrated campus wide team. The team should be formed to further define and specify East Carolina’s path forward as the leadership university. In addition, the full leadership team of Vice Chancellors, Deans, and Department Heads should be involved with the development of the vision and path forward to ensure full support from university leadership.

The team must be dedicated and given the time and resources to develop the vision and requirements. A dynamic transformational leader is essential for the success of the team and the overall effort. The team should be limited to a specified time period (recommended no more than 12 months) and should report progress periodically (at least quarterly) to university senior leadership (Chancellor and Vice Chancellors). The team
should first and foremost develop the definition what it means to be “the leadership university” (East Carolina University, 2014d). Second the team should define the current status of East Carolina as a leadership university or the leadership university. Third the team should begin defining the specifics and role of a centralized leadership center as published in the university’s strategic plan. In defining a centralized leadership the team should recommend goals for the center, an organizational structure, the university office that should oversee the center, the roles and responsibilities of the center and the physical or virtual structure of the center.

Roles and Responsibilities of Key Players in Implementation

East Carolina University’s senior leaders are critical to success. They must support and energize the endeavor for a successful solution. Without full support by the entire senior leadership team a synchronized effort will not be possible. In addition to senior leaders Department heads and mid-level leaders and managers must be committed to the development of a centralized leadership center. Deciding upon a structure and organizational alignment are also key elements as well determining the leader of the leadership center.

Leader’s Role in Implementing the Proposed Solution

The Chancellor and senior faculty leadership play a role critical in the success of a centralized leadership center. Chancellor Ballard developed the vision of East Carolina as the leadership university and he developed the strategic goal of a centralized leadership center. Continuing to develop and communicate the vision of the university and the specifics of the meaning of “the leadership university,” and a centralized leadership center are critical to success. Stakeholders will have competing interests and
desires requiring the Chancellor to make choices while keeping the overall good of the university in sight. Long established and well-funded programs may not want to share resources for fear of losing autonomy while less established and funded programs may expect help. Balancing competing interests and helping all leadership programs improve should be the goal.

**Evaluation and Timeline for Implementation and Assessment**

As detailed in chapter four the first step for implementation recommended was the establishment of a committee to develop the details of a centralized leadership center and starting with the committee completed in 2009 which established an institutional framework for leadership education at East Carolina University (Holston, 2011). Further it was recommended the committee be empowered to develop the specifics of a leadership center framework. The committee must report periodically to senior leadership and at a minimum quarterly. An initial implementation plan with goals and timelines should be completed and submitted for approval to senior leadership in no more than twelve months. While the plan should be comprehensive the leadership center can be implemented in a multiple step, multi-year approach with modifications, as needed using an annual assessment process. In other words, each year the University should assess the progress of leadership endeavors to include the establishment of a centralized leadership center.

Measures of success should include tools such as the surveys and interviews used in this study. Senior leaders and department heads should in the future demonstrate a better and clearer understanding of the meaning of “the leadership university,” and a better understanding of East Carolina’s success in its leadership goals. Annual
assessments should provide progress checks and major reviews of progress as well should be accomplished with the review of university strategic plans every five years.

**Convincing Others to Support the Proposed Solution**

As expressed throughout Chapter Four and Chapter Five implementation of centralized leadership center must be done with the support of senior leadership and mid-level leadership throughout the university. As demonstrated in the findings the need to provide a central direction and clear vision of leadership programs for East Carolina appeared evident. Significant support for leadership programs and a centralized leadership center appeared clear but the need for specific direction also appeared clear. If a clear path was provided starting with a university wide committee appropriately empowered support would follow.

**Critical Pieces Needed for Implementation and Assessment**

Certainly, some need for funds and personnel are required for implementation of a centralized leadership center. However, just as a phased approach should be used for a leadership center, a phased approach for funds and personnel is warranted. Establishment of the development committee would require a redirection of some personnel and resources but should not require significant disruptions. Current faculty and facilities are adequate although some reprioritization may need to occur. Critical to the appointment process is designation of a dedicated leader to oversee the developmental effort. The individual could be a current leader at the university or someone from outside.

**Internal and External Implications for the Organization**

As discussed in Chapter Four a number of internal and external implications must be considered in establishing a centralized leadership center. There were many identified
stakeholders in the disparate leadership programs throughout the university. A small number of the programs tended to be mature and well established while others were limited and in their infancy. In addition the programs in general focused on their respective single discipline. Moving to a more centralized approach was clearly viewed as having potential negatives by some university senior leaders and department heads. Internal stakeholders were critical in building excellent leadership programs and they must be ensured their voices will be heard and they will not lose their autonomy.

