

CREATING AN EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR  
ADULT LEARNERS: A QUALITATIVE, MULTI-CASE STUDY OF OFF-  
CAMPUS CENTER ADMINISTRATOR'S USE OF INVITATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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A Dissertation  
presented to the  
Faculty of the Graduate School  
University of Missouri – Columbia

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In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

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By

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April 2012



The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled:

CREATING EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ADULT  
LEARNERS: A QUALITATIVE, MULTI-CASE STUDY OF OFF-CAMPUS CENTER  
ADMINISTRATOR'S USE OF INVITATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Presented by Carolyn P. McKnight,

A candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

And hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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Dr. Doug Thomas

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely guys, Spencer and William, thank you for being patient; and for all the off-campus administrators and their staff who work tirelessly to provide educational opportunities and services to adult learners.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Since 1996, when I graduated with my bachelor's degree from Emporia State University, one of my lifelong goals has been to complete a doctorate degree. However, finishing a doctorate degree can never be solely accomplished alone. It takes the encouragement, collaboration, empathy and sympathy from extensive support group, including: family, friends, colleagues, mentors, advisor, and classmates to achieve such a daunting undertaking. I will not be able to acknowledge every single person that has lent me advice, words-of-wisdom, or has given a pep talk, but I would like to recognize a few that have had a sincere impact on me during this process.

To my family, Mom, Dad, Tim, Tom, Michael and Meghan and their families for being supportive during the process. Most importantly, to my Mom who has watched her grandson for long periods of time when I had a paper due or I was writing my comps and have provided positive words to me for the past three years.

To my colleagues at work, Grenvell Foraker, Rick Smetana, Linda Bachman, Kelly Edmondson, Jeni Welsh and Clarinda Dir, whom on many occasions filled-in for me on speaking engagements or other matters at work. Thanks for being the best staff an administrator has ever had. Furthermore, to my main campus colleagues, I thank Joyce Huffman and Laurel Hogue, for always inquiring about the doctoral process and supporting me.

To my classmates, Audrey, Cheryl, Cindy, and Hayet, thank you for your commitment to making the experience successful. To my two buddies, Asyia Foster-Nelson and Kris Schuler, both of you will be friends of mine for life. Thank you for creating an alliance and bond that can never be broken.

To Dr. Sandy Hutchinson, Dr. Linda Bigby, Dr. Doug Thomas and all of the Educational Leadership faculty and staff, thank you for your support of me during this process. Your daily encouragement has provided me a sense of urgency in completing this degree.

To the off-campus center administrators, staff, faculty, and students, thank you for time, energy, and honesty in making this dissertation a rich, informative study.

To Dr. Barbara Martin, you are an amazing advisor who embraces the concepts that are significant to learning, and sets a level of expectation that expanded my ability to write, synthesize and apply new knowledge. I am so thankful, for your commitment in molding me and others into leaders who have a resounding grasp on the theoretical, methodological, and practical applications of leadership. You have been my advisor and professor for the past three years, but I consider you my mentor and friend.

Most importantly many thanks to the loves of my life, Spencer and William McKnight. Spencer, thank you for all the extra free time you had to sacrifice, while I was working on one paper after another. You are an amazing man and husband and this doctorate would have not been possible without your support, encouragement, and love. To my son, William, you have been part of this process since birth. Your dad and I love you so much and it has been difficult for me being away from you at different times these last three years. I am so excited to spend the rest of our lives watching you grow, learn, and experience.

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1. Represents the Role of the Off-Campus Center Administrator
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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative, multi-case study was designed to examine off-campus centers and their administrators in creating an effective learning environment for adult learners. Serving as the conceptual framework, invitational leadership theory is a holistic approach which nurtures the belief that everyone is intrinsically motivated and it is the leaders' responsibility to unleash their true potential (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). The researcher utilized invitational leadership theory as lens to analyze off-campus center administrators to understand the perceptions of faculty, students, and staff on the four characteristics: trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality within the five environments: people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Novak & Purkey, 2001).

A qualitative, multi-case approach was selected to expand the perceptions of off-campus center stakeholders when addressing "...a problem or issue" (Creswell, 2003, p. 40). The off-campus centers analyzed were located in Midwestern States and the universities were classified as Masters Universities and Colleges by the Carnegie Foundation. The study's populations consisted of three off-campus center administrators and their supervisors, faculty, students and staff. Data was collected and triangulated through interviews, focus groups, observations and historical material (Creswell, 2003). Through data analysis, three themes emerged: 1) Intense Collaboration, with subthemes of: a) Quorum of Stakeholders, b) Distributive Responsibility; and 2) Motivational Influence, with subtheme of: a) Optimism, and b) Intention; and 3) Inherited Sense of Kinship subthemes of: a) Dispensation of the Patron, and b) Ambiance Conducive for Erudition.

From the research, conclusions derived from the finding indicated: the off-campus center administrators' practices were consistent with invitational leadership characteristics; the environments were created to serve the adult learner; and there is a continuous need for transparency between their main campuses and the off-campus centers. These results provide further insight into the implications and recommendations on creating a successful off-campus center.

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CHAPTER ONE  
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

*Background*

In the higher education environment, institutions are continually facing challenges that necessitate transforming organizational processes and educational delivery (Rich, 2006). Pressing issues, including: waning financial budgets, changing student populations, increasing competition from community colleges and for-profit institutions, and implementing technological innovations serve as constant stressors on public universities and their leaders (Downey, Pusser, & Turner, 2006; King, 2001; Morey, 2004; Rich; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008). In response to these significant issues, institutions have developed departments that extend programs and classes to populations not served through the traditional academic structure and generate new revenue streams, not available through a conventional format (Armstrong, 2001; Downey, Pusser & Turner; Kaplan, 2004; Schejbal & Wilson; Shoemaker, 2008; Vallett, 2010; Weidner, 2010). These departments focus on assimilating "...academic innovation, traditional approaches, and new ventures," which requires a change in how leadership is practiced (Shoemaker, 2008, p. 31).

Historically, when encountering critical issues, university leaders formerly focused on how to be a great manager; referencing an educational leadership theory grounded in business management principles, which emphasize controlling and directing a hierarchical organizational system (Amey, 2006; Bush, 2003; Duke 1998; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006; Taylor, 1947; Yukl, 2006). However, with a rapidly changing higher education landscape, effective leaders need to embrace a collaborative leadership theory for institutions to succeed (Greenleaf, 2002; Kezar,

Carducci, Contreras-McGavin; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Spears, 2002; Yukl). Therefore, in recent years, leadership has been revolutionized to become a transformational process of guiding a vision, influencing by example, and facilitating shared efforts between leader and followers (Bennis, 1989; Burns, 1978; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Yukl).

### *Historical Perspective*

In the effort to understand how institutional structures and delivery practices have changed, a historical perspective will frame the progression After World War II. Government officials began expanding higher education through eliminating barriers and making it accessible to minority groups and returning veterans (Bankston, III, 2011; Kasworm, 2003; Morey, 2004; Thelin, 2004) With an influx of new student types needing education opportunities, institutions grew extensively in physical size, programs, personnel and students, with the largest growth between 1960 and 1980 (Levine, 1997; Thelin). With colleges and universities having different missions and programs, the increase perpetuated the need to develop a consistent institutional classification structure (McCormick & Zhao, 2005). Consequently, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching was tasked with creating a systematic classification system organizing colleges and universities into different categories (Carnegie Foundation, 2011; Doyle, 2006; McCormick & Zhao). This classification system continues to be used and provides the type of institutional parameters for this research study (Carnegie Foundation). In addition to the classification system, emerging trends and concerns since the 1980's, focused on four major areas: financial concerns, changing student populations, competition, and technology as contributing factors to transformation of the higher

education landscape (Edelson, 1992; Flint, 2001; Hudzik, 2010; Kambutu, 2005; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Nixon, 1996; Ritt, 2008; Ross-Gordon, 2011; Thelin; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Therefore, to contend with the major issues facing higher education, colleges and universities developed new outreach and revenue generation strategies (Downey, Pusser & Turner, 2006; Edelson, 1992; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008; Tracey, 2004).

### *Continuing Education*

To address these critical issues facing higher education, institutions have responded through the creation of continuing education departments, which focus on accessibility, student driven (responsiveness) curriculum and delivery, serving adult populations, and revenue generation (Downey, Pusser, & Turner, 2006; Morey, 2004; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008; Shoemaker, 2008). These units look differently than most departments on an institution's campus because of their focus on outreach and new revenue (Downey, et al; Shoemaker, 2008; Thelin, 2004; Tracey, 2004; Vallett, 2010). Furthermore, continuing education departments are not consistently structured from one institution to the next; however, these units share similar missions, consisting of: extending programs beyond the main campus learning environment, offering courses to distance population, and providing an additional revenue source for the institution (Armstrong, 2001; Downey et al.; Kaplan, 2004; Schejbal & Wilson; Shoemaker, 2008; Tracey; Vallett). Leadership, within continuing education, is built on the entrepreneurial model, where change is welcome. It is the leader's responsibility to provide a sense of direction and purpose, while at the same time implementing a creative management style

to embrace new programmatic opportunities (Donaldson, 1992; Edelson, 1992; Shoemaker, 1998; Shoemaker, 2008).

### *Off-Campus Centers*

A division that often resides in continuing education, off-campus centers, has emerged as a microcosm of their main campuses extending the institution's resources and academic knowledge to address the educational needs of adult learners (Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008; Shoemaker, 2008). Gabor and Heggan inferred, "...off-campus centers have been developed in response to a range of internal and external forces, as well as to provide an organizational form to enhance educational access and to address specialized local educational needs" (p. vi). Leaders of off-campus centers seek to encompass a holistic and inviting approach of providing meaningful experiences for their colleagues, patrons, and community members without the use of authoritarian means (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). These experiences require the continuous negotiating and facilitating of programs and services to the off-campus location (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan). In doing so, when striving to create an effective learning environment, off-campus center administrators should possess the ability to handle change in a positive manner (Burns, 2007).

### *Invitational Leadership*

When analyzing off-campus center administrators, invitational leadership emerged as a suitable theory to study their leadership characteristics. This new theory considers everyone is motivated and it is the leader's responsibility to unleash their potential (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Novak, 2008). As a leadership theory, invitational leaders engage with others and invite them to collaborate on initiatives for

shared benefit (Purkey & Novak, 2001 ). As Purkey and Siegel stated, "...successful leaders take a strong, personal interest in their associates and get results through respectful relationships" (pp. 7-8). Moreover, invitational leaders welcome change and diversity of opinions among the participants as a positive opportunity to grow and learn as an organization (Purkey & Siegel). Unlike other theories, invitational provides a template of the essential leadership characteristics and its application within all realms of a leader's life (Novak & Purkey; Purkey & Novak, 2001; Purkey & Siegel). The intention of invitational leadership theory is to view leadership as a "...holistic and dynamic model," which embraces leaders pursuing a more purposeful life and to "... invite their colleagues, family, friends, loved ones, and community to do the same" (Purkey & Siegel, p. 3).

In Chapter One, the researcher provided an introduction for this study focusing on exploring off-campus center administrators' use of invitational leadership when negotiating the delivery of programs and services. Furthermore, the researcher presented the statement of problem, purpose, research questions, conceptual framework, design and methodology, assumptions and limitations, key definition and significance of the study.

#### Statement of Problem

While institutions have always had a mission to conduct research and offer educational programming to improve and enrich the lives of its stakeholders; continuing education has provided the opportunity to extend the knowledge and research to audiences that otherwise would not have benefited from it and provide educational efforts not confined to traditional departments (Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008). The role of continuing education is to offer courses, services, and learning

opportunities beyond the main campus learning environment (Armstrong, 2001; Kaplan, 2004; Schejbal & Wilson; Shoemaker, 2008). Off-campus centers, as part of continuing education, have evolved from a being a trend to an element of an institution's outreach mission (Gabor & Heggan). However, although off-campus centers have become a niche within higher education, little research has been conducted on their description, learning environment, quality of instruction and leadership style of their administrators (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan). This lack of research presented the basis for studying off-campus centers and off-campus center administrators in attempting to understand their importance and significance within higher education (Flora & Hirt).

In understanding the rationale for this study, the primary concerns related to ambiguity of off-campus centers in their description, environment, and quality of instruction (Aslanian, 2007; Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Pappas & Jerman, 2004; Sperling & Tucker, 1997). The mission of most off-campus centers is to serve an adult audience that work full-time and take classes at night; which is contrary to their main campus that is designed for the 18-24 year old, full-time traditional student (Gabor & Heggan; O'Neill, 2005; Shoemaker, 2008; Thelin, 2004). Although missions for off-campus centers can be similar, providing a uniformed description is problematic, because each type of institution can approach their off-campus center in a unique format (Gabor & Heggan; The Higher Learning Commission, 2011; Manzo, 1997). Along with describing these centers, services and technology needs are subsequently different from what is offered on the main campus (Gabor & Heggan; Manzo). Creating a learning environment conducive for the off-campus learner can sometimes be difficult, because many of the resources are provided through the host institution, which historically has functioned for traditional

students (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan; Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008; Kasworm, 2003; Levine, 2001; Morey, 2004). As a final point, a foremost concern is the perception by peer faculty who reside on the main campus that courses being taught at off-campus centers are inferior to the quality of instruction delivered at the home institution (Gabor & Heggan; Shoemaker; Sperling & Tucker). When referring to quality, there is an underlining environment that depicts "...separate but not equal" (Shoemaker, 2008 p. 22). Therefore, when faced with these concerns, leadership of off-campus centers becomes an important component to its success (Flora & Hirt).

Leadership within off-campus centers is usually the responsibility of its primary administrator (Flora & Hirt, 2008). These administrators have the extensive task of proving off-campus centers value and worth to its main campuses and the community where the off-campus facility resides (Flora & Hirt). As leaders, off-campus center administrators have to be flexible by first creating an atmosphere that mimics the invitation on the main campus, but also are willing to engage community members as part of the educational environment (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). Moreover, these leaders serve changing demographics of students and should be willing to accommodate their needs within the off-campus center (Flora & Hirt; Pappas & Jerman, 2004). Therefore, to address issues unique to off-campus centers and their administrators, the study of leadership is an important factor within the research (Flora & Hirt).

A further rationale for the study was providing additional research to add to the body of knowledge on off-campus centers and their administrators (Armstrong, 2001; Courtenay, 1990; Flora & Hirt, 2008). Since limited research has been conducted, this

study offered a distinct perspective for institutions that have off-campus centers and the students who attend these locations (Flora & Hirt).

### Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of the use of invitational leadership by the off-campus center administrator in creating an effective educational environment for adult learners as perceived by the students, faculty, and staff. Since off-campus centers are extensions of their main campus, attention to the leadership attributes of the administrator in providing a comparable educational environment was also analyzed (Gabor & Heggan, 1995).

A subsequent intention of the research was to investigate the involvement of the administrator in community activities and events, and creating partnerships with local organizations in relation to the off-campus center. The objective was to present a holistic understanding of the environments in which off-campus leaders engage their invitational leadership characteristics (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Furthermore, in view of the fact that there was limited research on off-campus centers and their administrators, a multi-case study approach was selected to ensure critical replication between the different sites to give the readers a "...thick description" of the off-campus administrators' use of invitational leadership assumptions (Creswell, 2007; Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan; Mertens, 2005, p. 256).

## Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were:

1. What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?
2. How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?
3. How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

## Conceptual Framework

Leadership, as a theoretical framework, can be defined as the guiding and influencing of others on a specific vision or dream and the process of facilitating cooperative efforts to accomplish these shared objectives (Bennis, 1989; Purkey & Seigel, 2003; Yukl, 2006). Burns (1978) shared a similar belief, but provided the relationship between the participants when he stated,

Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers (p. 425).

Leadership provides the collective underpinning of the relationship between the leader and follower in the pursuit of a vision, goal, or dream (Bennis; Burns, 1978; Gardner,

1990; Harris & Cullen, check year...ref have 2008 2007; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Yukl, 2006). However, under the realm of leadership, theories evolve that focus on an area or genre, case in point, education (Bush, 2003; Yukl). A further analysis of these theories will demarcate the conceptual approach used within the study.

Embedded within the larger theoretical framework of leadership, invitational leadership is a holistic approach of intentional inspiring "...connectedness, cooperation, and communication" between leader and stakeholders (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p.1). Invitational leadership is an emerging theory within the education environment (Novak & Rocca, 2006). Therefore, established leadership theories, such as educational, and adult and continuing education were considered for this study because of their focus on learning and instruction (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Bush, 2003; Donaldson, 1992; Edelson, 1992). While not chosen, these theories provide a guiding framework for invitational leadership theory within a higher educational setting.

Educational leadership, known to be the broad, overarching theory, has a purpose to develop innovative and effective leaders in managing the changing landscapes of higher education organizational structures (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Nixon, 1996). This theory is rooted in the philosophical ideals of Taylor's (1947) managerial principles of leading an organization from a hierarchical perspective. New theorists contend educational leadership should embrace more of an entrepreneurial approach of engaging and collaborating new initiatives, which would be appropriate when studying off-campus center administrators (Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Rich, 2006; Whetten & Cameron, 1985). However, this theory extensively focuses on the teaching and learning aspects of education and does not provide the holistic approach of being an educational and

community leader needed when studying this unique position (Bush; Flora & Hirt, 2008; Nixon).

