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A doctorate is increasingly a credential for community college leaders, yet much remains unknown about the structure of doctoral programs and links between course requirements and practitioner needs. Programs awarding an Ed.D. more often focus on skill oriented coursework, whereas Ph.D. programs have greater emphasis on research. This study creates a portrait of program structure that showcases a need to address how curriculum contributes to leadership development and the acquisition of key competencies

Introduction

A key requirement for those seeking chief executive roles is a doctorate (McFarlin, Crittenden, & Ebbers, 1999; Townsend & Wiese, 1991); however, little is known about the structure of programs and links between what current and future leaders need to know. Community colleges are facing a leadership crisis with a projected wave of impending retirements (Shults, 2001; Weisman & Vaughan, 2007); thus, some of those in the pipeline for high-level positions are working toward or already possess an advanced degree. With many future leaders pursuing the doctoral degree as their "ticket" to advancement, it is important to know if the education they are receiving is indeed meeting the needs of what campuses require and the leadership literature says is needed for future leaders (AACC, 2005; Ottenritter, 2004; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin,

2006). Therefore, the research reported here sought to uncover how doctoral programs approach educating some of the potential community college leaders of tomorrow.

The terminal degree most commonly held by community college presidents is in education, with a full 73% of community college leaders holding a doctorate in education (ACE, 2007) as opposed to only 7.1% of doctoral-granting institutional presidents with an education degree. By comparison, sitting community college presidents participate in formal leadership development programming to a lesser degree. Hull and Keim (2007) found that the Chair's Academy had the highest levels of participation by current presidents at 23.8%, with the American Association of Community College (AACC) training following at 19.9%, and the training offered by the League for Innovation in the Community College at 14%. However, the reported percentages of training may be skewed since individuals may have participated in more than one form of training. The relative reliance on degree programs versus leadership training sessions for professional development by sitting presidents underscores the need to understand how these programs are preparing community college leaders.

The present study was undertaken because attention to preparation of future community college leaders is needed. With some 1764 public and private two-year colleges in the country (Hardy & Katsinas, 2007), the impending turnover in leadership is staggering as 44% of current presidents are over 61 years old (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). The changing of the guard in community college leadership prompted the AACC to form their Leading Forward initiative (Ottenritter, 2004). Leading Forward (AACC, 2005) established a set of six competencies to guide leaders and their institutions in developing skills required to successfully lead community colleges in the future. The six competencies include: community college advocacy, collaboration, communication, resource management, organizational strategies, and professionalism. Despite identification of these leadership skills, it remains unknown how many are indeed covered in doctoral programs.

Given the current demands in community colleges for prepared leaders, it is critical to know more about how leadership training occurs within graduate programs. Future leaders require skills and abilities to operate in an increasingly complex system. The questions at the heart of this study ask what is the structure and curricu-

lum of higher education doctoral programs and, specifically, how is learning about leadership embedded in these programs? Following is a review of the literature used to frame the study, a review of the methods for data collection, and a summary of the research findings. Finally, a discussion presents the findings and the implications for practice of the outcomes of the research.

Review of literature

Concepts of leadership have evolved over time (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989), with coursework on leadership shifting to reflect the changes. Current research posits a revolution in research on leadership (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). Specifically, issues of ethics, empowerment, collaboration, globalization, entrepreneurialism, and accountability are shaping how leaders must lead. The competencies argued for by the AACC (2005) mirror these topics as areas of critical need for community college leaders. To put the findings on higher education programs in context, it is necessary to examine the literature on leadership preparation programs and doctoral programs in particular.

Leadership Preparation Programs

Research on community college leadership programs found sitting leaders stating a preference for the educational leadership doctoral degree over other degrees (Brown, Martinez, & Daniel, 2002), but noted that graduates felt the current structure of doctoral programs did not meet their needs. The needs of the practitioner student differ from those of graduate students seeking a doctorate for the purposes of becoming a faculty member or researcher. Importantly, the AACC competencies (2005) and the revolutionary leadership practices outlined by Kezar et al. (2006) require a closer examination of doctoral program outcomes since the new models of leadership point to the need for adaptable leadership in more culturally complex colleges (Eddy, 2008).