External forces also present potential issues. Chapter two reviewed the numerous struggles faced by East Carolina over the years in obtaining university status and approval of the Medical School. While East Carolina University established itself as a national research university and worthy of increased state support potential opponents remain in a university system that has seen significant reductions in funding by the North Carolina legislature and those may battle any increased funding or a centralized leadership center at East Carolina (Mitchell M., Palacios V., & Leachman, M., 2014). With limited funds other competing universities, their leaders and constituents, may see funding as a zero sum game and resist any increases in programs and funding for East Carolina.

**Implications and Considerations for Leaders Facing Implementation of Proposed Solution**

University senior leadership at East Carolina should be most concerned about buy-in from leadership throughout the university. Senior leaders will need to speed personal capital in motivating and moving forward as the leadership university and a centralized leadership center. Deans and Department heads with well-established
leadership programs will be reluctant to give up organizational and personal autonomy. These leaders will need to be personally assured that the plan is not to limit autonomous but to increase the quality and depth of leadership programs throughout the university. In addition senior leaders will need to be out front and transparent in their decisions affecting leadership programs and centralized leadership center. Leaders throughout the university need to be empowered and to recognize that they are part of the program and solution. Open and constant communication to leaders and faculty is the best means to ensure buy-in and support.

**Evaluation Cycle (or Evaluation Cycle Outcome If Implemented)**

As described earlier a designated team should further define the vision and goals of a centralized leadership center. An assessment of the team’s progress should be quarterly with a full assessment at the one the end of one year. Additional annual assessments should be conducted to determine the progress and to reassess the goals of a centralized leadership center. Longer term the progress of the centralized leadership center and the progress of East Carolina University’s leadership journey should be evaluated with the same frequency as the university master plan.

**Implications for Action/Recommendations for Further Research**

This Dissertation in Practice demonstrated significant support for a centralized leadership center and demonstrated the lack of definition for a centralized center despite the fact a leadership is a strategic goal. Additional research to provide definition for goals, organizational structure, physical requirements and personnel requirements is ripe for further research. In addition, an area that was addressed in this study was the prevalence or lack of prevalence of leadership research at East Carolina University. In
order to be the leadership university in all facets, leadership research conducted at East Carolina needs to be addressed and should at a minimum be catalogued in a central repository.

In addition to internal research at East Carolina it is hoped that other university scholars might be motivated to study centralized leadership centers at their respective institutions. As shown in the literature review there are many universities with leadership centers but few if any that embody a university wide, all-encompassing leadership center that uses a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education. Further study of the concept could be of benefit.

Summary

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to determine the need for and potential benefits of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected in succession. In this study, quantitative methods determined there was significant support for a centralized leadership center and qualitative interviews further refined the specifics of support and produced overall findings and recommendations. The study recommended appointment of a committee to further define the vision and goals for a centralized leadership center and to report back to senior university leadership on a quarterly basis with a major review at the conclusion of one year. Establishment of a centralized leadership center with detailed goals and a solid path forward will better position East Carolina University in its journey to become the leadership university.
Epilogue

From start to finish the dissertation process was enlightening, invigorating, frustrating and rewarding. The initial process was probably the most difficult in developing a topic. A first attempt centered on comparing and contrasting the effect of a change in senior leadership at the Missile Defense Agency. Unfortunately the Agency refused to release survey data that would have been critical to the success of the project. While other means were available to gather data and to obtain Agency data I elected not to fight the bureaucracy and spend far too much time on non-research activity.

Fortunately, the Creighton team was helpful in moving to what would become my topic. Dr. Peggy Hawkins encouraged me to do my practicum in an area that I might be able to use in my eventual dissertation. As a result I contacted Dr. Steve Duncan at my undergraduate alma mater and completed some research on military programs at East Carolina University and around the nation. Discussions with Dr. Duncan evolved into a potential dissertation topic involving leadership education and potential for a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University. It was a natural progression and tied my passion for my undergraduate alma mater with my experience and study of leadership.

Dr. James Martin, as advisor, was very helpful in helping to frame the research in the dissertation-associated classes. The entire structure of the Creighton program was very helpful in defining and developing the dissertation proposal. At times the process appeared repetitive but the intent and the time to reflect and refine the products was instrumental in success.

From a technical standpoint my development of the proposal would have been better had I put more thought and time into the questions on the quantitative survey and how they would relate to the hypotheses. The same was somewhat true of the qualitative interview questions but face-to-face interviews allowed for clarification. A second technical issue that provided some difficulty was the requirement to deal with two
Institutional Review Boards (Creighton and East Carolina University). While both were professional and helpful differences in process, procedures and interpretations proved challenging at times.