Adult and continuing education leadership has similar managerial origins of educational leadership, although, it differs in its focus on the non-traditional educational delivery processes and a specific type of student, the adult learner (Donaldson, 1992; Edelson, 1992; Shoemaker, 2008). This theory embraces an entrepreneurial approach, whereas leaders expect changes and foster a sense of collaboration among team members to compete a goal or objective (Edelson, 1992). Nevertheless, even though it is innovative leadership theory, adult and continuing education remained guided by managerial theory and lacks the moral perspectives to consider it an encompassing approach to leadership (Donaldson). While, both of these theories are successful approaches to developing educational leaders, a holistic approach was chosen because leadership is not a series of events, but rather it encompasses all aspects of a person's life (Purkey & Novak, 2008; Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

To better understand invitational leadership, part of its conceptual framework is that "...people are motivated" and invitational leaders, rather than spending time on motivation, instead "...seek to unleash each person's intrinsic energy by summoning people cordially to see themselves as capable of tackling tough challenges, overcoming obstacles, and accomplishing great things"(Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 5). Two comparable theories, transformational and servant, share a similar moral approach to leadership, including: creating a purpose, embracing shared goals between the leader and followers, and establishing a vision (Burns, 1978; Bush, 2003; Greenleaf, 1996; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Yukl, 2006). Transformational leadership, a well-known theory,

emphasizes the cooperation and collaboration of a leader and followers to pursue shared goals with the objective of moving the organization forward (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003; Burns, 1978; Bush, 2003; Muijs, Harris, Lumby, Morrison & Sood, 2006). This theory has several complementary aspects to invitational leadership, but as Bass (1985) contended, transformational is best-suited for leaders during situations when critical changes are occurring. Conversely, servant leaders are often considered transformational leaders, while sharing a similar philosophy with invitational leaders that all persons are motivated (Farling, Stone, & Wilson, 1999; Greenleaf, 2002; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel; Spears, 2002). However, Yukl distinguishes this theory when he stated "...service to followers is the primary responsibility of leaders and the essence of ethical leadership" (p. 420). A servant leader's purpose is to listen to the followers' needs and facilitate a process of helping each individual reach their full potential (DePree, 2010; Greenleaf, 2002; Spears; Yukl).

Although, these theories embrace comparable attributes, invitational leadership has a holistic framework of its assumptions and applications (Burns, 2007; Purkey & Siegel). These assumptions take the form of an "inviting stance" which is applied to the total environment of a leader's professional and personal lives (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Novak, 2008). Invitational Leadership theory provides an appropriate conceptual framework for analyzing off-campus center administrators' leadership, because the leaders serve as the inviter, even when engaging in new and innovative challenges (Purkey & Siegel). In utilizing this leadership theory, the intent of the research study was to explore off-campus center administrators' use of invitational leadership characteristics in creating an effective learning environment.

## Design of the Study

The research study was a problem of practice analyzing invitational leadership characteristics of off-campus administrators (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 1989). In choosing a design and method, Creswell believed a qualitative research study is best suited to address a problem of practice or in the case of this research to "... understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or issue" (p. 40). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) described the aspects of a qualitative study "...qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world," which provide researchers the ability to "...study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" ( p. 3). Within the qualitative methodology, a multi-case study approach was selected with the intent of achieving as great a holistic understanding of the off-campus phenomena (Creswell; Merriam, 2002; Mertens, 2005). This approach provides the reader a "...thick description" including: "...time, place, context, and culture" which is imperative for transferability, or the ability to "...determine the degree of similarity between the study sites and the receiving context" (Mertens, p. 256). Since there is limited research on off-campus administrators, multiple data sources are considered to ensure a successful multi-case study (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006, Mertens; Stake, 2010).

The researcher examined the data sources through a social constructivist lens which provided the rationale for the study (Creswell, 2007; Gillman, ; Mertens, 2005; Stake, 2010). Social constructivists are "...individuals who seek understanding of the world in which they live and work" and they believe "...the goal of research is to rely as much as possibly on participants views of situations" (Creswell, p. 20). The study had

“...multiple, socially constructed realities” needing “...interactive links between researcher and participants” (Mertens, p. 9). During the process of collecting data for a multi-case study, several sources were utilized, including: interviewing administrators and their supervisors, interviewing faculty, conducting focus groups of staff members and students, analyzing promotional material, reviewing historical material, and observing daily activities (Creswell; Krueger & Casey, 2005; Gillham; Merriam, 1988; Mertens). The collection and organization of the data provided the opportunity to code and identify emerging themes (Creswell; Mertens).

### Design Controls

Within data analysis, components of multi-case study approach were utilized for interpreting the research. Some of the multi-case study techniques included “...organizing data files, describing the context of the case, and establishing patterns and themes” (Creswell, 2007, p. 156). The researcher was “...hoping that issue-relevant meanings will emerge” and natural generalizations can be determined (p157). The intent of using these techniques was to ensure credibility and dependability of the research (Creswell; Merriam, 1988; Mertens, 2005).

Mertens 2005) believed credibility “...as the interpretive parallel to validity” (p. 358). To guarantee credibility, the researcher clarified the bias and assumptions, perform member checking, and triangulate the data (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens). The researcher intended to first clarify bias and assumptions through acknowledging past experiences and prejudices (Creswell; Merriam, 1988). Next, the researcher conducted the process of member checking, which involves taking “...data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions” back to the participants to determine if the

accounts are accurate (Creswell, p. 208). Finally, to create triangulation, the researcher collaborated evidence from multiple sources to determine patterns or themes (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman). These sources included interviews, focus groups, observations, and historical information (Creswell; Mertens). Through utilization of these techniques, the researcher ensured the credibility of the study (Mertens). Further techniques on dependability demonstrated the research tools were measuring the goal of the research.

Reliability or their qualitative counterparts, dependability, were addressed within the research study through creating detailed footnotes (Mertens, 2005). Creswell (2007) believed by audio and video taping the interviews and focus groups, the researcher was allowed to review previous recorded information and code this information for further analysis (Stake, 2010).

#### Limitations and Assumptions of the Study

The limitations and assumptions are most relevant to the researcher's work experience, region, and size of institutions being studied. The researcher has worked in the field of higher education for over 15 years, and has served in the role of an off-campus center administrator for over 10 years. This has been indicated within the data analysis section of the relationship between the researcher and participants. In addition, the off-campus centers and their administrators reside only within the Midwest region of the United States, which limited a national view of off-campus centers and their administrators. Finally, the research was only being conducted on off-campus centers of *Master's Colleges and Universities*. Doctoral-granting institutions could possibly provide a different makeup of an off-campus center and the administrators who manage the site.

## Significance of the Study

The significance of the study was to make contributions to literature, practice, and institution or situation. In regard to contributions to literature, the research study added to the body of knowledge in several areas, including: knowledge of off-campus centers (limited research exists), providing educational opportunities and services to the adult learner, and additional inquiry on a new leadership style, invitational leadership. The contributions to practice of this research study provided a structure of leadership characteristics that could be necessary in creating a successful off-campus center. It also added to the body of knowledge of the leader's impact on delivering off-campus programs and services. Furthermore, in considering its contribution to institution or situation, the study added to the body of knowledge of continuing education. Moreover, since little research has been conducted on off-campus administrators, the study added to the body of knowledge.

## Key Definitions

The following key terms were identified as being significant to the research. Defining these key terms was critical for creating a framework of common language between the researcher and readers, which further provided clarity of the study and its results (Bruffee, 1999).

*Adult and Continuing Education Leadership.* An educational leadership theory focused on the adult learner and delivering programs and classes in a non-traditional format (Edelson, 1992; Donaldson, 1992). The theory is based on change and planning (Shoemaker, 2008).

*Adult Learner/ Non-Traditional Student.* The National Center for Educational Statistics (2002) provided a list of characteristics that define a nontraditional student. Students only have to meet one of these categories to be considered nontraditional (Flint, 2001):

- Delays enrolling at least one year after high school;
- Attends on a part-time basis;
- Works full-time while attending classes;
- Financially independent;
- Cares for dependents besides spouse;
- Attends as a single parent, including being married or not married;
- Did not obtain a high school diploma (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2002).

*Continuing Education.* Continuing education provides credit and noncredit programs and classes to working adults who are unable to attend on a traditional main-campus (Kaplan, 2004).

*Educational Leadership.* A broad theory over the field of education, educational leadership theory has three components: ability to influence others, establish a sense of value and purpose; and create a vision (Bush, 2003).

*Ethical Leadership.* A leadership theory based on the "...a person's values, stage of moral development, conscious intentions, freedom of choice, use of ethical and unethical behavior, and types of influence" (Yukl, 2006, p. 418).

*For-Profit Institutions.* The basic attributes of for-profit educational institutions, include: emphasis on recruiting and education working adults, hiring professionals as

instructors, and understanding education is delivered with the notion of making a profit (Sperling & Tucker, 1997).

*Higher Education Center.* Similar to an off-campus center, "...is a facility, managed by an independent administration, where two or more institutions deliver baccalaureate and/or post-baccalaureate programs" (Flora & Hirt, 2008, p. 38). These institutions may offer credit or non-credit courses at the facility.

*Invitational Leadership.* Invitational leadership upholds the belief that all "...people are motivated" and rather than spending time on motivation, leaders instead "...seek to unleash each person's intrinsic energy by summoning people cordially to see themselves as capable of tackling tough challenges, overcoming obstacles, and accomplishing great things" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 5). Purkey & Siegel defined the four principles of invitational leadership as:

*Respect* - believing all people are valuable and should be treated in a caring manner;

*Trust* - possessing confidence and predictability of others' abilities and integrity;

*Optimism* - understanding that human potential is untapped and that every person is "...capable of self-direction and should be treated accordingly" (p. 15);

*Intention* - implying leaders have "...a choice and a desire to be respectful, trustworthy, and optimistic" (p. 20).

These principles take the form of an “...inviting stance” which is applied to the total environment, known as the five “P’s”: *people, places, policies, programs, and processes* (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p.12).

*People* - For off-campus leaders utilizing the invitational leadership theory, they should consider people as the central ingredient (Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004).

*Places* - “Places are powerful, and they can influence the performance and satisfaction of all who inhabit the school” (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17).

*Policies* - Policies consist of the written and unwritten “...directives, codes, and rules” used to regulate schools (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17).

*Programs* - Programs should be designed to “...work for the benefit of everyone and...encourage active engagement with significant content” (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 18).

*Processes* - “...Process is the bottom line in Invitational Leadership for it reveals how the other four ‘P’s’ fit together to support a culture of *respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality*” (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 132).

*Leadership*. “...Lies at the core of administration and management, involving many aspects of good administration but going beyond these to include ‘vision’ about the future” (Rose, 1992).

*Moral Leadership*. A leadership philosophy, leaders embrace followers’ needs and wants and provide value to their work, even during times of conflict (Burns, 1978).

*Off-Campus Center.* Off-campus centers can look differently from one institution to the next, but Gabor and Heggan (1995) provided four common features:

- "...a building or space in a building, dedicated to an institution's ongoing credit and/or noncredit programs" (p. 2);
- "...owned or rented, and administered by the university or school" (p. 2);
- "...physically separated from the main campus, but not a 'branch campus'" (p. 2); and
- "...not an off-campus 'site' on the premises of a company or business that is used exclusively to train employees" (p. 2).

*Servant Leadership.* The belief that the "...servant-leader is a servant first" and that the servant leader emphasizes "...increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, building a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision making" (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 27; Spears, 2002, p. 4).

*Participants.* "...Commonly used by qualitative researchers to describe the individuals being studied" (Merriam, 2007, p. 162).

*Transformation Leadership.* Transformation leaders embrace the following ideals consisting of: influencing followers through respect and trust, inspiring individuals, stimulating followers' intelligence, and providing individual attention to followers (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003).

## Summary

In summary, the intended purpose of this research study was to explore off-campus centers and their administrators. In addition, the purpose and the research questions were presented to demonstrate clarity to the intentions of the researcher .

Furthermore, to better understand the overarching conceptual framework, the researcher defined leadership by delineating the embedded conceptual framework of invitational leadership which will be the guide for the study. The concluding sections presented within this paper, describe the design and methods and significance of the study. As stated, the significance of the study represents the effect invitational leadership has on off-campus center meeting programmatic objectives and enhancing the educational experience of stakeholders.

In Chapter Two, existing literature was synthesized to present the background and conceptual framework of the study. In Chapter Three, an explanation of the research design and methodology being used for this study are provided. The research analysis and findings are presented in Chapter 4. Presented in Chapter Five are the results of the study, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In recent years, higher education has encountered major issues consisting of: financial concerns, changing student population, competition, and technology which have ignited a revolution to the traditional delivery practices (Armstrong, 2001; Donaldson & Graham, 1999; Flint, 2001; Kambutu, 2005; Levine, 1997; Levine, 2001; Ritt, 2008). Institutions and their leaders, previously bounded by the current limitations of their institutional structure are now embracing different delivery methods with the expectation of increasing revenue and serving the public (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). As a result, administrators of colleges and universities have encouraged the growth and development of their continuing education departments (Tracey, 2004). These units focus on delivering education outside the main campus setting to people who might not be able to attend in a traditional format (Shoemaker, 2008). An area residing in continuing education, off-campus centers are generally located within population centers that seek advanced learning, but are unable to commute to a main campus (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). Administrators of these off-campus centers work within the unique position of being part of a larger organizational system, while at the same time leading a community's mini-university (Flora & Hirt, 2008). For these leaders to succeed, their leadership skills create opportunities to engage the organizational structure, as well as the local community members in participating within the decision making process (Lehr, 2003).

In analyzing leaders, effective leadership should appear differently than the previous top-down approach (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). As Kouzes and Posner (1987) inferred for leaders to accomplish extraordinary goals, they need to be

“...challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart (p. 13). Moreover, these leaders have to embrace the social and contextual situations that surpass the idea of born leaders to leaders that are prepared to embrace problems (Heifetz, 2001). Since off-campus administrators often engage within social and contextual situations, a distinguishing quality for successful leadership is the importance these leaders place on creating personal relationships with their followers, colleagues, and outside constituents (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). Therefore, when analyzing off-campus center administrators, a new leadership theory, invitational, provides a holistic approach to establishing relationships (Purkey & Seigel, 2003). This leadership style inherently accepts every person is motivated, and to unleash a person’s potential the leader’s role is to create an inviting environment within their professional and personal lives (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel).

Within Chapter Two, a review of related literature examined continuing education and off-campus centers, along with the theoretical framework of leadership. The expectation of this literature review was to create a compelling argument for the use of invitational leadership theory as the conceptual framework when analyzing off-campus administrators. In the effort to better understand off-campus centers and their administrators, the literature reviewed began with a historical background.

Within the historical perspective section of the literature review, the issues that influenced the expansion of continuing education and the creation of off-campus centers were presented. A further in-depth analysis on the description and functions of these units and centers, in concurrence with detailed analysis of an off-campus center administrator’s roles and duties, ascertained the significance of this study. Through understanding the

distinctness of off-campus centers and their administrators, the aspect of leadership becomes an important component for their success (Flora & Hirt, 2008).

Within the conceptual underpinnings of the leadership section, a delineation of theories, including educational, and adult and continuing education served as guiding theories on synthesizing higher education administration with invitational leadership. However, within the process of identifying the leadership theory to guide the study, a comparison with similar theories, transformation and servant, affirmed the use of invitational leadership as the appropriately suited approach to study off-campus administrators.

### History

The history of continuing education and the creation of off-campus centers can be traced to the growth of higher education after World War II (Bankston III, 2011; Kasworm, 2003; Morey, 2004; Thelin, 2004). Soon after the war, government elected officials became highly interested in the higher education system with the intent to improve access and increase the education levels of constituents. At the time, the goal was to eliminate the barriers that might hinder citizens from attending college (Levine, 1997). Three important initiatives included: making college available to students in minority racial groups; breaking down gender issues and growing female attendance; and instituting the Serviceman's Readjustment Act (G.I. Bill) providing federal funding for returning veterans (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Kasworm, 2003; Ogren, 2003; Thelin). In addition, government officials were experiencing a decline in blue-collar jobs and the need for advance educational training for workers was vital to a strong economy (Bean & Metzner; Ogren). To serve the influx of new students, universities began a process of

changing their fundamental purpose and the delivery of continuing education programming emerged (Schejbal & Wilson, 2008).

The era between 1960's – 80's marked the "...great transformation of higher education" (Thelin, 2004, p. 318). Leaders of institutions were provided the wherewithal to expand, grow, and change the attributes of higher education. Numerous public universities and colleges were created, faculty positions were in abundance, and financial aid was accessible to promote expansion (Levine, 1997). Thelin inferred on the 1970's higher education profile, "...enrollments were healthy, having reached an all-time high of 8.65 million students taught by 383,000 full-time instructors at 2,573 institutions" (p. 318). With the tremendous growth in higher education, a systematic classification structure of colleges and universities was needed to identify the dimensions of these institutions in relation to their educational services and programs (McCormick & Zhano, 2005; Thelin). This led to the creation of the Carnegie Classification, a system still used today, which categorizes universities, colleges, and training institutions into groups and subgroups (McCormick & Zhano). Since off-campus centers are extensions of their main campuses, the classification system provides clarity on the type of institution being studied.

#### *Carnegie Classification and Master's Colleges and Universities*

In 1970, the Carnegie Commission, established by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, was charged with the task of developing "...a new classification scheme to meet [higher education] analytic needs" (McCormick & Zhano, 2005, p. 51). The objective was to classify institutions according to "...the number and type of degrees awarded across different fields and each institution could fall into only

one category” (Doyle, 2006, p. 51). The classification groupings were labeled by the Carnegie Foundation (2011) <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/basic.php>:

*Doctoral-Granting University* – conferred more than twenty doctoral degrees;

*Master’s Colleges and Universities* – conferred over fifty master degree programs, but have less than twenty doctoral granting degrees;

*Baccalaureate Colleges* – ten percent of their bachelor degrees account for their undergraduate degrees and the institution have to offer less than fifty master’s degrees;

*Tribal Colleges* - degrees conferred are required to be members of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium;

*Associate’s Colleges* – the highest degree conferred is an associate’s degree.

Master’s colleges and universities, a category that usually struggles with their identity, consisted mainly of institutions with humble beginnings as regional teacher colleges. These universities have burgeoned in physical size and organizational structure to offer an array of degree programs intended on preparing students to enter the workforce (Dalbey, 1995; Henderson, 2009; Henderson & Buchanan, 2007; Ogren, 2005). Although these universities lacked exposure at the national level, Henderson surmised, like the doctoral-granting universities, the public service they offer regionally is exceedingly important. For the purpose of this study, their flexibility of program variety and regional focus provide unique features for studying leadership characteristics of off-campus center administrators. In further examination of higher education history after the great transformation period, in conjunction with the formation of the Carnegie

Classification, new issues and trends in higher education emerged to provide further insight into the creation of off-campus centers.