Changes in curriculum are underway as evidenced by alterations to dissertations in Ed.D. doctoral programs that are practitioner oriented and accomplished via team design (Archer, 2005; Marsh, Feldon, Gallagher, Hagedorn, & Harper, 2004) and in course content, which is thematic and based on case-study analysis (Orr, 2006). Researchers at the Carnegie Foundation (Shulman, Golde, Bueschel, & Garabedian, 2006) argue that reform is possible and suggest

the development of a distinctive practice-oriented doctorate, which they tentatively title the Professional Practice Doctorate (P.P.D.).

Leadership preparation also occurs via certificate programs or through professional development programming, which often is associated with professional organizations such as the League of Innovation leadership institute, presidents' academies, and programs sponsored by national associations and organizations (Eddy, 2008). As noted, however, not many sitting leaders have taken advantage of these development opportunities and thus are beyond the purview of the research reported here. Clearly, evidence underscores that leadership development is needed to fill pending openings given retirements. The dilemma is that little is known about how doctoral programs in higher education administration serve to support the type of leadership development demanded.

Doctoral education

There has been a steady increase in the number of doctoral degrees awarded over the past 20 years (NCES, 2007). Linked to the demand is the current trend toward "credentialism" (Townsend, 2002). Professionals see the degree as a way to distinguish themselves and rise above others in competition for top-level leadership positions.

While there is no conclusive evidence that an Ed.D. or Ph.D. improves performance in the field of practice, there is evidence that holding such a degree is useful in acquiring administrative positions at institutions of higher education, particularly at executive levels within community colleges (Townsend).

Haworth (1996) identified four trends in doctoral programs at the turn of the 21st century. These included changes in "the demographic composition of doctoral recipients, the proliferation of doctoral-granting institutions and programs, increasing "professionalization" in doctoral study, and prolonged time-to-degree" (p. 386). The changes all target the population of community college leaders currently seeking advanced degrees since these students are more often adult learners seeking practitioner oriented programs with flexible scheduling. Thus, while we know there is increased demand for doctorates, we still know relatively little about how they operate and how their programs link to needs in the profession.

Complicating investigation into doctoral education is the ever persistent question about the Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) versus the Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.). The field-based Ed.D. was initially designed to focus on issues

of practice (Townsend, 2002) and is likely to be the only educational doctoral degree awarded at comprehensive universities, whereas research universities more often offer the Ph.D. (Osguthorpe & Wong, 1993). But the increase in Ed.D. programs has also led to the blurring of the lines between the two degrees (Toma, 2002). The commonly understood distinction is that the Ph.D. is theory-driven, research-oriented, and prepares one for scholarly work, while the Ed.D. prepares students for the professional practice of educational leadership. The present research investigated how the degree offerings differed in course content and credit requirements.

Doctoral education is under pressure to reform to become more accountable to students (Shulman et al., 2006), but the question remains in what ways? The paucity of research on doctoral programs that target community college leadership preparation underscores the need to know more details about programming offerings and course selections. The current project was designed to fill this gap in knowledge.

Project summary

The primary source of data collection for the study was a survey instrument sent to the coordinators of higher education administration programs in the United States. The mailing list for the survey was compiled from the Association for the Study of Higher Education directory of higher education programs (http://www.ashe.ws/ashedir/statedir.htm). An initial review of the 2003 ASHE directory identified 154 higher education programs in the United States. Of the initial list, 149 received the survey due to elimination of duplicate programs or programs no longer in existence. Surveys were mailed directly to identified coordinators of programs, and if no coordinator was listed, the survey was addressed generally to "Program Director." The final return rate for the survey was 44%.

The survey included four major areas: Program Background; Student Demographics; Programming Descriptions; and Leadership Preparation. Additionally, two short response questions asked for descriptions of how leadership preparation was included in graduate programming and what external issues were influencing program changes.

Data supplied by respondents was analyzed using a chi-square statistic to identify significant differences between respondents versus non-respondents and the type of institution. The bivariate tabular analysis is presented in Table 1. There was no significant statistical difference between the two groups.

Table 1. Type of institution by respondent status

Responses	Doctoral Research Extensive	Doctoral Research Intensive	Master of Arts	Total Sample
Respondents (N)	47	13	5	65
Non-respondents (N)	54	22	8	84

Note. Chi square statistic significant X^2 (2, N = 149) = 1.09, p <.581

Survey data was coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze differences between degree levels, specialization, and curricular offerings.