Research discovery added to the learning process. Throughout the research were enlightening moments that proved what I had thought or accepted was wrong or at least partially wrong. Part of the learning process I finally recognized these moments as part of the learning process and the main reason we do research. As part of my enlightenment was the realization that far more research could be done and in some areas should be done on the topic of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University.

Finally, though the journey was frustrating and trying at times the rewards of discovery and the development of many relationships made the journey well worth the effort.
References


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https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/cldr/about

Dear ECU Faculty or Staff Member,

I am a Doctoral student at Creighton University and a graduate of East Carolina working on a research project to determine the feasibility of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University (ECU). As a faculty or staff member at ECU, you can provide valuable insight into the potential support for a centralized leadership center.

The survey is only 13 questions and can easily be completed in less than 10 minutes. Your responses to the survey are completely voluntary and will remain confidential. Results will only be available to myself, the ECU survey center researcher (Mandee Lancaster, FOUSHEES@ecu.edu) the Dissertation Committee Chair (Dr. John Hudson of Creighton University, JohnHudson@creighton.edu) and the ECU Committee Member (Dr. Steve Duncan, DuncanS@ecu.edu). There is no compensation associated with the survey. However, your insight will be important to the research findings and recommendations.

The study is completely voluntary. Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,

J. Worth Carter
APPENDIX B

Quantitative Survey

The following survey is intended to measure the potential support for a Centralized Leadership Center at East Carolina University. A Centralized Leadership could take many forms but in general would provide overarching guidance for leadership programs to include core leadership curricula, a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education and a sharing of resources and lessons learned among schools and colleges.

1. What is your age?
   a. 25-35    b. 36-45    c. 46-55    d. Over 55

2. What is your gender?
   a. Female    b. Male

3. How long have you been a full time employee of East Carolina University?
   a. less than 5 years  b. 5-10 years  c. 10-20 years
      d. more than 20 years

4. East Carolina is fulfilling its goal as a leadership university.

5. Leadership education has many similarities among disciplines and career areas.

6. Leadership education is best taught using a multidisciplinary approach.

7. East Carolina University has many separate leadership programs.
8. A core leadership curricula would benefit leadership education at East Carolina University.

9. Common leadership themes and principles exist in leadership education and are common in most disciplines.

10. A Centralized Leadership Center would promote a more effective and efficient use of resources supporting leadership education.

11. A Centralized Leadership Center would benefit leadership education at East Carolina University.

12. Organizations and educational institutions often provide a set of common leadership principles and values. As an example the below values are derived from George Mason’s Committee on Leadership (Mason Leads, 2014). Are the below principles and values applicable at ECU (mark all that apply).
    a. Respect  b. Making a Difference  c. Integrity  d. Authenticity  
    e. Courage  f. Service  g. Humility  h. Wisdom

13. Are there any additional leadership principles and values not mentioned in the previous question? a. Yes b. no (If yes, then go to 13a)
13a. Please list the additional principles and values:

________________________
APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol for Qualitative Research

No names will be recorded. All interviewees are Deans or Vice Chancellors at East Carolina University.

1. One of East Carolina University’s strategic goals is to be a leadership university. Do you think ECU is fulfilling that goal and if so how is the university fulfilling the goal? If you do not think the university is fulfilling its goal, what are the problems or issues?

2. Do you prefer a multidisciplinary approach to leadership education or a single discipline approach?

3. Does East Carolina University have schools or colleges that use a multidisciplinary approach in leadership education?

4. Would East Carolina University (schools and colleges) benefit from a more centralized approach to leadership education? Why or why not?

5. If East Carolina University would benefit from a more centralized approach to leadership education what type of organizational structure would you envision for the center?
APPENDIX D

Invitation Letter for Interviews

J. Worth Carter
496 Hopewell Road
Danville, AL
35619

ECU Dean or Vice Chancellor,

I am a Doctoral student at Creighton University and a graduate of East Carolina working on a research project to determine the feasibility of a centralized leadership center at East Carolina University (ECU). As a faculty or staff member at ECU, you can provide valuable insight into the potential support for a centralized leadership center.

The interview can be completed in approximately 30 minutes. Your responses to the survey will remain confidential. Results will only be available to myself, the ECU survey center research team (Mandee Lancaster, FOUSHEES@ecu.edu) the Dissertation Committee Chair (Dr. John Hudson of Creighton University, JohnHudson@creighton.edu) and the ECU Committee Member (Dr. Steve Duncan, DuncanS@ecu.edu). There is no compensation associated with the survey. However, your insight will be important to the research findings and recommendations.

The study is completely voluntary. Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,

J. Worth Carter