### *Emerging Trends Since the 1980's*

Beginning in the 1980's, the large organizational structures developed during the transformation era began to financially plague institutions (Thelin, 2004). The abundance of higher education with each institution offering a plethora of degree programs coupled with a declining economy and reduction in state funding, led to the ideal circumstances for institutions to overextend on their budgets (Hudzik, 2010; Nixon, 1996; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Furthermore, in addition to the financial situation, changes in the demographics of the student population emerged as a new trend in higher education. Administrators classified these students as "...nontraditional" because they had different needs and demographics than the 18-22 year old student living on campus, including: age, living situation, family life, and professional position (Flint, 2001; Ross-Gordon, 2011; Thelin, p. 327). Consequently, for the next two decades, these issues of financial concerns and changing student population continued to grow along with new competition and increase in technology requirements (Kambutu, 2005; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Ritt, 2008). Thus, educational leaders were faced with drastic changes as to how and to whom education was to be delivered. Kezar and Eckel inferred the sentiments of institutional administrators when they stated "... the litany of changes is familiar to those in the field of higher education" (p. 435).

In the effort to keep the traditional university intact, continuing education units were expanded to serve these students including offering courses in metropolitan off-campus locations or on military bases (Edelson, 1992; Thelin). "[Off-campus centers]

enable institutions to expand their outreach to a ‘wider community’ and to address the changing educational needs of lifelong learners” (Gabor & Heggan, 1995, p. 27). Since these issues of financial concerns, changing student populations, competition, and technology contributed to the rise of continuing education units and off-campus centers, a deeper insight into each area will be analyzed within the next section (Flint; Hudzik; Kambutu; Kezar & Eckel; Nixon; Ritt; Ross-Gordon; Thelin; U.S. Department of Education).

### Issues Impacting the Expansion of Continuing Education and the Creation of Off-Campus Centers

#### *Financial Concerns*

When discussing the financial situations of higher education institutions, existing literature identifies the current conditions as the “...new normal” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006; Hudzik, 2010, p. 96). Levine (1997) stated, “...the common wisdom today is that higher education must do more with less; the existing programs and faculty positions [are] in jeopardy, as is the case with downsizing in business today” (p. 4). A contributing reason to the dire financial situation can be credited to the “...overexpansion in higher education with the proliferation of new degree programs and fields of study” (Thelin, 2004, p. 319). Nevertheless, another factor outside the control of higher education was the economic downturn and rising health care costs in 1990’s and 2000’s which elevated the financial crisis of many institutions (Hudzik; Nixon, 1996; U.S. Department of Education). In 2006, Margaret Spelling, Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education, clarified higher education financial concerns, “...these changes are permanent...states are expected to experience long-term structural deficits in funds for

postsecondary education, caused by the squeeze of revenues and pressures on spending from rising health care costs” (U.S. Department of Education, p. 9). Since educational institutions are largely funded by their states and states were experiencing a reduction in the collection of taxes, public higher education was heavily impacted (U.S. Department of Education; Hudzik; Nixon).

A strategy to off-set the deficits in budgets and reduce the likelihood of cutting programs caused institutions to take notice of their continuing education units (Tracey, 2004). Considered a subset of the university’s mission, continuing education units are considered revenue generators, because these divisions typically are based on an entrepreneurial model that reaches outside the university’s main campus learning environment (Schejbal & Wilson, 2008). Therefore, “...colleges and universities can benefit from taking a renewed strategic look at their [continuing education] programs resulting in a surprisingly positive impact on their financial bottom line” (Tracey, p. 49). In view of the fact that continuing education divisions were also the first to serve a growing number of adult students with off-campus programming, a review of how the student population has changed will be addressed in the next section.

### *Changing Student Population*

For higher education institutions, the most profound transformation in recent years is the changing demographics of students (Donaldson & Graham, 1999; Kambutu, 2005; Levine, 1997; Levine 2001; Morey, 2004). The majority of enrollment growths in the 1980s and 1990s were students “...over the age of 25, women, working adults, and part-time attenders” (Levine, 2001, p. 256). The U.S. Department of Education’s

Commission on the Future of Higher Education (2006) provided sobering data on the number of non-traditional or adult learners within the higher education environment, nearly 40 percent of today's postsecondary students are self-supporting adults age 24 and up almost half attend school part-time, more than one-third work full-time, 27 percent have children themselves. In 2005, more than 12 million adults age 25 and older participated in credential or degree-granting programs in colleges and universities (p. 8).

Furthermore, the National Center for Educational Statistics predicted by 2015 the growing adult population will be coupled with a decline in 18-24 year old students. This demographic shift has established a new type of student with different motives and needs for education (Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008; O'Donnell, 2006). With the ability to access higher education, adult learners are being provided a means to achieve social mobility, including increasing or preserving their financial viability, improving or at least finding stability in their work environment, and seeking life opportunities (Kasworm, 2003; Rossiter, 2009; U.S. Department of Higher Education). In addition, these adult learners view education as a service and are determined to access learning in new and innovative ways (Armstrong, 2001; Levine; Morey; U.S. Department of Higher Education).

The demographic transformation presents unique challenges for higher education leaders because the services and delivery styles required to educate these students are unlike the ones for the 18-24 year old student attending on a traditional campus (Giancola, Munz, & Trares, 2008, year; Levine, 2001; Kasworm, 2003; Morey, 2004; Shoemaker, 2008). Levine (2001) affirmed, "...nontraditional students...are likely to force colleges

and universities to provide new forms of instruction and formats” (p. 257). These students perceive education, particularly higher education, as a means to gain practical application of knowledge. However, these students lack interest in the traditional socialization customs of a university setting (Armstrong, 2001; Graham & Donaldson, 1999; Kasworm, 2009).

This adult learner seeks a different type of relationship with their college, “...they want their colleges to be convenient, accessible, high quality for low cost, open during the evenings and on weekends, and have helpful staff, available parking, and no waiting in long lines” (Morey, 2004, p. 135). Compared to traditional students, adult students have to balance their education with work, family, and a multitude of other demands (Giancola, Grawitch, & Borchert, 2009; Ritt, 2008; Ross-Gordon, 2011). These students prefer the accessibility of distance education or a residential campus because they are able to engage in learning at or close to their home or office (Kambutu, 2005; Levine, 1997; Thelin, 2004). More importantly, the activities and recreational facilities prevalent on a traditional campus are not desired by the adult learner (Fairchild, 2003; Morey). For this student type, higher education is viewed in the same way as their bank and grocery store, “...in which they engage every day and they value convenience, quality, service and cost” (Levine, 1997, p. 7). Therefore, the growing numbers of adult and part-time students are unable or not willing to be served by the traditional four year campus delivery method, creating an increase in competition from other educational sources (Levine, 1997; Morey; Ogren, 2003).

## *Competition*

Historically, colleges and universities have always embraced the competitive spirit that instills collegiality and a sense of pride for ones' institution. Armstrong (2001) inferred "...while some of these competitions can be longstanding and quite passionate...on the athletic field, [and] for faculty, students, donors and grants...they do not cause fundamental changes in the institutions involved" (p. 479). Nevertheless, competition from other sources are forcing institutions to relinquish the "...sheltered status" that they have grown accustomed to and engage within a competitive environment requiring a commitment to revamping their current educational delivery practices (Armstrong, p. 479; Levine 2001). Two year community colleges and for-profit institutions have emerged as tough competitors for traditional four year institutions, as they have responded quickly to the crisis of a changing student population, rising tuition costs, and financing and accessing education (Amey, 2006; Trow, 1996; Conner & Rabovsky, 2011; Levine, 2001; Morey, 2004; Weidner, 2010). Therefore, educational leaders need to be flexible and innovative in contending with these new educational rivalries. Further examination of these competitive sources, community colleges and for-profit institutions will provide an understanding of their impact on higher education.

Community colleges have steadily become a recognized educational delivery method for many Americans that are "...going to college" (Thelin, 2004, p. 322; Trow, 1996). However, this has not always been the case. Two year community colleges became a viable choice during the higher education transformation years from 1965-1980 challenging the concept of what the four year universities known as the "...real college experience" (Thelin, p. 322). Thelin stated, "...freshman enrollments grew over 15%....,

but the significant (and often overlooked) corollary was that most ‘freshman’ did not attend a four-year residential campus” (p. 322). In recent years, the community college continued enrollment growth has existed through being a starter school for many adult students. Data indicated community college enrollments are currently comprised between 43% to 60 % adult students, with the average age of 25 years old (Aslanian, 2007; Kasworm, 2005; National Center for Education Statistics, 2006; Ritt, 2008). The dramatic shift from students seeking a traditional four-year experience and instead electing to attend two years at a community college is extensively related to finances. “In recent years, with the decrease of funding, downward economy (including loss of jobs), and an increase of university tuition costs, community college enrollments have soared providing a place for many students to begin their college experience” (US Department of Education, 2006, p. 8).

In addition, access to education has been a secondary reason for community college enrollment growth. With the increasing number of adult learners in the market, available education close to home is a practical option for many students (Morey, 2004). Public university administrators recognized the changing shift, and responded through creating articulation agreements with community colleges to ease students’ transfer issues from one institution to the next (Thelin). Conversely, the for-profit colleges and universities acted in a more aggressive manner to students seeking to complete their degree by catering new delivery styles including online learning, distant education, and convenient off-campus facilities (Sperling & Tucker, 1997). They also accommodated adult students by providing excellent customer service tailored to their needs (Armstrong, 2001; Sperling & Tucker). Existing literature on for-profit institutions will provide a

better understanding of their contributions to four-year universities initiating new deliver styles to serve a changing student population.

That which has fueled the growth of for-profit competition is students are no longer the 18-24 year old, attending full time and living in a dorm or close to a traditional university (Levine, 2001; Morey, 2004) In fact, it has been reported that only 16% of students are considered attending college in a traditional format (Levine, p. 256; Stokes, 2005). In 1973, the Institute of Professional Development (IPD) recognized the change in student demographic and created an adult-centered educational model to serve the needs of the new and growing student type. The IPD introduced the model to the University of San Francisco and became the prototype adopted by the most prominent known for-profit institution, the University of Phoenix (Sperling & Tucker, 1997). Since then several other private institutions have adopted the model, but the basic principles have stayed the same, including:

- focusing on “...working professionals and those who aspire to professional positions;”
- recruiting faculty who are working professional in the field they are teaching; recognizing students are considered “...valuable customers;”  
and
- understanding the educational delivery process is governed by an academic institution, but ran as a for-profit business (Sperling & Tucker, p. viii.).

Enrollment for these institutions has risen between the range of 10 to 20 percent every year, and they presented a new and formidable competition for public four year

institutions (Bosworth, 2008; Maehl, 2004). The importance of for-profit institutions is they presented options to obtain an education for an underserved population. They are also focused towards privatizing higher education (Armstrong, 2001; Morey, 2004; Pusser & Doane, 2001).

Higher education is an attractive industry for being privatized or instituting an entrepreneurial model because although it is perceived "...as weak and slow to change...it generates an enormous amount of cash; and its market is increasing and growing global" (Levine, 2001, p. 259). Currently, higher education is a 250 billion dollar industry requiring students to make a 2-4 year investment in education (Levine, 2001). These students viewed as customers offer a consistent revenue stream for an institution.

In addition, higher education is "...countercyclical" meaning if the economy is in a decline, individuals are more likely to enroll in programs to improve or make themselves more marketable (Levine, 2001 p. 259). Finally, another important appealing feature to privatizing higher education is federal financial aid, which provides the opportunity for students to access education, while institutions have security that students will be able to pay their tuition (Levine; Sperling & Tucker, 1997; Thelin, 2004; Trow, 1996). Conversely, not all researchers share or promote the idea of privatization and entrepreneurship. Trow believed compared to European universities, privatization provided: "...unnecessary diversity, lack of co-ordination or central control over quality, inefficient duplication, waste and the absence of continuity" (p. 28). However, Sperling and Tucker, and Benjamin (2003) agreed, for the American economy to survive and compete within a global market, there has to be a focus on investing in human capital.

Community colleges and for-profit schools have invested in human capital through offering classes and programs at times and locations that meet the consumer's schedule (Sperling & Tucker). Therefore, the privatization of higher education has forced university leaders to think differently about program delivery methods and the possibilities of finding new revenue streams (Bosworth, 2008).

Besides a changing student population and a rise of competition, technology (Amey, 2006; King, 2001) has become a mechanism to advance the delivery of classes and programs, including online and distance education. Therefore, technology is a contributing influence and should be discussed in relationship to off-campus facilities.

### *Technology*

In essence, technology can be credited for revolutionizing higher education (Amey, 2006; King, 2001; Levine 2001). This median of electronic communication has provided universities the opportunities to expand their reach and students the opportunity to engage in learning which previously might have been impossible (Gabor & Heggan; Rodriquez & Smith Nash, 2004; Shoemaker, 2008; Venable, 2010). Universities have utilized the power of technology through devoting more manpower and financial resources to educate the new consumer (University Continuing Education Association, 2006). These consumers have embraced technology and its devices. In 2005, 96 percent of college students owned a desktop computer and more than 90 percent of students owned two technological devices, including: desktop computer, laptop, music device, wireless adaptor, or smart phone (University Continuing Education Association, 2006). The technology devices serve as mechanisms to take classes and receive services at undesignated time frames and innovative delivery modes (Venable).

Technologies have influenced a different type of university setting. Levine (2001) believed there will be three types of campuses: *brick universities*, *click universities*, and *brick and click universities*. The differences between the three types consist of: *brick universities* are residential colleges that serve the traditional student; *click universities* are online or distance education learning, solely offered through a technology apparatus; and *brick & click universities* are institutions offering both technology and face-to-face delivery methods. Levine considered the *brick and click universities* to be a competitive market for the future of higher education. His reasoning is similar to the online consumer:

While consumers appreciate the convenience, ease, and time independent nature of shopping on-line, they also want the physical presence of the store for returning merchandise, getting expert advice, trying on and viewing products, and having interaction with sales people and even other customers (p. 263).

While technology has been a critical part in revolutionizing how education is delivered, students still require a convenient location to engage personally with faculty and staff. In response to these additional stressors, consisting of: financial concerns, changing demographics, competition and technology, institutions formed or expanded their continuing education units to address these issues (Armstrong, 2001; Edelson, 1992; Thelin, 2004; Tracey, 2004).

### Continuing Education

Although seen as a rather new phenomenon in higher education, public institutions have had continuing education units since the 1940's (Schejbal & Wilson, 2008; Shoemaker, 2008). The purpose behind creating continuing education units was to function outside the boundaries of an institution, including being flexible and innovative

in offering educational opportunities off-campus, along with responding to business and industry needs (Armstrong, 2001; Downey, Pusser & Turner, 2006; Kaplan, 2004; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008; Shoemaker; Vallett, 2010; Weidner, 2010). Because of their entrepreneurial spirit, these units began to be noticed by their own administration to address the growing pressures of waning financial budgets, changing student demographics, competing educational sources and the introduction of new technology (Tracey, 2004). However, their agility makes each continuing education unit appear differently from one institution to the next. In fact, the ambiguity of these divisions presents difficulty in providing a uniform definition of continuing education. Schejbal and Wilson delineated:

Use the term ‘continuing education’ rather loosely because the boundaries of what fits into continuing education units from one institution to another are extremely fuzzy, so keeping the concept defined to one institution will not fit another (p. 33).

In addition, “...little empirical research has been conducted on continuing education programs and the students who enroll in them,” thus, it is complex to apply one encompassing definition for continuing education (Armstrong, 2001; Courtenay, 1990; Downey, Pusser, & Turner, 2006, p. 75).

A broad definition for continuing education is it “...extends the knowledge and research created at a university to audiences that would otherwise not benefit from it” (Schejbal & Wilson, 2008, p. 33). Downey, Pusser, and Turner (2006) attempted to categorize continuing education when they stated “...the range of programs and services that provide workforce training, adult basic education, academic transfer curricula, personal enrichment, and community outreach courses” (p. 75). What is absent from both

of these definitions is the financial bottom line. While, continuing education cultivates opportunities for the common good, it is considered an economic arm of higher education and without its revenue generation could significantly hinder many universities' operations and programs (Armstrong, 2001; Schejbal & Wilson; Tracey, 2004). With understanding the financial impact these units bring to the institutions they serve, Kaplan (2004) believed in a traditional sense of continuing education which offers credit and noncredit programs to working adults who are unable to attend in a conventional on-campus format. In many instances, off-campus centers are positioned within continuing education departments because of their purpose to serve adult students away from the main campus and provide an additional revenue source for its university's financial bottom line (Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Shoemaker, 2008; Thelin, 2004). Yet, beyond its definition, continuing education has operational functions that cause disparity within the administrative processes of an institution.

Universities created their continuing education units to be "...non-traditional in structure and mission, but need[ing] to mesh with the traditional structure and organization of a college or university" (Shoemaker, 2008, p. XXX). This can lead to tension, between the continuing education unit and the traditional structure of the university (Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Shoemaker, 2008). Areas such as: operations, marketing and outreach, and delivery methods are sometimes separate functions offered through a continuing education unit (Brown, 2004; Flint, 2008; Shoemaker, 2008). For example, in many cases the continuing education unit processes its own applications, enrollments, payment of teachers, and curriculum planning (Tracey, 2004). Since their operational practices are not integrated into the standard administrative procedures this

can lead to "...inefficiency and rigidity" within the overall institution's operational system (Tracey, p. 50). Additionally, continuing education often performs its own marketing and outreach, including: advertising, recruitment, enrollment, student services and library access (Brown; Flint). Continuing education units offer these functions separately than the main campus because they are recruiting and serving a different type of student, and are required to go "...to the places adults live and work, rather than waiting for them to come to campus" (Flint, p. 13). Furthermore, continuing education units are known for their different types of delivery methods at on and off-campus facilities. Currently, the most common methods, according to Tracey, consist of: distance learning (online and interactive television), traditional face-to-face and blended approach (face-to-face and online). While many institutions are starting to embrace a variety of delivery methods university wide, there is sometimes a feeling with traditional faculty that the programs offered through continuing education do not possess equivalent academic standards to the main campus instruction (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). All of these are ongoing issues which continuing education units and off-campus centers face when interfacing with their main campus counterparts. Thus, when conducting outreach initiatives, continuing education and off-campus center leaders need to possess savvy negotiation and relationship building skills to gain the trust of on-campus faculty and personnel (Flora & Hirt, 2008). In addition, the leaders also need to create an environment that is appealing for academic departments to take risks of offering educational programming off-campus and to an adult student market (Donaldson, 1992; Edelson, 1992). As Lehr (2003) postulated, "...where there is trust there is likely to be risk-taking, and where there is risk-taking, there is likely to be growth" (p. 57). Further

information on the uniqueness of off-campus centers will provide insight into the essential leadership skills needed by these leaders when facilitating educational programming outside the conventional university practices and procedures.