Findings

The findings are presented in three main areas. The first section highlights the structure of higher education programs. The second finding from the study compares the Ed.D. requirements to those of the Ph.D. Finally, a review shows how leadership preparation is embedded in the degree programs.

Program structure

The analysis of program structure reviewed specializations within programs, the average number of credits required by degree level — including the ratio of the credits between core, concentration, cognate, and thesis credits — and the types of classes found most often by degree level.

Degree format

The program structure and courses often depended on the position of the degree as a stand-alone option or as a sub-section of an overarching degree. The results showed a predictable difference by degree level of credits required to receive each degree. Additionally, the areas of specialization offered at each degree level differed. Community college leadership was found most often as a specialization in Ed.D. degree options. By far, the most common area of specialization across all degree levels was higher education administration.

Coordinators of programs also were asked about the use of cohort models in their various degree offerings. Specifically, they were asked how often their core classes were offered in a cohort format and how often their entire program was delivered to a cohort. Detailed results are presented in Table 2.

Fifty-five percent of master's-level programs offered some or all programs in a cohort fashion. The Specialist in Education (Ed.S.) degree option employed cohorts

Table 2. Use of cohorts by degree level

Degree	Cohort-Core	Cohort-Program
Master's	31% (N=36)	24% (N=41)
Ed.S.	6% (N=18)	6% (N=17)
Ed.D.	26% (N=27)	38% (N=34)
Ph.D.	28% (N=36)	12% (N=33)

to the least extent, offering some or all of their programs in cohorts only 12% of the time. The Ed.D. degree, on the other hand, offered cohort options the most of all degree levels, offering the entire program via cohorts 38% of the time compared to the Ph.D. option which used cohorts for programs only 12% of the time.

Specialization

Commonly, higher education programs are situated in combination with K-12-based administration programs. Likewise, student affairs programming often is linked to counseling units. Survey respondents indicated that 41% of their programs were structured as separate degree programs. Another 51%, however, were concentrations or specializations of another degree. Often, the overarching degree program was educational administration, with higher education or student affairs administration as one of several areas of specialization.

Respondents were asked to indicate from the following list the areas of specializations in their degrees:

- higher education administration
- adult and continuing education
- community college leadership
- curriculum and teaching
- student affairs administration
- educational leadership
- general leadership
- policy analysis/finance.

Table 3 provides details of each area of specialization by degree level. In the master's programs, the specializations offered most frequently were higher education administration (65%), student affairs administration (50%), and curriculum and teaching (20%). Of the specialization options provided, only the specialization of community college leadership (9%) was below 10% for program offerings at the master's level. The greatest diversity in programming

Table 3. Degrees offered within areas of specialization

Specialization	Master of Arts	Educational Specialist	Doctorate of Education	Doctor of Philosophy
Higher Education Admin	65%	11%	46%	66%
Adult & Continuing Ed.	14%	3%	12%	6%
Community College Lead.	9%	2%	15%	9%
Curriculum & Teaching	20%	3%	9%	9%
Student Affairs Admin.	50%	2%	9%	20%
Educational Leadership	19%	17%	23%	26%
General Administration	19%	3%	9%	14%
Policy Analysis/Finance	15%	3%	12%	17%
Note. Chi square statistic significant at p = 0.002; N=65				

options was found at the master's level.

Differences in concentration areas for the Ed.D. and Ph.D. degree programs highlight how the former targets community college leadership more so than the latter. Within the Ed.D. degree programs, higher education (46%) and educational leadership (23%) were the two options most frequently available. Also noteworthy is that both adult and continuing education (12%) and community college leadership (15%) were more available—almost twice as often— as areas of specialization within the Ed.D. relative to the Ph.D. The focus on adult and continuing education and community college leadership within the Ed.D. degree underscores a program focus on practical application that benefits the two-year college administrator. In summary, student affairs concentrations are found most often at the master's level, but were not the most popular degree specialization overall. Higher education administration specializations were the most frequently offered option for the master's level, the Ed.D., and the Ph.D. The Ed.D. degree offered the greatest diversity with respect to specialization compared to the Ph.D., including the highest frequency for community college leadership degree availability.

Levels/Credits

Within the program structure, survey respondents stated the total number of credits required in each degree and indicated the breakdown of the credits. The array of credits was distributed differently across the areas of core classes, concentration classes, cognate classes, and thesis credits for each degree level. The distribution of credits for the Ed.D. and the

Table 4. Mean number of credits and standard deviations by degree level for program areas

Program Structure Areas	Master's	Ed.S.	Ed.D.	Ph.D.
Total Degree	35.63* (N=41) (8.662)	42.36** (N=11) (20.485)	68.88 (N=26) (16.705)	72.71 (N=34) (14.768)
Core	16.77 (N=39) (9.675)	17.38 (N=8) (6.457)	18.56 (N=27) (10.286)	20.11 (N=36) (11.333)
Concentration	15.72 (N=23) (6.400)	15.50 (N=6) (6.950)	20.45 (N=22) (10.586)	20.38 (N=32) (9.065)
Cognate	7.48** (N=21) (5.259)	14.57 (N=7) (8.979)	14.10 (N=21) (5.804)	15.74 (N=31) (7.908)
Thesis	3.00*** (N=20) (2.956)	4.75**** (N=4) (5.123)	14.31 (N=26) (7.796)	14.39 (N=36) (8.784)

Independent two-tailed t-test at the noted confidence intervals:

* p<.001 MA are significantly different from the Ed.D. [t(65)=10.7047] and Ph.D.[t(73)=13.525]

** p<.001 Ed.S. are significantly different from the Ed.D. [t(35)=4.1275] and Ph.D.[t(43)=5.3762]

** p<.02 MA is significantly different from Ed.S. [t(26)=2.5725], Ed.D. [t(40)=3.8733], and Ph.D. [t(50)=4.1929]

*** p<.001MA is significantly different than Ed.D. [t(44)=6.144] and Ph.D. [t(54)=5.6055]

**** p<.05 Ed.S. is significantly different than Ed.D. [t(38)=2.1387] and Ph.D. [t(28)=2.356]

Ph.D. were markedly similar. An independent two-tailed t-test was conducted to test for significant differences in credit distributions among the degree levels and for the degree categories. Table 4 presents additional details.

Course options

Program coordinators were asked to indicate, from a list of 13 course topics, which courses were required in their core classes and which were general program offerings. The master's level required more courses in the core, reinforcing the data above regarding a more prescriptive degree structure. Ed.D. programs required fewer mandated courses for their core courses, with only four of the topical areas noted by more than 50% of the respondents. However, the level of agreement for the courses included was higher as represent-

Table 5. Topics required in core and optional courses by degree level

Course Topic	M.S.		Ed.D.		Ph.D.	
	Core	Option	Core	Option	Core	Option
Admin. & org.	83%	10%	81%	11%	60%	26%
Leadership	67%	31%	70%	27%	40%	51%
Student development	60%	39%	32%	68%	37%	63%
Finance	34%	66%	47%	53%	41%	54%
Law	47%	51%	46%	56%	33%	64%
Teach & learn	21%	79%	37%	63%	7%	85%
Policy	25%	75%	45%	52%	35%	56%
History of higher ed.	71%	24%	82%	15%	63%	34%
Diversity	39%	61%	24%	76%	18%	75%
Comm. college	7%	94%	39%	62%	26%	74%
Org. change	57%	33%	56%	39%	35%	47%
Internship	65%	32%	48%	48%	28%	69%
Technology	29%	71%	40%	60%	28%	72%

ed by higher frequencies. Fewer courses were required in the Ph.D. degree core. A summary is presented in Table 5.

Doctorate of Education degree programs are more prescriptive than Ph.D. degree programs. Traditionally, Ph.D. programs were individually driven by professor- and student-research interests in terms of the type and choice of courses selected. The Ed.D. degree historically required more coursework that focused on skills determined to be important for practitioners.

Of note, the history of higher education is among the most required courses across all degree levels, followed by administration and organizational theory. Thus, the content and objectives of these courses are critical because the greatest numbers of higher education administration students are exposed to them. How leadership skills are developed in these courses takes on heightened importance.

Ed.D. versus Ph.D.

Recent rhetoric regarding the value of an Ed.D. versus a Ph.D. (Shulman et al., 2006; Toma, 2002; Townsend, 2002) provided context for analyzing the differences in these two degree options. The findings from the current research point out only minor differences between Ed.D. and Ph.D. degree structures, making the distinction between the degrees arguably insignificant. Thus, the idea that the

Ed.D. is the practitioner degree and the Ph.D. is the degree for researchers no longer holds true based on the distribution of program credits found in this survey data. What does remain, however, is student perception of the value of each degree program.