### Off-Campus Centers

In an effort to better understand the role of off-campus facilities, Gabor and Heggan (1995) provided an extensive monograph, called *The Off-Campus Center*, which defined and highlighted several aspects and functions of off-campus centers. The researchers concluded "...whether offered for career advancement or personal enrichment, programs are moving off campus to facilities and sites that have become extensions and satellites of colleges and universities" (p. 1). Gabor and Heggan provided further evidence of the primary reason for institutions building an off-campus center. In their research 129 out of 150 (86%) public, private and for-profit institutions surveyed cited "...service to the community" as their decision to establish an off-campus center (p. 7). As a division within continuing education, the purpose of off-campus centers is to extend the institution's learning environment in effort to improve the intellectual capital and quality of life of its regional constituents (O'Neill, 2005; Shoemaker, 2008). While these centers serve as connective links within their regional communities, the elements of facilities themselves and the issues their administrators encounter are significantly different than what is faced by their main campus counterparts.

#### *Description of Off-Campus Centers*

The intent of off-campus centers is to mirror the educational programming and setting of their main institution (Manzo, 1997). These centers offer a smaller scale environment compared to large buildings and recreational facilities that are present on a

college or university campus (Fairchild, 2003; Morey, 2004). To illustrate, 72% of the institutions surveyed in the Gabor and Heggan (1995) study had locations less than 15,000 square feet, with the public institutions utilizing space differently than their for-profit counterparts. Typically, private institutions which on average are larger than public off-campus facilities primarily use their space for classrooms, while public institutions utilize space to offer additional services, including: office space, vending options, computers labs, and telecommunication connections (Gabor & Heggan, Manzo). Institutions have chosen to create these sites rather than rent rooms in existing community structures because as Aslanian (2007) explained "...for courses delivered off campus, undergraduate adult students prefer to take their courses at a facility owned or leased by the college, as opposed to another venue in the community (e.g., library, hotel, office building, etc.)" (p. 17). Although many of these centers possess similar attributes from one institution to the next, there have been few parameters determined of what an off-campus center should emulate (The Higher Learning Commission, 2011; Gabor & Heggan).

The leading accreditation authority, The Higher Learning Commission (2011), provided vague guidelines for off-campus centers. Their description of additional locations is having a geographically separate site from the main campus, where instruction is delivered to any number of students. Although, there is ambiguity on the guidelines, Gabor and Heggan (1995) found the centers may have limited administrative staff and can be supplemented through distance learning technology, including: online and interactive television. Therefore, when institutions are considering creating an effective learning environment at an off-campus location, the educational delivery

methods and services should be focused on its primary customer, the adult learner (Pappas & Jerman, 2004).

### *Effective Learning Environment of Off-Campus Centers*

In the process of creating an effective learning environment for an off-campus center, it is important to revisit the demographic of whom these facilities are serving. Since a majority of these students are adult learners, with an overwhelming 91% taking classes part-time, Pappas and Jerman (2004) inferred universities should consider the unique desires of adult students and create the necessary environment to support their needs (Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Manzo, 1997). Adult students at off-campus centers may require different services than their counterparts on the main campus,

These are the individuals who want to be able to use their major credit card in the bookstore; they want to spread their tuition payments over three or four months.

Childcare, a place to grab a quick sandwich, a secure spot to stash their knapsacks, and a financial aid office open in the evening are very attractive pluses (Sevier, 2002, p. 15).

Additionally, staff should try to focus on the services that ease the burden of students when taking classes, to include but limited to the following: free parking; advisement; textbooks; photocopying; library access; and testing examinations (Gabor & Heggan; Manzo). Along with the advancements in technology, these off-campus centers offer an appropriate environment for students to engage in effective learning (Gabor & Heggan; Rodriquez & Smith Nash, 2004).

Another essential tool for serving adult learners is the use of technology at off-campus centers. The advancements in educational technology have "...fundamentally

changed adult education” and have provided “...options to students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue higher education” (Rodriquez & Smith Nash, 2004, p. 73). Whether transmitting through interactive television, taking a class online, or augmenting face-to-face classes with virtual resources, adult learners rely on technology to enhance their learning (Pappas & Jerman, 2004; Rodriquez & Smith Nash). Gabor and Heggan (1995) concluded, the use of distance education technologies will continue to be an important aspect of off-campus centers. Nevertheless, skeptics are suspicious on the quality of these centers and their programs compared to their main campus learning environments (Gabor & Heggan; Sperling & Tucker, 1997). Thus, for the purpose of this research study, issues with quality are examined.

#### *Issues of Quality with Off-Campus Centers*

Undoubtedly, the major concern off-campus centers encounter is the perception that the education programming and delivery methods lack the quality of what is being taught within a university environment (Sperling & Tucker, 1997). Some of the outspoken opponents to off-campus centers’ courses and degree programs are the faculty who reside at its home institution. Gabor and Heggan (1995) contended off-campus centers have been perceived as lesser by the peer faculty of the institution, including lower educational standards and inferior teaching strategies. The reason for their skepticism is the faculty believes the environment and instruction should be *identical* to what is offered within the larger institutional setting (Gabor & Heggan). However, trying to recreate the massive educational environment of an institution is not a feasible option. Rather, the objective of the off-campus center is to create a *comparable* environment with quality programming, equivalent student outcomes, and services design for the adult

learner (Gabor & Heggan; Manzo, 1997; Sperling & Tucker). Aslanian (2007) portrayed what students desire from their educational experience, "...undergraduate adult students continue to care most about the quality of the programs, the quality of the faculty, and the scheduling and location of the courses" (p. 17). Nevertheless, negative opinions concerning being a lesser educational provider can be difficult to overcome and serve as a constant battle for continuing education units and off-campus centers. Shoemaker (2008) believed this can "...[contribute] to a poor self-image for the continuing education staff" (p. 22). Basically, being looked down upon, and referred to as inferior does not provide "...a strong path for growing larger" (p. 22). Thus, the role of an off-campus administrator encompasses several skill sets in being an advocate for off-campus programming, a collaborator with main campus administrators, and liaison within the community they are serving (Flora & Hirt, 2008).

#### *Paradox of Off-Campus Administrators*

The paradox of the role of the off-campus administrator is the fact that these individuals serve as the primary representative within their community. In many instances the director might engage in creating partnerships, participating in civic engagement, and identifying opportunities for new educational outreach; while at the same time having a unilateral relationship with their institution having to rely on direction and resources to exist (Flora & Hirt, 2008). The expertise of the administrator are often transparent and rarely utilized by the administration in matters pertaining to the institution (Flora & Hirt).

Within the scope of this study, Flora and Hirt (2008) provided the only known research on administrators who work in an off-campus environment. Their study focused

on the job satisfaction of higher education center administrators and basically described the position as "...an amalgamation of an entire college or university system" (p. 46).

The researchers further outlined the job duties, when they stated

[Off-campus center administrators] are engaged in public relations work (e.g., marketing advertising), faculty recruitment work (e.g., intimate knowledge of program requirements and curriculum), entrepreneurialism (e.g., seeking new opportunities), administration (e.g., supervision, resource allocation), and student affairs work (e.g., advising, admissions, student support services)...in addition to generating financial resources such as tuition and revenue, off campus administrators serve [as] a major human resource (p. 46).

Therefore, these administrators should embrace a leadership style that is inviting and engaging to a variety of stakeholders inside the organization and outside in the community (Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

### Leadership

When discussing the roles of off-campus administrators, Bush (2003) believed the educational environment has never been more buoyant for high-quality leadership. The understanding that effective leadership is key to achieving desirable outcomes, has resulted it being the "...subject of much thought, discussion, writing, teaching, and learning" (Bush; DePree, 2010, p. 5; Yukl, 2006). Yet, using leadership as an overarching theoretical framework presents the difficult task of defining it. Some theorists contended, leadership can only be seen from individual's perspective and it is not a "...one-size-fits-all proposition" (Burns, 1978; Duke, 1998; Greenfield, 1984; Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 1; Yukl). As Duke metaphorically stated, "...trying to understand leadership is a little bit

like watching a parade. What you see depends on where you stand” (p. 165). However, even with the indistinctness when defining leadership, Kouzes and Posner (1997; 2003) inferred leadership is not magical or mystical, it has an observable set of practices and to become an effective leader, a person should watch and emulate others with good leadership skills. Therefore, for the purpose of this research study, a theoretical framework of leadership will be provided through synthesizing existing literature.

### *Theoretical Framework of Leadership*

In understanding the conceptual framework of invitational leadership, the evolution of leadership theory should be noted (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Historically, leadership can be traced back to early religious tradition whereas leaders believed in the importance of hierarchy and prophetic knowledge (Edelson, 1992; Heslep, 1997). As a result, the study of leadership for several years focused on leader-centered theories (Bush, 2003; Duke, 1998). Research of these theories targeted the leaders influence on followers; with the followers being studied as objects of the leaders’ influence (Yukl, 2006). This is significant in understanding how leadership progressed to equating positional authority with the ability to lead others (Bolman & Deal, 2008). As Heifetz (2001) explained, “...routinely [we] call leaders those who achieve high positions of authority even though, on reflection, we readily acknowledge the frequent lack of leadership they provide” (p. 49). Within recent years, researchers have embraced leadership theories who which promote a moral obligation of the leader to engage in a reciprocal influence, or collaborative flow of information between employees and the organizational leader (Bolman & Deal, 2002; Burns, 1978; Cleveland, 2002; Edelson; Greenleaf, 2002; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Spears, 2002; Yukl). As Preskill and Brookfield (2009) indicated

“...every person in the organization or community has something valuable to teach and that everyone can contribute something for the good of the group” (p. 21).

A mutual definition of leadership is a leader who guides and influences others on a specific vision or dream. This process of facilitating cooperative efforts is accomplished through shared objectives (Bennis, 1989; Burns, 1978; Harris & Cullen, 2007; Purkey & Seigel, 2003; Yukl, 2006). Gardener (1990) provided a succinct definition, when he stated “...the process of persuasion by example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives...shared by the leader and his or her followers” (p. 1). The definition presents a basic outline for leadership, which moves leadership beyond being leader-centered to focus on theories of shared leadership and mutual influence (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Shoemaker, 2008; Yukl). “New theories emphasize the importance of emotional reactions by followers to leaders, whereas the earlier theories emphasized... aspects of leader-follower interactions” (Yukl, p. 272). As an emerging theory, invitational leadership, Purkey and Siegel (2003) has several identical features with transformational and servant leadership, consisting of: shared leadership, creation of vision, communication, and personal characteristics (Bush, 2003; Greenleaf, 1996; Yukl). However, the difference between these theories is that invitational leadership extends further to include a holistic approach to leadership. This leadership theory was developed with educational leaders in mind because leadership cannot be a series of “...isolated habits, behaviors, or skills,” but rather an encompassing model that effects both a person’s personal and professional life (Lehr, 2003; Purkey & Seigel, p.2). To understand how invitational leadership is an appropriate theory to study off-campus center administrators, a review of two prominent guiding theories educational, and adult and

continuing education are presented (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Bush, 2003; Donaldson, 1992; Edelson, 1992). These two theories are heavily relied upon as frameworks for studying higher education institutions, continuing education units, and their administrators (Bolman & Deal; Bush; Donaldson; Edelson, 1992).

### *Educational Leadership – Higher Education*

The basis for educational leadership was originally shaped from business management theories, often known as the managerial approach (Amey, 2006; Bush, 2003; Duke, 1998; Taylor, 1947). Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) defined it as a rational, hierarchical approach, whereas, if the leader administers the necessary functions and tasks of the organization, the operation will be successful. Where higher education leadership separated itself from industry was having its members isolated from a hierarchical system, allowing them to explore their profession (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Heslep, 1997). Hamilton (2000) inferred, "...the mission of higher education is to create and disseminate knowledge. Knowledge creation includes the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching" (p. 14). Thus, many higher education universities operate as a professional bureaucracy, signifying the largest core of the structure is operations compared to the remainder of the other parts, including administration (Bolman & Deal, Mintzberg, 1979). While higher education fosters an environment to create new knowledge; ironically, these institutions have longstanding struggles between leaders and professionals, usually resulting in reluctance to change and lack of responding to external needs (Bolman & Deal). Nevertheless, the higher education environment and its leadership is experiencing transformation in response to the declining economy and an anxious political landscape (Hudzik, 2010; Nixon, 1996;

Thelin, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Corporations are becoming more reliant on the knowledge of colleges and universities requiring collaborative initiatives performed in a timely manner (Smith & Adams, 2008). In addition, states are requiring more accountability from institutions that receive public funding (Smith & Adams). As Duignan and Macpherson (1993) stated, "...educational leaders are faced with pluralistic and sometimes competing or conflicting demands or expectations" (p.9).

In an effort to respond to new concerns, educational leadership theory has evolved to include administrators addressing issues as business opportunities rather than the traditional approach of administrative control (Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Rich, 2006; Whetten & Cameron, 1985). Rich (2006) encouraged "... administrators to view the challenges to higher education as business problems requiring business solutions," meaning for leaders to be effective they have to take the "...initiative to make things happen" (p. 38; Whetten & Cameron, p. 460). In fact, educational leaders need to embrace entrepreneurial skills in collaborating on new enterprising ideas to progress their institutions and learning environments. Thus, leaders have to be able to manage, as well as, evolve and at the same time communicating the goals of the organization, college, and department (Bush, 2003; Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001). At first review, educational leadership could be regarded as a suitable theory to study off-campus center administrators. However, educational leadership is a theory based on the broad spectrum of higher education leaders that still embraces an overriding purpose for institutions to focus on teaching and learning (Bush; Nixon, 1996). This theory does not provide an encompassing leadership style that is necessary for the diversity of an off-campus center administrators' role of being an educational, communal, and civic leader (Flora & Hirt,

2008). Nonetheless, a theory that fosters the belief leaders need to be entrepreneurial and lead within a variety of settings is adult and continuing education leadership (Donaldson, 1992; Edelson, 1992; Shoemaker, 2008).

### *Adult and Continuing Education Leadership*

Adult and continuing educational leadership has its origin from management concepts similar to the broader theory of educational leadership. As Edelson (1992) stated, "...leadership in adult and continuing education is culture-bound and therefore heavily influenced by the traditions passed on to us from other institutions in our society, especially the military, the church, and the corporation" (p. 6). Yet, this leadership style veered from educational leadership with its primary focus on adult learners and off-campus delivery methods (Donaldson, 1992; Shoemaker, 2008). These leaders are accustomed to working within an entrepreneurial model which encourages embracing the barriers of dwindling budgets, changing demographics, competing entities and technological innovations, which they consider "...business as usual" (Cleveland, 2002; Donaldson; Edelson, pp. 13-14). While continuing education units vary in size and structure from one institution to the next, Edelson believed five categories emerged as formative leadership influences on adult and continuing education. These categories (thus which comprises the 5 p's) consisted of program leadership, policy leadership, political leadership, leadership of people, and leadership within the profession. A description of each is listed:

*Program*            managing and delivering a program effectively provides the structural foundation for adult and continuing education makes it a viable option to its students and other stakeholders;

- Policy* develops mission statements that pertain to adult learners with the understanding of the larger parent organization goals and objectives;
- Political* lead within a political terrain of being a subsystem within a larger organization, while at the same time having subunits within your division competing for resources to offer programs;
- People* recognize the importance of human and intellectual capital of your organization;
- Profession* participant in professional associations, along with professional development to "...influence the evolution of adult and continuing education" (Edelson, p. 13).

Edelson affirmed these theories serve as a guiding influence for the comprehensive adult and continuing education leadership definition. Essential features of the definition consist of: the leader should establish a vision and formulate strategies to achieve the vision; and in addition, perform the management tasks of developing, implementing, and organizing programs and personnel (Donaldson; Shoemaker). Although, this leadership style values a leader's sense of purpose or vision, it lacks the quorum moral leadership needed between leaders and followers (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Greenleaf, 2002; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Spears, 2002). In addition, considering its background in management theory, Donaldson claimed "...we are guided as much or more by generic management and leadership concepts as by those that are particular to our practice" (p. 18). As remote facility leaders engage with a variety of stakeholders including faculty, students, administrators, and community members within the decision- making process, it

is necessary for the leader to appeal to the followers' moral values (Bolman & Deal, 2002; Burns, 1978; Chopra, 2002; Heslep, 1997; Hoyle, 2002; Farling, Stone, & Winston, 1999; Spears, 2002). Invitational leadership differs from educational and adult and continuing education by being a holistic approach to leadership that "...encourages leaders to pursue more joyful and more meaningful personal and professional lives" through the four principles of: respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 3).

### *Invitational Leadership*

In analyzing invitational leadership an important aspect is the belief all "...people are motivated" and rather than spending time on motivation, leaders instead "...seek to unleash each person's intrinsic energy by summoning people cordially to see themselves as capable of tackling tough challenges, overcoming obstacles, and accomplishing great things" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 5). Kouzes and Posner (2003) affirmed from existing literature, including their own, for individuals to work to their highest potential, internal motivation is necessary. Therefore, Purkey & Siegel defined the four principles of invitational leadership as:

- Respect - believing all people are valuable and should be treated in a caring manner;
- Trust - possessing confidence and predictability of others' abilities and integrity;
- Optimism - understanding that human potential is untapped and that every person is "...capable of self-direction and should be treated accordingly" (p. 15);

Intention - implying leaders have "...a choice and a desire to be respectful, trustworthy, and optimistic" (p. 20).

These principles take the form of a "...inviting stance" which is applied to the total environment, known as the five "P's": people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p.12). Similar to the leadership theories (program, policy, political, people and profession) used to guide adult and continuing education leadership, invitational leadership five P's represent all aspects of a leaders' personal relationships and physical surroundings, including connections with family, friends, colleagues, and customers; and the physical environment of home and work (Day, Harris, & Hatfield, 2001; Edelson, 1992; Fry, Kisselburgh, & Butts, 2007). In regard to off-campus centers, these administrators are immersed within their communities personally and professionally, therefore, these leaders should be aware of their inviting stances within these discontinuous environments (Novak & Purkey; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). However, invitational leadership recognizes the different type of inviting stances leaders can choose to utilize (Day, Harris, & Hadfield; Novak & Purkey; Purkey & Siegel).