On average, four additional credits are required in a Ph.D. degree option than in an Ed.D. degree option. Historically, the credits were dedicated to additional research. Interestingly, there was no difference, however, in the average number of credits required for the ultimate research project of the dissertation (Ed.D. mean 14.31; Ph.D. mean 14.39). What cannot be determined within this analysis are the requirements of the dissertation for each degree option. Current calls for doctoral reform cite instances of poor-quality research projects as one reason for change (Marsh et al., 2004). Moreover, Levine's (2005) call for a practitioner's degree would put increased emphasis on a practical application for the final project versus a more highly structured research study.

A difference in program delivery is evident for the two degree options. The Ed.D. is more likely than the Ph.D. to be delivered to cohorts. Thirty-eight percent of the Ed.D. programs surveyed offered the entire program to cohorts compared to only 12% of Ph.D. programs, suggesting that students who are practitioners prefer the cohort option as a more convenient format. Often, cohort programs are offered in alternative delivery options on weekends or in condensed formats (McPhail, 2000; McPhail, Robinson, & Scott, 2008). Another major difference between the two degree offerings is found in required course content. The Ed.D. programs require more courses within their core than do the Ph.D. programs. The Ph.D. programs provide more choices to students to pursue different avenues of individual interest compared to the more prepackaged Ed.D. programs.

Leadership preparation

Program directors were provided a list of 15 options for helping students learn about leadership and practice their leadership development. The choices ranged from skill-based practices, such as ones relating to budgeting and finance, to reflective practices that allow leaders to question their underlying assumptions in decision-making. The options also included classroom learning techniques using case studies and participation in internships. Coordinators were asked to indicate the level at which they currently offer the program learning opportunity and to indicate the level to which they felt the practice was important. Rank

Table 6. Ratings on the extent of leadership practices offered and their importance

Program Inclusion	Currently Offering Mean (N) (SD)	Important to Offer Mean (N) (SD)
Leadership and org theory	3.48 (63) (.759)	3.57 (60) (.722)
Leader and decision-making	3.11 (63) (1.002)	3.30 (60) (.962)
Reflective Practices	3.03 (63) (1.135)	3.13 (60) (1.096)
Role of budget and finance	2.92 (62) (.929)	3.23 (60) (.722)
Leadership Theory in other courses	2.90 (63) (1.043)	3.12 (60) (.922)
Required Leadership Class	2.81 (63) (1.378)	3.05 (60) (1.383)
Case study to explore leadership	2.71 (63) (1.023)	3.00 (60) (.902)
Internship focus on leadership	2.68 (63) (1.280)	2.78 (59) (1.260)
Exploration of new leadership concepts	2.62 (63) (1.156)	2.78 (60) (1.106)
Leader and personnel practices	2.52 (63) (.965)	2.70 (60) (.997)
Financial support for students to conduct research at conf	2.41 (63) (1.102)	3.12 (60) (.922)
Joint research with students on leadership	2.22 (63) (.958)	3.23 (60) (.722)
Grad student leadership development	2.03 (62) (1.130)	2.68 (59) (1.058)
Leadership required in dissertations	1.72 (61) (1.035)	1.95 (59) (1.074)
Coordination with outside leadership institutes	1.39 (62) (.964)	1.73 (60) (1.133)
Other	1.50 (4) (1.732)	1.67 (3) (2.082)

Note. Ratings were made on 4-point scales (0=not sure, 1 = not at all, 4 = to a great extent).

ordering selection options for survey respondents ranged from 1, "not at all," to 4, "to a great extent." Respondents consistently rated the learning opportunities higher as important to offer than the extent to which they were actually offered. Thus, while program coordinators thought they should be offering a practice, they were not doing so to the level they thought important. Table 6 presents additional information.