Invitational leadership recognizes four types of invites, which consist of: intentional disinventing, unintentional disinventing, unintentional inviting, and intentional inviting (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

*Intentional uninviting* – the most toxic form of leadership, whereas the leader purposely embarrasses or discourages individuals by design (Novak & Purkey, p. 20; Purkey & Siegel, p. 53);

*Unintentional disinventing* – the leader unknowingly creates a negative environment, including engaging in careless and inappropriate behavior (Novak & Purkey, p. 21; Purkey & Siegel, p. 57);

*Unintentional inviting* – sometimes known as the born leaders, these individuals possess leadership characteristics, but without a plan (Novak & Purkey, p. 22; Purkey & Siegel, p. 65);

*Intentional inviting* – the leader chooses appropriate behaviors and conducts careful planning to act accordingly (Novak & Purkey, p. 23; Purkey & Siegel, pp. 67-68).

Of course, the goal for a leader is to be inviting, but Purkey and Siegel (2003) contended, "...intentionality allows invitational leaders to achieve direction, purpose, and skill in their actions" (p. 67). Egley (2003) considered this type of leadership to be a refreshing change from other theories which focus on positional authority, whereas invitational promotes respect and collaboration (Bush, 2003). In higher education, several strong leadership theories have emerged, but none covering all four principles and their application to the total environment (Purkey & Siegel).

Within the landscapes of higher education, invitational leadership can serve as a valuable theory for administrators (Novak & Rocca, 2006; Purkey & Novak, 2008). When applying the principles of invitational leadership to an off-campus center, the primary purpose is to create an inviting environment where students, faculty, and staff feel safe and comfortable and at the same time conducive for academic and organizational success (Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004). Further analysis of invitational leadership and its four principles of: respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality molded

into the five P's - people, places, policies, programs and processes will provide awareness of how it guides off-campus center leaders (Purkey & Novak 2008 Purkey & Siegel, 2003). The five P's represent how invitational leadership principles can be applied to an off-campus center environment, below is a more comprehensive description of each of these areas.

### *People*

For off-campus leaders utilizing the invitational leadership theory, people should be considered as the central ingredient (Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004). The most important aspect for leadership is developing relationships, because people maintain positive patterns through interpersonal communication (Novak & Purkey, 2001).

Invitational leaders accomplish these relationships through focusing on a communal environment and having a commitment to employees, students, and colleagues (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). In doing so, they exhibit the principles of respect and trust (Purkey & Siegel).

### *Places*

“Places are powerful, and they can influence the performance and satisfaction of all who inhabit the school” (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17). The physical environment should represent intentionality in it being functional, attractive, and clean. This includes such items as keeping hallways and bathrooms well-lit and temperature consistent (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). The effect of a positive setting improves the level of “...morale, satisfaction, productivity, creativity, and customer service” (Purkey & Siegel, p. 118). In addition, the atmosphere should represent a caring center. For example, Lee and Ho (2006) presented a description of their school “...as with all inviting schools, visitors are

greeted warmly at the counter by our minor staff. The electronic notice board also displays welcome signs and important notices of the day” (p. 179). The physical environment is the easiest for an invitational leader to remediate; however, it is sometimes overlooked (Purkey & Siegel).

### *Policies*

Policies consist of the written and unwritten “...directives, codes, and rules” used to regulate schools (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17). Similar to places, policies represent the ideas and feeling of the people who create them. Although, policies can sometimes be contrived for a well-meaning purpose, the invitational leader should be aware of its impact, “[policies] sometimes contribute to the difficulties encountered by the very people they are designed to serve” (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 123). Inside the environment of an off-campus center setting, policies should be made with the principles of optimism and intentionality in mind (Asbill, 2006). Therefore, what you are trying to convey and how it will impact the constituents should be addressed.

### *Programs*

Programs should be designed to “...work for the benefit of everyone and...encourage active engagement with significant content” (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 18). At an institution, several programs exist for employees and students, including: wellness programs, training seminars, retirement planning and recruitment activities (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). An important aspect is to make sure the programs do not portray elitist, sexist, or other discriminating features that could affect the purpose of the program (Novak & Purkey; Purkey & Siegel; Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004). Furthermore,

Ouchi (1981) believed programs should convey respect and trust and should be created through a collaborative decision-making process.

### *Processes*

Processes represent the final P and provide a vehicle to orchestrate the other four P's. As Purkey and Siegel (2003) contended, "...process is the bottom line in Invitational Leadership for it reveals how the other four 'P's' fit together to support a culture of respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality" (p. 132). The invitational leader establishes these processes through a collaborative effort between faculty, students, and staff (Chan, 2006; Novak & Purkey, 2001). This could be conceptualized by asking for input from all three groups through surveys, focus groups, or informal conversations. The important aspect is that there is shared leadership in developing these processes.

The five P's provide a framework for leaders to incorporate the principles of invitational leadership into an off-campus setting (Asbill, 2006; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Novak, 2008; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Through the delineation of educational, and adult and continuing education theories, this style integrates the theories used to influence adult and continuing education, while applying a holistic, moral approach to leadership (Bush, 2003; Edelson, 1992; Novak & Purkey; Purkey & Novak; Purkey & Siegel). In addition, invitational leadership focuses on the intentionality or willingness to lead others (Greenfield, 1984). However, other theories including transformational and servant embrace the moral approach to leadership (Burns, 1978; Bush, 2003; Greenleaf; Purkey & Siegel, Spears, 2002; Yukl, 2006).

### *Comparison of Leadership Theories*

When describing moral leadership, Burns (1978) believed, "...leadership is a process of morality to the degree that leaders engage with followers on the basis of shared motives and values and goals" (p. 36). Transformational, servant, and invitational leadership theories share similar attributes of moral responsibility, purpose, and collaboration between the leader and followers in pursuing higher level goals and creating a vision (Burns; Bush, 2003; Greenleaf, 1996; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Yukl, 2006). However, where these theories differ is in the leader's approach in engaging with followers and pursuing mutual objectives (Bush). Thus, for the purpose of this research study, a further examination of transformation and servant administration strengthens the utilization of invitational leadership as the appropriate theory to study off-campus center administrators.

### *Transformational Leadership*

The definition of transformational leadership has endured numerous iterations, but it basically it can be agreed upon as a leader who moves or transforms an organization and its members to believe in themselves and their mission and goals (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003, p. 209; Burns, 1978; Bush, 2003; Muijs, Harris, Lumby, Morrison, & Sood, 2006, p. 88). Transformational leaders often have similar characteristic traits to charismatic and inspirational leaders, including inspiring and empowering followers to embrace shared goals; despite the fact that, Yukl (2006) believed charisma is not a required trait for transformational leaders to make changes within an organization (Rose, 1992). Bass, et al. offered four critical components of transformational leaders should embrace, to include:

- influencing followers through respect and trust, while providing observable leadership skills to emulate (p. 208);
- inspiring individuals by creating meaning challenges and behaving in a way to arouse team spirit (p. 208);
- intellectual stimulating followers to look at old problems in new ways through providing a trusted environment to where new ideas are encouraged (p. 208); and
- individualizing the needs and goals of each follower, to assist them in reaching their potential (p. 208).

Subsequently, the significant purpose of transformational leadership is it “...signifies a long-term relationship between leaders and followers that produces significant change, raises leaders and followers to higher levels of motivation and morality, and encourages followers to assume leadership roles themselves”( Preskill & Brookfield, 2009, p. 7).

Leaders in education tend to gravitate towards transformational leadership because of the strong moral responsibility to educate and promote learning (Bush; Muijs et al). However, Muijs et al. outlined a few issues with transformational leadership.

A presiding issue with transformational is when instituting new initiatives and operating practices, it is evident the organization is going to experience upheaval and disruption (Muijs et al.). As Bass (1985) asserted, “...transformational leadership is more likely to reflect social values and to emerge in times of distress and change” (p. 154).

While the goal is to sustain a long-term relationship between leader and followers, individuals resistant to change might engage in passive behavior with the expectation of waiting for the leader to find a new position (Muijs et al). A secondary issue is all the

leadership traits and skills reside with the leader, therefore, when the leader moves out of the organization, the institution can be left with followers that were not previously inspired (Bush, 2003) . Lastly, transformational leaders contend to have a high level of self-confidence which can sometimes create blinders to the reality of an optimistic vision (Muijs et al.). Although, transformational has similar attributes to servant and invitational leadership, the transformational leader is most effective in an environment where sweeping changes are necessary and where the leadership processes are focused on the leader (Bass et al., 2003; Muijs et al.). This is divergent from the invitational model where leadership is embedded as an intentional purpose, within the professional and personal environments of the leader (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Further, transformational also emphasizes the responsibility of the leader to influence or motivate followers (Bass, Bush, 2003). This is contrary to invitational leadership, whereas the intrinsic motivation of the followers is essential to the success of the leader (Purkey & Siegel). Within the next section, servant leadership offers similar dynamics to invitational on the notion of unleashing a person’s motivation and talents.

### *Servant Leadership*

As a relatively new leadership theory articulated by Robert Greenleaf in 1977, servant leadership has been portrayed as being influenced by transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Heifetz, 2002; Yukl, 2006). In fact, Farling, Stone, and Winston (1999) contended in their study comparing servant to transformational leadership that “...servant leaders are indeed transformational leaders” (p. 49). However, servant leaders separate themselves from other leadership styles because from Greenleaf’s perspective, to be a great leader a person should be a servant to others (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Spears,

2002; Yukl). Consequently, Spears recognized ten characteristics when identifying servant leaders, to include: being a good listener; empathizing with others; providing a sense of healing and wholeness; being self-awareness; persuading instead of relying on positional authority; conceptualizing ideas; using foresight to handle embedding situations; being a steward for the greater good; committing to the growth of individuals; and building a sense of community. These characteristics are important in challenging leaders to adhere to the stewardship of creating a caring educational environment (Bolman & Deal, 2002; DePree, 2010). To accomplish these goals, servant leaders should, "...deliver to their organizations the appropriate services, products, tools, and equipment that people in the organization need in order to be accountable" (DePree, p. 6). Besides creating a shared vision and having a moral obligation to their followers, servant and invitational leaders embrace the belief that everyone is intrinsically motivated; and the leader's responsibility is committed to the growth of each individual (Farling et al.; Greenleaf, 2002; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Spears; Yukl). Where these two theories differ is the application process invitational leadership focuses with the four principles of trust, respect, optimism and intentionality into the environments of the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Novak & Purkey, p.12). Although, servant leadership has integrated several of these principles within the characteristics identified, invitational leadership provides a systematic, holistic approach for off-campus administrators to be analyzed.

In assessing all three leadership theories postulated that effective leaders engage with staff, customers, and stakeholders with the purpose of establishing a level of moral commitment, which then can be linked to vision (Bush, 2003). These leadership theories

acknowledge the principles of trust and respect between leaders and followers, where invitational leadership differs, is in its awareness of optimism and intentionality (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Seigel, 2003). Consequently, invitational leaders draw upon the lessons of transformational and servant leadership to create a common purpose and vision between leader and followers, but differ in their application of all the four principals: trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality into an organizational environment (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Thus, for the purpose of this research study, the use of invitational leadership as an appropriate conceptual framework was utilized.

### Summary

To better understand the development of continuing education units and off-campus centers, critical themes were identified as driving forces for universities and colleges to strive for a new model of delivering instruction including financial concerns, changing student population, increased competition, and innovative technology (Armstrong, 2001; Donaldson & Graham, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 2006; Venable, 2010). To respond to these new issues, institutions formed or expanded their continuing education departments to serve as vehicles for mobilizing education to meet the needs of adult students (Downey, Pusser, & Turner, 2006). Three well-known methods emerged out of continuing education as models for delivering education, which consisted of online learning, distance education, and off-campus centers (Tracey). For this study, the research intentionally focused on off-campus centers and their leaders with existing literature providing a synopsis of the description, learning environment, quality, and paradoxical role. Two major studies provided the background on off-campus centers and their administrators. Gabor and Heggan's (1995) extensive monograph presented an

all-embracing reference in defining and describing the scope of off-campus centers, while Flora and Hirt's (2008) study of higher education center's administrator's job satisfaction identified the positional requirements and common problematic scenarios experienced by off-campus administrators. Through synthesizing the literature, the need for off-campus administrators to engage in an effective and collaborative leadership style emerged.

When utilizing leadership as a theoretical framework, it is important to acknowledge the leaders' frame of reference when describing leadership (Burns, 1978; Duke, 1998; Snowden & Boone, 2007, p. 1; Yukl). In viewing leadership from a collaborative perspective, an overarching definition of leadership is focused on the leader's role in guiding and influencing followers to achieve shared objectives (Bennis, 1989; Burns, 1978; Harris & Cullen, 2007; Purkey & Seigel, 2003; Yukl, 2006). However, before choosing a leadership theory for the study, a delineation of theories including educational and adult, and continuing education leadership were explored.

These two leadership styles, educational, and adult and continuing education, served as guiding theories for invitational leaders within an educational setting. Educational leadership is a broad theory, based on the management practices borrowed from business and industry (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Although, it serves as an all-encompassing leadership theory for educational administrators, the primary focus is on teaching and learning (Bush, 2003). A similar theory, adult and continuing education leadership has comparable origins from managerial leadership; however, these leaders embrace an entrepreneurial spirit in serving the adult learner while delivering off-campus curriculum (Donaldson, 1992; Shoemaker, 2008). Nevertheless, adult and continuing education continues to draw several best practices from management theory which is

counter to the position of an off-campus administrator who is required to engage with a variety of stakeholders within the decision-making process and to embrace each follower's values (Burns, 1978; Yukl, 2006). A holistic theory, invitational leadership, is based on the four principles: trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality within environments, known as the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes. This theory fosters shared leadership through creating an inviting atmosphere (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Even though this leadership theory has similar traits to transformational and servant in the areas of moral responsibility, purpose, and collaboration, invitational leaders believe everyone is internally motivated and it is the responsibility of the leader to take an "...inviting stance" when assisting people in tackling obstacles or achieving goals (Purkey & Siegel). Through the pillars associated with invitational leadership; namely of being collaborative and inviting, this theory provided the necessary lens to analyze the leadership characteristics and attributes of the off-campus administrator.

In Chapter Three, a detailed framework of the research design and methodology are provided. In addition, the outlines in the chapter are the participants, data collection procedures, and triangulation processes. Within Chapter Four the findings of the qualitative multi-case study are presented. Provided in Chapter Five are the results, conclusions, implications and recommendations that can be utilized for future research.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A division within continuing education, off-campus centers has emerged to be a component within an outreach mission of the institution (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). As leaders, off-campus center administrators have to be versatile by creating an environment as inviting as their main campus, but practical in serving the adult learner (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan). While continuing education units have become a fixture within the higher educational delivery process, previous literature revealed that limited research exists on these departments, including: off-campus centers and their administrators (Armstrong, 2001; Courtenay, 1990; Downey, Pusser, & Turner, 2006; Flora, & Hirt; Gabor & Heggan). Furthermore, leadership for off-campus centers should be approached differently than the historical educational leadership theory (Flora & Hirt; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008). These administrators should embrace an encompassing approach of influencing, collaborating and engaging with a variety of stakeholders (Flora & Hirt; Gabor & Heggan). Thus, off-campus center administrators should consider adopting the new theory, invitational leadership, which is a holistic approach that focuses on inviting and motivating all participants to be part of the process (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

The goal of this research study was to understand the phenomena of off-campus center administrators in offering educational services and programs at an off-campus location. In addition, the research study explored if invitational leadership characteristics have any impact on the off-campus center's environment and services (Asbill, 2006; Novak & Rocca, 2006). As a result, a qualitative multi-case study approach was selected

to provide a descriptive account of off-campus center administrators' use of invitational leadership characteristics in creating an effective learning environment (Creswell, 2007). This chapter is organized to detail the purpose, research questions, rationale, participants, data collection and analysis, and possible limitations of the study.

### Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership in creating an effective educational environment for adult learners as perceived by the students, faculty, and staff. Since off-campus centers are extensions of their main campus, attention to the administrator's leadership attributes in providing a comparable educational environment was also analyzed (Gabor & Heggan, 1995). In view of the fact there was limited research on off-campus centers and their administrators, a multi-case study approach was selected to ensure critical replication between the different sites to give the readers a "...thick description" of the off-campus administrators' use of invitational leadership assumptions (Creswell, 2007; Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan; Mertens, 2005, p. 256).

### Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were:

1. What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?
2. How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?

3. How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

#### Rationale for Use of a Qualitative Multi-Case Study

In formulating the design and methodology, the researcher took into account the goals, purpose, and research questions of the study. In doing so, a qualitative, multi-case study emerged to address the problem of practice or phenomena of off-campus center administrators and invitational leadership (Creswell, 2007). Within this section, the rationale of the research design and methodology will be discussed.

The research study was a problem of practice analyzing invitational leadership characteristics of off-campus center administrators (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 1989). A problem of practice requires a complex analysis of a populations or group with measurable variables, but with the ability to simultaneously hear the silent voices of the study (Creswell). The problem was explored in an organic approach, instead of relying on predetermined research or results from another study (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens, 2005; Yin, 1989). The researcher chose a problem of practice because there was a desire to investigate the phenomena of off-campus center administrators and invitational leadership theory (Creswell; Merriam, 2009).

In choosing a design for this study, Creswell (2007) believed a qualitative research study is best suited to address a problem of practice because it provides a holistic view of the contextual aspects, including the participants and issue being addressed. To present a holistic view, a qualitative researcher observes and analyzes the phenomena within its natural setting at a particular point of time, and then attempts to

make sense of these interpretations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2002; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2010). Therefore, the goal of the researcher was not to prove or disapprove a hypothesis, but rather let the categories emerge throughout the progression of the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Mertens, 2005). In this research study, a secondary objective was to understand the participants within their surroundings and the issue of leadership.

In the qualitative methodology, a multi-case study approach was selected with the intent of bringing an in-depth illustration of the off-campus center phenomena (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002). The case study approach is a descriptive method which offers an encompassing view to analyze a problem or issue captured within a bounded case or setting (Creswell; Merriam; Merriam, 2009). A multi-case study represents generalizations between a selected numbers of bounded cases being research, which Creswell believed "...the researcher chooses no more than four to five cases" (p. 76). In utilizing this approach, themes emerged over a period of time through several sources of data collection, including: interviews, focus groups, observations, and historical material (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens, 2005). A qualitative, multi-case study approach provided the reader a "...thick description" consisting of: "...time, place, context, and culture" which is imperative for transferability, or the ability to "...determine the degree of similarity between the study sites and the receiving context" (Mertens, p. 256). Moreover, since there is limited research on off-campus center administrators, gathering data from a selected group of cases presented rich information on the differences and similarities of their roles and leadership styles (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 1990; Stake, 2010).

## Participants

In selecting participants for the qualitative, multi-case study, a non-probability or criterion-based sampling method was used (Merriam, 1988). Criterion-based sampling, otherwise known as purposive sampling, determines the necessary "...criteria, bases, or standards" needed to conduct the study and then search for participants with similar attributes (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1988, p. 48). This is contradictory to probability sampling where the participants possessing the attributes might be chosen out of a general population (Merriam, 1988; Mertens, 2005). Since the goal of this study was to gain knowledge and understanding of the phenomena of off-campus center administrators' leadership characteristics, rather than probability of possessing these attributes, a criterion-based method was the appropriate approach (Creswell; Merriam, 1988). A particular scheme of criterion-based sampling, called unique case sampling, was also utilized. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) described unique case sampling as when the researcher establishes unique traits of a population then gathers participants who match those traits. In viewing the many different types of off-campus centers, unique traits of the administrator and their campus were used to determine the selection process of participants (Carnegie Foundation, 2011; Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan, 1995). In addition, campuses located only within the Midwest region of the United States were selected, which Yin (1989) believed "...geographic proximity can be the main criteria for selecting the pilot case or cases" (p. 80). Furthermore, in each of the case studies, three interviews and two focus groups, totaling ten to fifteen participants, were conducted with the intention of collecting information rich cases and expanding the most knowledge that could be learned (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 1990; p. 160 ).

### *Off-Campus Center Administrators*

For a criterion-based sampling, off-campus center administrators were chosen by the institution's classification, location, and length of service of the administrators (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 1989). In addition, it was important the participants of the study worked within a continuing education department, given that these departments have a focus towards adult students and outreach (Armstrong, 2001; Downey, Pusser & Turner, 2006; Kaplan, 2004; Schejbal & Wilson, 2008; Shoemaker; Vallett, 2010; Weidner, 2010). The three administrators (n=3) chosen for the study have worked at the off-campus center for over three years in a leadership role. Their length of service provided consistent and accurate experiences along with an in-depth knowledge of the phenomena being studied (Creswell). All three administrators work in the Midwest, and their institutions are considered *Master's Colleges and Universities* or "...institutions that awarded at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees" (Carnegie Foundation, 2011, <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/basic.php>).

The first administrator was contacted during a University of Professional Continuing Education Association conference. Through several discussions, it was determined this administrator matched the characteristics needed for the study and resides in Michigan. The next two administrators were identified through the organization, Kansas City College Area Professionals. During visits to regional off-campus centers, the two administrators were chosen based on the identified criteria. One administrator resides in Kansas and the other in Missouri. Although, these administrators have been identified, each institution represented formally received a gatekeeper letter prior to the

administrator being contacted, and the administrators were contacted through a consent letter and informed consent form (Appendix A).

### *University Staff, Faculty, and Students*

To best understand off-campus center administrators and their leadership characteristics, individual and focus group perspectives were sought. University faculty, staff and students were asked to participate in the study which included the university staff, faculty and students. Stake (2010) suggested a purpose of interviewing was "...collecting a numerical aggregation of information from many persons" which Yin (1989) articulated provided "...the case study investigator with insights into a matter but also can suggest sources of corroboratory evidence" (p. 95; p. 89). The supervisors (n-3) were chosen since the administrator was their employee. Each of administrators' supervisors, which typically were a dean, was interviewed because of their knowledge of participant's responsibilities and work ethic (Creswell, 2007). Two faculty persons (n-2) from each location were also interviewed to assist in providing a comparison of main campus learning environment to the environment of the off-campus center. The individuals were identified to be full-time, university faculty that taught on the main campus as well as at the off-campus center for at least three years. In addition, two focus groups were conducted at each location, including a staff and student focus group. These focus groups ranged from three to twelve persons, depending on the size of the administrator's staff (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999; Krueger & Casey, 2009; Morgan, 1998). The objective of using a smaller group is to get "...a more in-depth understanding of what participants has to say" (Morgan, p. 73). Since off-campus center staff has intimate knowledge of the leadership style of the administrator, and these staffs are

typically small, a focus group format was a preferred choice (Morgan). The criteria for participating in the staff focus group included the fact that the individual had to have been a full-time employee. The size of the off-campus center staffs' focus groups was dependent on the number of employees. The focus group for each location ranged from three to five people (n-3/5) depending on location. Also conducted was a second focus group comprised of current students from each of the three off-campus locations. For the student focus group criteria, the researcher requested from the off-campus center staff to locate a mixture of undergraduate and graduate students with some of the students having previously attended the main campus for classes. As far as student groups, five to six students (n-5/6) per center were selected.

#### Data Collection

During the process of collecting data for a qualitative, multi-case study, interviewing individuals and conducting focus groups were used to present the thoughts, behaviors and feeling of the participants which could not be observed (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Patton, 1980). To triangulate the data, the researcher further observed, analyzed promotional material, and reviewed historical information (Creswell, 2007; Gillham; 2000; Merriam, 2002). In addition, the human subjects' protection and other ethical considerations were discussed in relation to data collection with all participants.

#### *Interview Protocol*

A primary source of data collection was the interviews. Interviews, which are considered the central component of gathering data for a qualitative multi-case study, were conducted with the administrators, supervisors, and faculty (Creswell, 2007; Gillham, 2000; Merriam, 1988; Merriam, 2009). To ensure the participants are protected,

the researcher had preauthorization from the Institutional Review Board (IRBs) of the University of Missouri – Columbia (Appendix B). Before conducting the interviews, all three universities provided permission through the use of a signed gatekeeper letter (Appendix A) which provided an overview of the study (Creswell). Once the researcher received the approval from each of the universities, consent letters and informed consent forms (Appendix A) were distributed to each of the interviewees and were signed and dated. The informed consent further provided details for the participant, including: their involvement in the study; the opportunity to decline at any time; and the confidentiality of the data gathering and analysis procedures (Creswell).

Prior to the interviews being conducted, each interviewee received a definition of invitational leadership key terms (Appendix C) to assist in the interview process. The researcher administered each interview using the interview protocol form (Appendix D) designed for the particular population, including: administrator, supervisor, and faculty member. After the interview was completed and transcribed, the researcher requested member checking of each of the interviews by the participant (Stake, 2010). Member checking protects the participant from being misquoted or from providing inaccurate data (Stake). These perimeters provided the procedure for the interview process.

When the administrator was interviewed, each was conducted in person, and lasted between 30-45 minutes. Gillman believed if the researcher is "...firmly, but unobtrusively, in control" interviews can be administered within 30 minutes (p. 66). The interview questions were modeled after Burn's (2007) research on effective leaders in public schools. All interviews were confidential with only the researcher and doctoral advisor having access to the data. The questions asked were semi-structured with the

opportunity to be open-ended. Semi-structure format allows for the use of structured questions, while giving researcher the opportunity to engage in conversation for further insight (Appendix D) and when conducted effectively provides the richest form of data collection (Gillman; Merriam, 2009). The questions were delineated from the overarching research questions that guided the study (Stake, 2010). These research questions were grounded in invitational leadership and other related literature. The interview questions were formulated and categorized in relation to a corresponding to research question or questions before the interviews were conducted (Weiss, 1994).

In addition, the researcher used an interview observation form (Appendix E) to collect field notes during the interview process and subsequently reflecting on the interview after it was completed (Creswell, 2007). Unless the administrator refused, all sessions were video and audio taped to ensure creditable extraction of data in the findings (Creswell). Furthermore, through videotaping, the researcher reviewed the tapes to identify additional observations, not documented in the initial interview (Gillman).

In regard to interviewing of the administrators' supervisors and three faculty members from each institution, the interviews were conducted on the administrator or faculty's campus in a designated room or office. Each interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes with semi-structured questions (Appendix D), and again with the opportunity for open-ended questions (Gillman, 2000). The questions and protocol for the supervisor and faculty were modeled after the questions and protocol of the administrator with modifications due to role (Appendices D & E). Confidentiality was adhered to for these participants as well. Again, unless the supervisor and faculty refused, all sessions were audio taped.

### *Focus Group Protocol*

Focus groups were conducted with the administrators' staff and one student group from each of the three off-campus locations to gain a "...range of opinions of people across several groups" within a naturalistic setting (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 7). The focus groups followed similar protocol of having first permission from the university (Appendix A) and then each member of the focus group received a consent letter and informed consent (Appendix A) form to sign. Each person received a definition of invitational leadership key terms (Appendix C) to provide clarity before the focus group was conducted. Open-ended questions were utilized, with each set of questions targeting either the off-campus center staff or student focus groups and were framed again around the tenets of invitational leadership (Appendix D). Initial categorizing of the questions was completed to ensure a connection with the research questions (Weiss, 1994). All questions were grounded in invitational leadership and related literature. An interview protocol form (Appendix E) was used by the researcher to reflect and record field notes during the focus group process. The use of multiple participant groups allowed for saturation and the opportunity for individuals to provide explanations and illustrations (Creswell, 2007; Krueger & Casey; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Conversely, the number of participants ensured the opportunity to share individual perspectives, yet was large enough to document diversity in the responses (Krueger & Casey). Furthermore, unless participants object, all focus group sessions were video and audio taped and all focus groups input was considered confidential with only the researcher and doctoral advisor having access to the data.

### *Observations and Document Analysis*

To complete the collection process, observations, and analysis of promotional material and historical information was gathered resulting in necessary data for triangulation (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens, 2005; Stake, 2010). Observations (Appendix F) provided meaningful data within the study because it was a first-hand account and a fresh perspective to the phenomena (Merriam, 2002; Stake). In addition to observing each campus for a day, additional observations were conducted in conjunction with the interviews and focus groups (Marshall & Rossman). Likewise, promotional material and historical data (Appendix G), including previous annual reports, letters, and memos pertaining to the research study were analyzed (Creswell; Mertens; Marshall & Rossman). These types of materials strengthen the research because the “...data source lies with the fact that they already exist in the situation” (Creswell, p. 13). Through the use of multiple data sets, the researcher attempted to add clarity to the invitational assumptions adopted by off-campus centers administrators (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman; Mertens; Stake). In addition, using these techniques, including collecting multiple data sources and triangulating the data, will reinforce the usefulness of the study in additional settings Marshall & Rossman).

#### Data Analysis

Within data analysis, this qualitative multi-case study, examined through a social constructivist lens, provided the intent of understanding campus administrators through the conceptual frame of invitational leadership characteristics (Creswell, 2007). In addition, through the use of several analysis components of a multi-case study approach, the researcher was hopeful that “... issue-relevant meanings will emerge” (p. 163).

Social constructivists believe reality is socially constructed and the researcher should search to understand the world in which they the subjects of the study exist (Mertens, 2005; Stake 2010). In doing so, the researcher relies on the participants' views, values, and opinions to present significant insight of the situation (Creswell, 2007; Gillman, 2010; Mertens; Stake). This is not to say there is an absent of the relationship between researcher and participants within the study. On the contrary, Mertens believed there are "...multiple, socially constructed realities" including the joint relations between researcher and participants that are formed during the research process (p. 9). Since this researcher works as an off-campus center administrator, there is a keen interest in understanding the leadership characteristics of other off-campus center administrators through the perspectives and views of themselves and others, solidifying why a social constructivist lens was chosen. Further, the use of multi-case study analysis techniques provided meaning and value to the research.

While there are several methods used to analyze qualitative multi-case studies (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2005; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996), for this inquiry, cross-case analysis served as a systematic technique of searching for natural generalizations from the data (Creswell; Yin, 1989). Yin (2003) believed through creating a table of individual cases using a standardized framework and then comparing the results, the researcher can delineate the similarities and differences between the cases. Consequently, patterns and themes can be drawn from these similarities and differences to provide meaningful and valuable transferability for a population of off-campus center administrators (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens). To determine this transferability, the researcher first described the context of each individual case, and then created a cross-case analysis

of the data collected from off-campus centers (Creswell). Taking into account the researcher's connection with the participants, the resultant themes provided relevant information for administrators in their use of invitational leadership characteristics (Marshall & Rossman; Yin).

### Issues of Quality

To ensure the issues of quality and trustworthiness within this study, the researcher used credibility and dependability techniques which are comparable to the quantitative methods of validity and reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Mertens (2005) believed, credibility "...as the interpretive parallel to validity" (p. 358). To guarantee credibility, the researcher clarified the bias and assumptions from the offset of the study. Since the researcher currently serves in the role as an off-campus center administrator, acknowledging past experiences and increasing awareness of possible bias formed how the study was approached and interpreted (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1988) Next, the researcher conducted the process of member checking, which involved taking "...data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions" back to the participants to determine if the accounts are accurate (Creswell, p. 208). This technique is considered to be the most critical in establishing credibility (Lincoln & Guba). Finally, to create triangulation, the researcher analyzed corroborating evidence from multiple sources to determine patterns or themes (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens). These sources include: interviews, focus groups, observations, and historical information (Creswell; Mertens). In using these four techniques, the researcher ensured the credibility of the study. Reliability or its qualitative counterpart, dependability was addressed within the research study through creating detailed footnotes (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2005). Creswell believed

by audio and video taping the interviews and focus groups, the researcher was allowed to review previous recorded information and code this information for further analysis (Creswell; Stake, 2010). Furthermore, through the transcription of the interviews and focus groups, including the awkward pauses and breaks, the field notes reflected an accurate depiction of the situation, which is imperative for providing a quality study (Creswell; Gillman, 2000).

### Summary

In summary, the design and methodology provided a framework to explore off-campus centers and the leadership practices of the administrators. The qualitative multi-case study approach was a descriptive method used to explore how off-campus center administrators use invitational leadership assumptions and environments in creating an effective learning environment. Furthermore, the research study was intended to add to the body knowledge currently available concerning off-campus centers and the administrative personnel. Subsequently, in Chapter Four the data analysis, interpretation, and research finding are presented. Provided in Chapter Five are the results, findings and conclusions. In addition, included in Chapter Five are the conclusions drawn, the recommendations, and implications for the future.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this research study was to add to the body of knowledge on off-campus centers and their administrators in creating a successful learning environment. Through the lens of invitational leadership theory, the research analysis was designed to understand the leadership characteristics consistent among off-campus center administrators. This theory is a "...practical, holistic, and dynamic model of leadership" that focuses on the four leadership assumptions: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality applied with five environments: people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 3). Since off-campus centers are a micro-version of their larger campus, but primarily serving an adult population, the leader has to negotiate and deliver educational programming and services that are unique to this demographic (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan, 1995). With limited research on off-campus centers and their leaders, this research study presents the perceptions of students, faculty and staff on leadership characteristics and the educational learning environment created by these administrators (Gabor & Heggan).

Within Chapter Four, an overview of the study design, data collection methods, conceptual framework, research questions and analysis of data are provided. The researcher presented descriptive information on the participants and settings of each case study. In addition, themes that emerged were synthesized through the use of qualitative data collection procedures of interviews, focus groups, observations, and gathering historical information (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

## Study Design

A qualitative multi-case study approach was utilized to gain knowledge of an off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership theory (Creswell, 2007; Mertens, 2005). A qualitative approach is "...designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific program, practice, or setting" (Mertens, p. 229). A case study presents a comprehensive account of a bounded case or subject within its natural setting (Creswell; Mertens). When analyzing multiple cases, the researcher has an opportunity to glean generalizations and themes through various sources, consisting of: interviews, focus groups, observations, and review of historical material within no more than to four or five cases (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). For this research study, three cases or administrators were chosen through criterion-based sampling, which included their length of service as an off-campus center administrator, size of institution, and regional location in the Midwest of the United States (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 1989). Within each case study, the administrator, supervisor, two faculty members were interviewed at the off-campus center, via interactive television or by telephone. Additional supporting stakeholders, including staff (n-2/3) and students (n-3/6) participated in focus groups at each off-campus center location.

## Data Collection Methods

Prior to collecting data, the researcher received permission from the gatekeeper at each university (Appendix A). After securing gatekeeper permission, the researcher completed the Campus Institutional Review Board application at the University of Missouri - Columbia. When the IRB (Appendix B) was approved, the researcher visited each case study location and obtained signed informed consent forms detailing the

participant's involvement and rights within the parameters of the research. The majority of the interviews and focus groups were conducted at each location, with a few telephone interviews of two administrators and four faculty members. All interviews were audio-taped and followed an interview or focus group protocol (Appendix D). To ensure accuracy, each individual was provided a transcript of their interview or focus group. Changes or revisions of interviews were reflected in the data set. This process of member checking allows the participants the opportunity to revise or offer feedback of their interview (Creswell, 2007). To complete the data collection procedures, the data were triangulated using the interviews and focus groups; recorded observation in field notes (Appendices E & F); and analysis of historical documents (Appendix G).

### Conceptual Framework

An innovative leadership theory, invitational, served as the lens to analyze off-campus center administrators and their centers. Invitational leadership considers every person is intrinsically motivated and it is the leader's responsibility to empower individuals to recognize their capabilities when encountering difficult challenges or assisting them in the pursuit of accomplishing new initiatives (Purkey & Seigel, 2003). Since the off-campus center administrator's role is to facilitate a smaller-scale version of their main institution, the leader should be diverse in leading and engaging with individuals (Flora & Hirt, 2008). Consequently, leadership should be perceived as a holistic approach, taking into account the four basic moral assumptions of trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality into the five environments, consisting of people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel). Therefore, the focus of this study was to extrapolate the beliefs and feelings of students, faculty and

staff on the leadership style of the off-campus center administrator and the learning atmosphere of the off-campus center.

### Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were:

1. What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?
2. How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?
3. How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

### Process of Data Analysis

When analyzing the data, the information was interpreted through a social constructivist lens, where multiple realities exist and the researcher has a connective relationship with the participants during the study (Mertens, 2005). Through this lens, the researcher relies on the participants' perceptions to provide valuable insight for each of the case studies (Creswell, 2007; Gillman, 2010; Mertens; Stake, 2010). The analysis process consisted of triangulating the data collected from interviews, focus groups, observations and historical data to recognize emerging themes (Creswell, 2007; Merriam 2002). Each participant or observation was assigned a code (Appendix H): Administrator 1 (A1), Administrator 2 (A2), Administrator 3 (A3), Supervisor 1 (S1), Supervisor (S2),

Supervisor 3 (S3), Staff 1(S1), Staff 2 (S2), Staff 3 (S3), Staff 4 (S4), Staff 5 (S5), Staff 6 (S6), Staff 7 (S7), Staff 8 (S8), Faculty 1 (F1), Faculty 2 (F2), Faculty 3 (F3), Faculty 4 (F4), Faculty 5 (F5), Faculty 6 (F6), Student 1 (ST1), Student 2 (ST2), Student 3 (ST3), Student 4 (ST4), Student 5 (ST5), Student 6 (ST6), Student 7 (ST7), Student (ST8), Student (ST9), Student 10 (ST10), Student 11 (ST 11), Student 12, (ST12), Student 13 (ST13), Field Observation 1 (FO1), Field Observation 2 (F2), and Field Observation (F3). The transcripts and observations were read multiple times to ensure accuracy and consistency with the coding.

### Settings

The institutions used for this study were considered *Master's Colleges and Universities* or "...institutions that awarded at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees" (Carnegie Foundation, 2011, <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/basic.php>). In addition, the institutions were designated as public and located within a different Midwestern state within the United States. Subsequently, the three main campuses were located in smaller cities or towns, with their off-campus centers located in larger metropolitan area or suburbs. A description of each off-campus center setting is provided.

*Site 1: Payola University – Metro Center* (pseudonym). Situated in a building with direct access from a major interstate, the first location is easily accessible for adult students with a large sign visible from the building indicating the location. The Metro Center resides on the fourth floor of a multi-use building with other companies, such as: technology businesses, accountants, and another university. When entering the glass building, the students are greeted with a large lobby and a sign directing them to use the

elevator to access the site. When exiting the elevator, students are greeted by a front-desk person who has information posted for the students and degree options at the site (doctorate, specialist, masters, and bachelors) for potential students.

When arriving, the front desk person is wearing the school's t-shirt signifying the student or visitor has reached the right place. In addition, the entry way has a large open area behind it, so students can either go left or right to get to the classrooms. The site has 18 classrooms configured in over 26,000 square feet. The classrooms range from 14 to 75 chairs. Also, the rooms have chairs and tables that are on wheels to move and configure in different formats. To accommodate students coming from work, the site has a lounge with a soda and food machine for students to eat and relax before classes start. The center's atmosphere is similar to an office space, rather than the traditional campus classrooms. The cushion chairs and large tables provide ample space for students who might attend long class periods (i.e., 3 hour at night).

*Site 2: Rutgers University – Adult Learning Center* (pseudonym). The Adult Learning Center is located in a suburb of a metropolitan city. As a public institution its mission is to offer graduate courses within the area. The Adult Learning Center competes with a small private liberal arts college and an extension site of a small private liberal arts college from a different state. The site location is embedded within a high school campus in a building located within walking distance of the main high school. The center is a welcoming environment with a large sign indicating students have located the center. When walking through the front doors, signage directs students to the elevators where the Adult Learning Center occupies the top two floors of a four floor building. Entering the elevator, several posters and signs provide a sense of the

university's spirit. In addition, throughout the entire site, pictures of the main campus are displayed providing a sense of connection to the university.

When getting off on the third floor, a person is met by a friendly face to answer any questions or direct a person to the appropriate place. The third floor mostly has office space and locations for instructors to make copies or store material. It also has a room dedicated to technology, where students and faculty can check out a laptop for their entire educational experience. The classrooms on this floor and the fourth floor are large and conducive for adult learning. Each room has two person tables and relaxing chairs. The entire off-campus center occupies 18,950 square feet of space and has 13 classrooms. The classrooms range in capacity size from 15-30 people. The fourth floor has a large lounge with a plasma television for the students to relax, eat, or study. A vending machine is provided, or the students can bring in their own food. Each room has emergency directions and instructions posted near the door.

*Site 3: Williams University - Education Center* (pseudonym). The Education Center is located within a thriving suburb of a metropolitan city. Situated within a building, which resides within a multi-building complex, the Education Center is difficult to find because outside signage is not visible. However, plans for a sign were underway when the researcher visited the location. Within the building, the Education Center occupies most of the space on the first floor with two other business tenants. The main office area is within an office suite, and has a small reception area when entering the site. When entering the office space, it is observable the space is inhabited by a university with pictures of their school and mascot donning the walls. This area has small offices for the administrator, recruiter, and faculty person. It also has a small conference room, break

room for faculty, small bookstore, and a desk for the graduate assistant. To access the classrooms and another faculty office, students enter from the main entryway of the building. The site currently occupies 9,500 square feet and has 6 classrooms. All of the classrooms are large and able to hold up to 30 students with comfortable tables and chairs. Although, this campus does not currently have a lounge for students to eat or relax, a room was under construction to provide this type of service.

### Participants

For this research study, three individuals were chosen to represent off-campus center administrators and their leadership characteristics. All three of the individuals have worked at an off-campus center for more than three years. An additional 31 individuals (approximately 10 participants at each site) were either interviewed or participated in focus groups with questions framed around the off-campus center and the leadership characteristics of the administrator. These individuals included administrators' supervisors, faculty, staff, and students (n=34).

*Administrators.* The first administrator, Chris Elmore (pseudonym), had been an administrator at the Payola University – Metro Center for over 12 years. When she first began at the center, it had eight classrooms. The center now has expanded to 18 classrooms, occupying the entire top floor of the office building. She has not always worked in education, but has had a long career in being an administrator. She plans on retiring within the next year and completing her doctorate.

The second administrator, Bill Cole (pseudonym) has been at the Rutgers University – Adult Learning Center for approximately three years. Although, he has been an off-campus center administrator the fewest years, his tenure in higher education

spans over 16 years. He previously worked on the main campus as a professor, left for a few years, and then returned to Rutgers. Dr. Cole has a doctorate degree in Education.

The last administrator, Clarie Thomas (pseudonym), has worked at the Williams University – Education Center for five years. She attended the main campus as a student, and then worked as a graduate assistant coach for a few years, before transitioning to a full-time position at the education center. She currently has a master's degree.

*Supervisors.* Three supervisors at each site were interviewed in relation to their off-campus center administrators. One of the individuals is the dean that oversees the graduate school and continuing education, another individual has just recently left a similar position to return to teaching. The third individual, from Rutgers University, was considered a vice provost over graduate research and interim dean of their business school and professional studies, including being dean of the graduate school and their continuing education unit. All three supervisors have had previous positions as faculty within a university setting. However, all three supervisors had served in the dean's role over the off-campus center for less than five years. Ms. Elmore's dean was her supervisor for less than four years, Dr. Cole's dean for three years, and Ms. Thomas's dean was her supervisor for two years.

*Faculty.* Six faculty members in total were interviewed individually on their perceptions of the off-campus centers and their administrators. At Payola University, one male and one female faculty members were interviewed. The male faculty member was a business professor and had a long tenure at the university, whereas the female was a nursing professor. In regards to Rutgers University, two female professors were interviewed both were from their education college and both had worked for Rutgers for

over 16 years. Finally, at Williams University, one male and one female professor were interviewed. Ironically, both professors live in the metropolitan area and travelled to their main campus to teach. Both were considered full-time professors at the main campus. The male worked as a professor in the business school and the female in counseling.

*Staff.* The size of the staff focus groups depended on the number of staff members at each off-campus center. At the first location, there were three staff members consisting of two males and one female. One male served as their technology person, while the other was a coordinator of programs, and the female was a customer specialist and worked the front desk. At Rutgers University, three females were interviewed. The first female worked as their education coordinator, the second as their office manager and a third female served as their outreach coordinator. At Williams University, two females were interviewed. The first served as their recruiter, while the second female was a graduate assistant.

*Students.* The range of participants for the student focus groups varied at each university. At Payola University, a group of three students participated in the focus group, consisting of two females and one male. One female, was a returning adult student who had been away from higher education for a few years. The other two students were seniors taking classes at the main campus and the Metro Center. At Rutgers University, six individuals participated in the focus group, including five females and one male. All of the students were graduate students, since that is only type of courses offered at the Adult Learning Center. All students were currently working full-time and attending at night. Only three Rutgers students had attended the main campus for their undergraduate degree. At Williams University, four students attended the focus group, including three

males and one female. The three male students were employed full-time and attended classes at night working towards an undergraduate degree in business. The female was a graduate student taking classes in library science.

### Themes

From this study, themes emerged that were synthesized from data collected and predetermined codes. These themes included: 1) Intense Collaboration, with subthemes of Quorum of Stakeholders and Distributive Responsibility; and 2) Motivational Influence with subtheme of Optimism, and Intention; and 3) Inherited Sense of Kinship with subthemes of Dispensation of the Patron and Ambiance Conducive for Erudition. These themes provide an understanding of the leadership practices of administrators and the educational learning environments of off-campus centers from the perceptions of students, faculty and staff.

#### *Intense Collaboration*

In this study, there was an overwhelming sense of collaboration between the administrators and their staff. Collaboration provides the opportunity to create a collective environment, because "...leaders who seek cooperation constantly search for common grounds and mutual goals" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 108). When discussing collaboration, two prominent characteristics, respect and trust, were noted by the participants as key components between the leader and staff in fostering a sense of group effort and support. Respect was regarded by the participants as an "...extremely important" characteristic for leaders to possess. An individual, who displays respect, treats others with consideration and basically, as Ms. Thomas stated, "...the way you

want to be treated” (Bowen, 2006). A Payola University faculty member illustrated how their administrator and off-campus center staff exhibit respect:

Ms. Elmore and her staff are very respectful and, you know... they pay attention to what you're saying and they're always respectful. Ah, I told them several times that they can call me by my first name, but then they insist on calling me Dr. Bailey (pseudonym). Which I, they do that for the rest of other faculty. I think that also that's one way they try to be respectful.

On the other hand, trust “...is established in predictable patterns of action, as opposed to a single act” (Purkey & Siegel, p. 12). Each of the university employees responded positively to how their administrator is a trustful leader. The supervisor further provided how Ms. Thomas demonstrated trust:

Somebody says they are going to do something and they don't do it, there is breaking trust immediately and I have never seen that with Ms. Thomas. So, if in fact, for example, she is going to run an event tonight, it is done, it is done well, it is done at a 110% and I know when I walk in here I absolutely know it will be done. I never have to worry about this facility because of Ms. Thomas.

Regarding off-campus administrators, trust may take longer to develop than respect, because a level of confidence has to be established between individuals or a group (Bowen, 2006). When interacting with main campus colleagues, Dr. Cole's supervisor provides a perspective on how trust relates to the off-campus administrator establishing credibility:

He is not their boss, he is not there ah, he is not in their college, he does not report to his dean, and all those things he has to build trust by working with the administration, by working with two different deans, one in business area, one in the education area. Not go around campus the ah protocol, everything we do on campus as it relates to faculty process, student process are policies they all apply for the off-campus center, you know. He would lose a lot of trust quickly, if he tried to schedule classes the department didn't know about or attempt to change instructors or try push people through that they weren't comfortable with that would be adjuncts and things. So, it is a very critical relationship with the department and the faculty and he has been able to build his own trust and reputation through his consistency and fair dealing and ah, nothing that he does is

and everything he does is above board. Nothing sneaky or trying to get things through quickly.

Trust and respect of the administrators provides the framework of shared leadership and collaboration between the stakeholders in creating an effective learning environment.

Additionally, how stakeholders are engaged in the decision making process responsibilities are distributed were evident as aspects of collaboration.

### *Quorum of Stakeholders*

Each of the centers has a relatively small staff, and the administrators indicated their staff engages in shared decision making practices in creating an effective off-campus learning environment. Leaders in education who choose a democratic or thoughtful decision making process are "...able to remind themselves of what is truly important in education: an appreciation of people and their development" (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 23). As Dr. Cole indicated when discussing the idea of engaging his staff at Rutgers University Adult Learning Center:

I know myself; I don't make decisions until I get input from individuals that work here. Before I make a decision, I am going to run it by Susan (pseudonym) and, if it deals with our education students or some aspect of recruiting our education students. If it, if it deals with other aspects, I want to run it by, run it by Christine (pseudonym), to try to give them a voice, eh, in, in the culture. I notice they do the same thing. We try to you know, have a culture of (pause) working together to try to create a common goal. We, we try to set goals together. You know, what we want to accomplish. The processes that we use – I think it's healthy to, you know, find out what would be the best way for you to do this part of this major task.

The administrators all shared a belief that new ideas were welcome and Ms. Elmore stated, "I always tell my staff you can do anything as long as it's not illegal, doesn't hurt somebody." For this to happen, the administrators have to create an inviting environment where members experience an ambiance of comfort contributing to improving the center.

As Purkey and Novak (1996) summarized, "...individuals respond best when they share the company of educators who believe them to be able, valuable, and responsible and who intentionally summon them to share in these beliefs" (p. 17). Ms. Elmore further provided a description of how she engages employees:

I encourage the staff to always think about different ways of doing things. We always like it when someone new came in or if we had a student worker or something. Cause they'd actually come up with different ways of doing things. So, it's we're never caught in the process. This is the way you have to do it. We're caught in the process of if you can get from A to B; I'm not really as concerned about how you got from A to B as long as it was efficient.

Students also feel they have a voice in the decision making process. All three administrators commented on how they survey the students, with Dr. Cole describing personal focus groups he has with the students.

We also give them [students] an opportunity to be a voice. Eh, every semester, we have a student advisory dinner, where we invite anywhere from six (6) to seven (7) students to dinner and we have, eh, we send them questions prior to that and they're essentially allowed to tell us the things that they feel are going well and some of the things that we need to work on. And, I think that helps a sense of trust – eh – people know that we do this and, we, eh, we make the individuals available, eh, to try to gather the pulse of the students. And, I think that, that helps. Eh, with faculty, we try to establish trust, uhm, in a way where (pause) we, uh, again serve their needs, if they have things that they need when they get here. Eh, we try to do everything we possibly can to make them feel comfortable.

Although, a quorum from the stakeholders was an accepted practice for decision making at the off-campus center some participants did believe the administrators had a similar relationship to the main campus. As Flora and Hirt (2008) discovered in their research of off-campus center administrators, often times these administrators have a unilateral relationship with their main campus colleagues, and therefore, these individuals are underutilized in their areas of expertise. A Williams University faculty person commented on the administrator's relationship to their main campus:

I know that Ms. Thomas has meetings with the administration and that whole structure. And I know that she has tried very – as much as possible to get new programs initiated and adopted and put in place and they have not been supportive. And so I think of leadership in that respect. Yes she is trying to lead but for whatever reason it is not being supported. So is that poor leadership? Or is it poor decision making by the approval body and I'm – I tend to go, I don't know. It's poor administrative support that she's getting.

A further example is from Ms. Elmore as she recalls a situation with an administrator on the main campus and how it is sometime frustrating her viewpoint is not respected within the decision making process:

People need to listen to both viewpoints and make their decision. Just because we don't always agree doesn't mean we don't like each other. It's just that we have different – and he was one of those people that believe that if you're on main campus you're on main campus. If you're off site, we shouldn't hear about you.

Since off-campus centers work as a quasi-autonomous operation within a professional bureaucracy that "...often view any change in their surroundings as an annoying distraction," the administrators can sometimes be viewed as outsiders from their own institution and not involved in the decision making process (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 83; Flora & Hirt, 2008). In one instance, Ms. Elmore's supervisor recalls how another administrator tried to use his position to blockade or hinder progress in decision making when working directly with departments:

Well, for one thing, she, she (Ms. Elmore) works directly, and this is much to the chagrin of [this administrator] but he and I had many discussions about this. She would work directly with the department heads on campus and I encouraged that...

Nevertheless, there appeared to be when discussing the centers, an overall sense that the participants' suggestions or recommendations to the administrators were either validated or incorporated within the off-campus learning environment. Furthermore, within all

three case studies, the staff displayed an unequivocal sense of support and trust for their administrator when dealing with the “red tape” at their institution.

### *Distributive Responsibilities*

The sense of collaboration was further extended into the job duties between the leader and staff members. Lencioni (2002) noted a functional team works towards the collective results of the group rather than each individual’s goals. It was noted on several occasions by the interviewees that it is not uncommon for the administrators to participate in tasks that fall outside the scope of their position. With limited personnel resources at off-campus centers, the functions of specific job duties overlap between roles, including the administrator, front desk personnel, coordinator and custodian. As Ms. Elmore mentioned,

We move tables. We empty trash. I mean, we all do that. I don’t sit in an office and say you have to do that. I say, “Hey, has anybody done it yet?” ‘Cause maybe we’re all busy or something. But I don’t have to say for them to serve, I don’t have to – they know how to do.

Several participants commented on serving others as a key component with off campus personnel. As one faculty member noted about Ms. Elmore and her staff, they have “...the same kind of commitment to quality and commitment to being in a servant kind of role.” Another aspect, leading by example, was also a mechanism administrators used to demonstrate the distribution of responsibilities. A William University Education Center staff member, who works for Ms. Thomas, stated:

She is not afraid to jump into a task, I think it is more leading by example, than anything verbal. She may ask, going back to the open-house example, let’s go move some tables and we are to jump into it. We just follow and obviously she is leading that.

Furthermore, distributive responsibilities were extended into the physical environment. Ms. Elmore moved her personal office to a different location within the building, and allowed faculty and staff to occupy her former office. This provided the opportunity for students to have easy access to their instructor or advisor near the entrance of the site. In a different illustration, Dr. Cole demonstrated how important people are even when the task falls outside his job duties. Dr. Cole intervened when an instructor was having difficulty with a local motel she was staying at after teaching class.

In her own words:

There were a couple of times when the motel didn't exactly have its act together...and I called on Tuesday and let him know that there was a problem. He apologized, called the motel, gave me his home phone number and cell number in case it happened again. It did. I called; he took care of it immediately. It's a small matter, but it's not a small matter when you're down there trying to get everything together and think about teaching the next day. And it's almost a two-hour drive from here down there. So it's not like I wanted to just hop back in the car and drive home, that sort of thing. And of course, I know he takes care of all of the professors that come down there to teach. And for some it seems not a major matter, but it is when it's happening to you.

Although each of these administrators fostered a sense of collaboration and shared responsibilities between their colleagues, they credited hiring a quality staff as the key to creating a successful learning environment.