In reviewing the 15 leadership practices in Table 6, respondents felt that it is "moderately" to "greatly" important to employ nine of the practices for honing leadership skills. The top four practices viewed as critical by the respondents included leadership and organizational theory (M=3.57, SD=.722), leadership and decision making (M=3.30, SD=.962), the role of budget and finance (M=3.23, SD=.722), and joint research between faculty members and students (M=3.23, SD=.722). Other options viewed as important by the respondents included reflective practices (M=3.13, SD=1.096), leadership theory embedded in other courses (M=3.12, SD=.922), required leadership class (M=3.05, SD=1.383), and the use of case studies to learn about leadership (M=3.00, SD=.902). Even though nine areas were noted as important learning opportunities for students regarding leadership,

only three of the areas were typically offered in degree programs, pointing to a disconnect in programming between what program directors feel is important to offer and what is actually offered in current programs.

The leadership skill areas currently offered to a "moderate extent" or a "great extent" include leadership and organizational theory, leadership and decision-making, and reflective practices. Given that the most common course required in both Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs is administration and organizational theory, it can be inferred that the top leadership skills noted by program directors as currently offered are covered in this single class. Such a conclusion raises several questions regarding the depth of coverage for each skill area and the opportunity for practice of the skill by students. Further research can determine to what extent the skill areas are reinforced in other elective course work versus the required core class.

Significantly, there were some areas identified by higher education coordinators as not offered at all or only to a slight extent. One area offered only slightly was graduate student leadership development (M=2.03, SD=1.113). Despite the focus of degrees on leadership development, the means of developing students as leaders was

not evident with respect to the graduate student role. A specific focus on leadership was not required for dissertations (M=1.72, SD=1.035), nor was there a connection between university graduate programs and leadership institutes (M=1.39, SD=.964).

Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to learn more about the structure and focus of higher education programs, in particular at the doctoral level, and to see how learning about leadership was embedded in the programs. The findings highlight a great deal of flexibility in the ways programs operate. Typically, master's level programs showed the greatest proportion of required courses and also the greatest number of areas of specialization. The master's degree is the first professional programming that graduate students encounter and thus, the heavy reliance on content rich courses—administration and organizational theory, leadership, history, student development theory, organizational change, and law. They provide a foundation and perspective for the newly minted professionals. The findings underscore that the educational specialist degree is not commonly used by higher education administrators. But since many degree programs are offered in departments that also house

with K-12 programs, some of the elective courses higher education students take may also be used for the Ed.S. degree.

The remaining discussion will focus on the Ed.D. and Ph.D. programming, the preparation for the terminal degrees most community college leaders seek or have. The findings provide a portrait of both degrees, which highlights only nominal differences between the two degrees. The number of credits required and the way the programs are structured supports previous claims of minimal distinction between the degree programs (Osguthorpe & Wong, 1993; Toma, 2002). Further investigation, however, highlights the vestiges of the divide between a practitioner's degree and a research-oriented degree. The distribution of the coursework points to fewer options of curricular choice in the Ed.D. program compared to the Ph.D. program, but research requirements are similar in both. What remains unknown are the expectations of the research sequence and the structure of the final capstone projects. As noted, some programs structure an Ed.D. dissertation that focus on practical application in which a group of students work on an area of common interest (Marsh et al., 2004). That type of final product looks markedly different from a traditional research disser-

tation. Following the practitioner model, community college leaders could focus their dissertation research on topics of importance to their institutions or on competency areas that they want to build or expand.

Directors of higher education programs indicated that they do not currently require a leadership class, making the administrative and organizational theory courses the only exposure students receive to leadership theory. Likewise, directors of programs noted an array of leadership practices which are important to develop, but are not currently offered. Taken together, several conclusions might be drawn. First, learning about leadership and its associated competencies is grounded in the core organizational theory class and reinforced as appropriate throughout the remainder of the program courses, making a separate course unnecessary. Second, survey respondents may have made certain assumptions about the definitions of "new" leadership concepts, concluding that they were already included as a form of regular updates to current courses. Finally, the findings showcase a number of interest areas covered in doctoral programs, with leadership representing only one area. As such, higher education programs may not see as their prime goal the training of future leaders.

In further comparison between curricular requirements in Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs, the findings show that Ed.D. programs have a larger range of classes identified as critical to core offerings. Several of the classes are skills-based, such as finance and law, suggesting the inclination toward practice despite the minimal structural differences with Ph.D. programs. Another difference noted is the inclusion of an internship requirement in the Ed.D. program. Given the historical practitioner orientation of the degree, the connections with the field via the internship might be a visible manifestation of links to practice. Also, with many Ed.D. programs found in regional universities (McLaughlin & Moore, 1991), it is likely that the higher education administration programs are coupled with K-12 programming with several abiding by the accreditation standards of National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which requires an internship for each degree level.

Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006) address the revolution of research on leadership and point to the need for leaders to be entrepreneurial, to think globally, to collaborate, and to address issues of accountability. It is not evident in the findings that these broad areas are covered, which leaves a significant gap in

leader preparation. Doctoral curriculum has not overtly changed to include competencies identified as being important to new leaders. Further, the blurring of the lines between the Ed.D. and the Ph.D. masks the ways in which the degrees might be used to develop leaders for community colleges.

Conclusion

Higher education doctoral programs are being used by community college administrators as a way of obtaining the credential needed to advance on the career path to upper administration. Calls for reform of doctoral programs have been a constant refrain for some time. What differs in the current wave of change efforts is a confluence of elements, including decreasing funding for higher education, increasingly complex organizational structures, a myriad of diverse changes in student demographics, the influx of technology, and new expectations for leadership. The large percentage of leader turnover anticipated at community colleges makes it critical to consider the content and format of program outcomes of doctoral programs. Now is the time for substantive reform.

The present study created a portrait of doctoral programs in higher education which suggests that concepts of leadership are

reviewed in only one required course, Administration and Organization Theory. Programs for the Ed.D. have expanded core offerings compared to the Ph.D. that focus on specific skill sets for the practitioner leader (i.e., finance, law, policy), but fail to provide in their core offerings support for thinking about newer paradigms guiding higher education leadership. Higher education executives are faced with increasingly complex financial and legal matters—including the need to be more entrepreneurial, reacting to far-ranging political and social issues, and other multifaceted academic and organizational matters requiring strong and confident leadership, initiative, and influence with multiple constituencies. Thus, leaders require opportunities to learn about such critical areas within the larger global context using systems thinking during their doctoral education. No attempts at these goals are obvious in the current doctoral structures.

Potential students often pick their graduate programs given convenience factors, especially those seeking an advanced degree while still maintaining a full-time position. The situation may make it more likely that students are pursuing degrees at regional comprehensive institutions, those most likely to be offering the Ed.D. versus the Ph.D. Hiring boards may

not make a distinction between the two doctorates, however, the Ph.D. is often thought of as more prestigious (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). The present research suggests that coursework, research, and doctoral student leadership development are more vital than degree titles. More important is the knowledge of how to run an institution, the development of skills to master complex situations and choices, and how to build relationships both internal and external to the institution.

As noted by Shulman et al. (2006), program reform needs to start at the grassroots level—namely within each program. Regional differences and context influence particular demands of programs. A four-prong approach to reforming individual doctoral programs in higher education is suggested. First, alumni of the program and current educational leaders in the state should be queried regarding the skills they find most critical to leading today's institutions. Second, a program review of current offerings and program structure needs to determine a benchmark for the institution. Key at this stage is involvement of leaders within the college, business partners, workforce agencies, students, and other constituents to provide a continual 360 degree scanning process. It is critical to make palpable distinctions between the

Ed.D. and Ph.D. Next, student learning outcomes need to be developed based on the set of defined outcomes desired. Finally, the creation of a revised curriculum needs to be built around the above findings.

Resistance to change in many forms, including healthy criticism, should be anticipated and managed. First, faculty members will feel an affinity and comfort level to courses historically offered, particularly since many of them were themselves enrolled in such courses as students. The lure of the Ph.D. degree often compels programs to offer the degree, when instead an Ed.D. degree that focuses on the needs of the practitioners may be a better option. There must be clear distinctions between the two degree offerings. The decision to offer only the Ed.D. may be met with resistance by faculty members who perceive the Ph.D. to be more prestigious and by higher education institutions seeking increased institutional rankings and prestige.

Finally, as departments consider reconfiguring their doctoral programs to best prepare students to become the leaders required for tomorrow, it is important to identify what is important to know. Future leaders will be heading organizations that are of growing consequence to society. Therefore, leaders need to know how to as-

semble teams, communicate with a variety of constituents, and build relationships. As heads of doctoral programs consider the changes to make to prepare and effectively develop future leaders, they must be conscious of what the leaders will most need. Graduates will face fewer surprises regarding the complexity of performing effectively in executive-level administration if they have exposure to team building ideas within doctoral programs. Planning for the succession of leaders requires us to reflect on our practice and commit to making required changes.

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