In analyzing distributive responsibilities from the view of the administrator, all three leaders expressed how hiring good people are important to the success of the center. As Dr. Cole believed, "I truly do and, you know, (pause) if there's good people, and you can make it through anything...but, if you don't have the people, it's not going to work. It's just absolutely not going to work." Ms. Elmore concurred,

And I said I just look for good people. You know. I just look for people and I have some excellent people and I wouldn't give them up. I said because these are the right people for the right spot and I don't think that even the students even

look at them as white, black, pink, or yellow. I think they look at them as people serving and helping them. And identifying with them. And so we identify with our students very well.

While shared roles are a common practice at off-campus centers, each of the administrators embraced the belief of what Leniconi (2002) would consider "...common sense with uncommon levels of discipline and persistence" (p. 220). These aspects were also evident in their leadership style.

### *Motivational Influence*

In the majority of the interviews, the administrators were portrayed as being positive leaders with a can-do or willingness attitude to accomplish new challenges. This sense of positive leadership provided a feeling by the participants of being connected and members of the off-campus center. As one faculty member described about Ms. Elmore:

Well, I think one way she does that is by having a very positive attitude herself towards the area and towards the faculty that she serves and the students that she serves and in addition, I never heard her talk about not being able to make something happen.

As Dr. Cole's supervisor further summarized, "...his comments and personal demeanor I think is a large part of answering this question, he is approachable, and he always has a positive outlook on things." In delving further into what contributes to the feeling the participants experience at the off-campus center location and about their administrator, concepts of optimism and intentionality were expressed as contributing factors.

### *Optimism*

When considering optimism, Purkey and Siegel (2003) acknowledged before individuals can reach their full potential, "...what people desire most is to be affirmed in their present worth" (p. 15). These leaders, who embrace positive charisma traits, emphasize morals and values rather than personal awareness (Yukl, 2006). As one

administrator believed, "...we always need to be optimistic, but, yet, pragmatic." On several occasions participants in this study commented on the ability of each administrator to be supportive and engage in conversations and interests that pertain to the well-being of others. A female faculty member indicated about Ms. Thomas:

It's fun to come to work. She always has great stories to share. I mean, she always remembers what you're doing. Sometimes, you go into a place to work, and they have no idea what your family life is about or what your weekend was like, but she is personal as well as business-like and professional, but she always remembers your weekends, what did you do and how did you do. Things that you have put down that you would need to do, she remembers, that little personal touch, and then just the joy of, I mean, there is a lot of laughter amongst the group here, I think.

An analyzing optimism as a leadership characteristic, it is the responsibility of administrators to engage in discovering the best possible solution to advance the quality of the center(Bowen, 2006). A faculty member at Rutgers University provided an example of how Dr. Cole uses his optimism to create a positive environment.

Well, he's pretty excited when I come down. I come every time we do an Advisement night...I run into him, he'd ask what we're doing. He's kept up and kept current with what we're doing at our program. He seems to be pleased by the number of students that are coming for the program.

Another faculty member concurred about Dr. Cole's positive engagement with them:

I think everybody has mentioned that he is genuinely concerned and also, pretty happy about what we're doing. He has concerns before but never in a negative way. He has a gift, actually, for remaining positive and still making his point.

Through their use of optimism and embracing each individual, these administrators create a sense of positive leadership aspects at their off-campus environment.

### *Intentionality*

A subsequent aspect of positive leadership is how the administrators demonstrated intentionality. In a few instances, the interviewees contemplated whether the positive

leadership traits of the administrators were innate or developed. As a faculty member recalled about Ms. Thomas, “You know, I think, to be a good leader, I’m not sure whether you’re born with that quality or whether you learn that quality, but she has that quality.” Dr. Cole even questioned his own outlook of positive leadership when he stated:

Well, I don’t know. It just kind of happens. I’ve always kind of been a glass half full kind of guy. I, I don’t know. I try to have-I try not to associate with too many people that are gloom and doom. Uh, and luckily, we don’t have a lot of those people around, especially, here at the center.

Purkey and Siegel (2003) believed many leaders are naturally born with the qualities of respect, trust and optimism catapulting them to leadership opportunities and roles.

However, these individuals can be dangerous “...because some leaders lack intentionality, they are likely to be inconsistent in their work and unpredictable in their actions”

undermining the positive aspect of their leadership style (p. 65). When referring to the off-campus center administrators, a consistent theme from the participants was the ability of the leader to be intentional in creating a positive environment without micromanaging their staff. As mentioned about Ms. Thomas, “...she is a great communicator” and she believes it is important to convey a vision of what the center should look like to her staff.

A faculty furthered provided proof of Ms. Thomas’s leadership style:

I think part of being a good leader is also being a good follower. When she needs to step up and take the reins, she does, but she allows you to do that sometimes, too. So, you don’t know whether you’re following or whether you’re doing it or she’s provided you that opportunity to do what you need to do.

This is also evident in how Dr. Cole intentionally conducts his staff meetings:

I try to keep people on task, whether in meetings. Ah, you know prior to the meeting, it doesn’t matter what we’re talking about but during the meeting, I try to draw people back to – okay, this is what we are talking about; this is what we are going to do. Ah, I always try to help get organized. I’ve been in situations where you don’t really have a clear sense – now what’s the agenda or are we, are we meeting here or, you know, what time exactly are we meeting and I, I try to,

intentionally supply leadership so that people know what's going on, know what to expect. I try to supply leadership with people's time.

Therefore, the intentional characteristic of the administrators' leadership style transcends into creating a positive culture at the off-campus location. As Ms. Elmore asserted through her use of intentionality, "...people do it because it is normal now, but it was very intentional. I mean, at the beginning and we're still teaching our CS [customer specialist] on intentionality." The supervisor concluded on Ms. Elmore's ability to synergize a collaborative attitude while still being an intentional leader:

I hear from my colleagues that the environment here is very positive and I think that's not just the function of the physical environment but of the culture that's created by Ms. Elmore in terms of her staff. I think that's because she almost wills that to happen by the way...the approach that she takes.

Intentionality also is indicated in the leaders' ability when interacting with main campus colleagues. Within some of the interviews, it was apparent administrators have to intentionally address issues brought forth from main campus colleagues on the uncertainty of practices at the off-campus center. As the supervisor for the Rutgers University Adult Learning Center illustrated:

There was there has been concern, with several on-campus faculty who never even teach off campus in fact, they are graduate faculty, but they don't teach in a graduate program, particularly in the sciences, have concerns with a particular course called trends in science taught by adjuncts and it might be different people who teach it each time and several of them in my graduate council and I am speaking as graduate dean now, ah had huge concerns because they didn't understand the class and then didn't have copies of the syllabus and then they weren't sure how their credentials lined up. So, he was getting tested by people who really don't interact with them or even teach down there, but since they are the graduate council they have a large input in the say of the approval process of some of the faculty.

As the supervisor further clarified, Dr. Cole's intentionally engaged with faculty to assure the high academic standards of the off-campus center:

He came up and met with the graduate council, they proposed things, could we have x, y, and z whether it is credentials, or could we have a syllabus ahead of time and he has complied with all of that because he is not trying to hide any particular thing or rush things around the process so that there is a process on campus, that administratively has oversight of our graduate programs and that he has complied with all of that and I think that helped him build an on campus reputation for someone that doesn't work on campus, so that ah pretty important as well.

Additional examples were provided from all three administrators on their role of intentionally addressing the ambiguity perceptions of off-campus centers from their main campus colleagues. As the supervisor for Williams University Education Center indicated:

Um, sometimes that is difficult to do, especially when you are not getting responses from outside sources that are an hour and half away. But, again I think it is her own personality, she stays positive, she knows when she has reached a certain point that she can't get passed and she knows who to go to overcome that block.

Thus, intentionality should be recognized as an aspect of the administrator's skill set to create a positive and collaborative culture on the main campus and at the off-campus center.

#### *Inherited Sense of Kinship*

At the off-campus centers, a significant number of participants indicated how the administrators strived to provide students, faculty and staff a sense of kinship. Ms.

Thomas remarked on having students and faculty feel comfortable at their site:

It is very important...that they need to know that this is their facility and their home and that we want them to feel comfortable and because they are sacrificing a lot of time away from the family and friends and so we want to make sure that if they are sacrificing that time that they have place that they can kind of call their home.

Since a majority of their students at all three centers work full-time and attend at night it is imperative for the administrators to make every effort to provide excellent customer service and a comfortable learning environment.

### *Dispensation of the Patron*

The administrators in this study were frequently recognized by the participants as treating them warmly and providing comfortable surroundings. This sense of belonging contributes to individuals wanting to attend and teach at the center, which optimally leads to a successful learning atmosphere (Asbill, 2006). Since the administrators embrace a philosophy of serving people as a norm at the center, excellent customer service is a necessity. As Ms. Elmore assessed:

We're excellent in customer service. We're the model that they should be following. We're also excellent in recruiting. Recruiting and maintaining students. Following up with them. So those are some of the things that the off campus centers do very, very well. We also are very engaged in our community. Main campus isn't engaged in their community. They maybe will do this or that but they're not really engaged. Off campus centers are very engaged.

A supervisor for another administrator provided further insight, "...the students feel welcomed when they walk in the door. That also translates to the faculty." All three administrators regarded serving people as their number one priority at their center. As Novak and Purkey (2001) believed through interpersonal relationships, people create the positive learning environments.

At each location, the staff remarked they provide excellent customer service something beyond what would be provided on their main campus. As one staff member shared,

I mean, we do kind of take them by the hand and do more. It is not like you are on your own kind of thing. If they have a problem or something, we are right here. All of us. To help.

Several students commented on how they are greeted when entering the site, and the willingness of staff to assist with their technology or administrative needs. One student

from Payola University Metro Center commented, on her experience with Ms. Elmore when she first applied:

I dealt with her from the beginning and she assisted me with getting signed up for classes, going through the paperwork and telling me what I needed to do next and she would call me back if I had a question. And, she would e-mail me back if I e-mailed her. And, and I found that comforting to know that she cared that I did get registered and that I was a student here, that I enjoyed, you know, or that this experience would be a good experience for me and she seemed to take that in hand and it to me, by her having the position that, the position that she is in, I know that she had a lot of other things that she could have been doing and she could have probably handed that off to someone else. But, she took the time out to, you know; respond to me and to assist me when I needed it.

Some students who attended both on the main campus and the off-campus center felt the sense of belonging resided primarily in their relationship with the professor. However, as one student commented he felt a greater sense of being valued:

I think it kind of goes back to what we were just talking about, when I am addressed here – like, within the classroom, I feel exactly the same as I do, I am addressed exactly the same way I would be anywhere else. But, you kind of feel a little bit more – I can't think of the right word – value is not the right word but there is a lot, they accommodate you a lot better, which makes you feel a little more valued, I guess here, but that's probably also due to the fact that there is far less traffic coming in and out of here compared, ahm, you know, there. And, they are able to provide those services more readily because there are a lot less people.

Furthermore, since a significant number of classes at each center are taught by full-time professors who often travel a distance to get to the site, the administrators offer snacks, drinks and copying services as a means of convenience. Dr. Cole explained:

The refrigerator's always stocked with soda and water for the faculty when they come and they know that and they're very welcome, to get that. And we, you know, we try to, make this as comfortable as possible. Our main campus is ninety (90) miles away and that is about an hour and a half drive and by the time they get here, if they have somebody to greet them and they feel that they're welcomed and that they're appreciated it, you know, it makes a difference.

Ms. Elmore's supervisor provided further evidence:

We ... she would do little things like having coffee available for faculty after they've driven an hour to the off campus location. Having some snacks available. You know those kinds of things. And, I think those personal touch make people feel more valued.

From a faculty's viewpoint at Payola University Metro Center:

The place is made to feel to be more of a place of supportive environment because someone is always here to help...for example, there's always, if you need copying done, it is always done right away and somebody is right there. So, (hesitation) the place feels more, ah, just an extension of you as an instructor, where it, it is not as many hurdles that you might have to handle.

This personal commitment to attending to people provides students, faculty and staff a sense of belonging to the center.

#### *Ambiance Conductive for Erudition*

Another aspect is the physical environment of the off-campus centers. In all three centers, the administrators worked with their staff to put up pictures and information of their main campuses to provide students a connection to their institution. Purkey and Siegel (2003) believed it moves a center from a less desirable environment to one that demonstrates a "...collective 'we,' 'us,' and 'our'" (p. 107). When discussing the environment their main campus, an administrator inserted:

We have the same mission – that being student success, student every day. And we try to – we've go, eh, everybody that you've talked to here today, except for Susan (pseudonym), is a graduate of Rutgers University. So, we try to bring that, that Mule atmosphere down here.

The physical environment can be a positive influence on the individuals who visit the center, which Novak and Purkey (2001) stated, "...the landscape and upkeep of the school can announce that people care and are on top of any situation" (p 17). At each center, the participants stated how inviting the physical environment was to teach and

learn. Faculty was the most descriptive about the centers. As a professor commented on the Williams University Education Center:

I love the facilities. I have taught in both and on campus, and I've taught here. I love it here. It is quiet. I always think and I know that every professor here feels the same. It is my own personal space. I call it my room.

Rutgers University faculty person further emphasized:

Our students like the fact that they have that lounge area on the third floor and the fourth floor; that they can go, and sit and talk to each other, and work on their computers if they want to. Several of them have mentioned that they could check out computers. In fact, I'll check that computer when I forgot to bring my own. That's major for a lot of them.

However, one center did not have a lounge and students mentioned this is something they would like to have. As one Williams University Education Center student remarked:

A lot of difference stuff around here that would probably improve the overall situation, the student lounge. Somewhere to relax and somewhere to study, things of that nature so if we had all that it will basically improve the environment but the staff here is great.

Nevertheless, overall the environments of the centers were considered inviting for students, faculty and staff, creating a sense of belonging and ideal learning environment.

The themes represent the administrators' commitment to providing a successful learning community for student and faculty that attend or instruct at their off-campus center. Specific attention was focused on the perceptions of students, faculty and staff, on the center and its administrator's use of leadership characteristics through the lens of invitational leadership. These themes serve as evidence of a positive relationship that is fostered through respect, trust, optimism and intentionality into the off-campus learning environment.

## Summary

Within Chapter Four, the study design, data collection methods, conceptual framework, research questions and process of data analysis were discussed. Subsequently, a description of the sites and the background of the participants were provided. Also presented in Chapter Four were the emerging themes of off-campus centers and administrators in creating an effective education environment through the lens of invitational leadership. The three themes that emerged were: 1) Intense Collaboration, with subthemes of Quorum of Stakeholders and Distributive Responsibilities; and 2) Motivational Influence, with subthemes of Optimism and Intention; and #) Inherited Sense of Kinship, with subthemes of Dispensation of the Patron and Ambiance Conducive for Erudition. The information was a synthesis from interviews, focus groups, observations, and historical material. Furthermore, discussed in Chapter Five are the summary of findings, conclusions, limitations, implications for practice and recommendations for future study.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This qualitative, multi-case study was designed to investigate off-campus centers and their administrators in creating an effective learning environment for adult learners. Serving as the conceptual framework, invitational leadership theory provides a holistic approach, whereas the belief that everyone is intrinsically motivated and it is the leaders' responsibility to unleash their true potential (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). The researcher utilized invitational leadership theory as the lens to analyze off-campus center administrators to understand the perceptions of faculty, students, and staff on the four characteristics of trust, respect, optimism, and intentionality within the five environments: of people, places, policies, programs, and processes (Novak & Purkey, 2001). Data were collected and triangulated through interviews, focus groups, observations and historical artifacts (Creswell, 2003). To ensure credibility, the researcher used member checking, which provides the participants an opportunity to review transcribe data and offer feedback (Creswell). Through data analysis, three themes emerged: 1) Intense Collaboration, with subthemes of Quorum of Stakeholders and Distributive Responsibility; and 2) Motivational Influence, with subtheme of Optimism and Intention; and 3) Inherited Sense of Kinship with subthemes of Dispensation of the Patron and Ambiance Conducive for Erudition.

Within Chapter Five, a summary of the findings and conclusions that were based on the data analyzed were discussed. Furthermore, the implications for practice and recommendations were presented. A qualitative approach provided the opportunity to

“...understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or issue” (Creswell, 2003, p. 40). For the purpose of this research, a multi-case study was selected to expand the perceptions of off-campus center stakeholders.

### Summary of Findings

The finding of this research study examining off-campus centers and their administrators will be provided within this section. The focus of this research was to analyze administrator’s leadership characteristics through the lens of invitational leadership theory. Purkey and Siegel (2003) identified four assumptions applied within five environments, presenting a holistic approach to leadership that is transparent throughout the leader’s personal and professional life. These assumptions of trust, respect, optimism and intentionality within the five environments of people, places, policies, programs, and processes served as the lens for the overarching questions utilized within this study (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). In addition, the lens of invitational leadership provided the framework to analyze the off-campus center learning environment compared to the main campus learning environment. The purpose was to determine if the off-campus center offered an effective learning environment for the demographic being served at their location, the adult learner.

The following three themes related to the perceptions of off-campus center and their administrators emerged through data analysis: Intense Collaboration, Motivational Influence, and Inherited Sense of Kinship. Within the parameters of the study, as developed from the conceptual framework, these research questions served as a guide for this study:

1. What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?
2. How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?
3. How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

Within Chapter 4, a summary of the major concepts extrapolated from the data.

Furthermore, the literature review served as guide to interpret the data.

*What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?*

When examining the significant leadership characteristics in creating an effective learning environment, most participants were evenly divided between respect and trust as being the essential traits for an administrator to possess. Invitational theorists, Purkey and Siegel (2003), believed the key important aspect is respect, because it is the belief, "...that we and our associates are able, valuable, and responsible, and should be treated accordingly" (p. 7). A faculty person agreed with their assertion, "...I still think respect is maybe the first, because respect builds trust, and you go from there to the others."

However, equally noted as a necessary characteristic, trust, is a set of predictable patterns of a leader that are developed overtime through a consistent performance of quality attributes, such as reliability, truthfulness, intent, and competence (Novak &

Purkey, 2001). A Payola University male faculty person replied when asked which of the four characteristics is the most significant for an off-campus center administrator, "... trust would be the cornerstone and all of the other three are very important. But if I don't trust you I really could care less about your vision or anything else that you do." This is further indicated through interviews with Ms. Elmore and a faculty member, who stated "...yeah, because you know that you want someone predictable." Since respect and trust are woven throughout other moral leadership theories, including transformational and servant, it is evident from the data analysis and existing research, trust and respect are two significant characteristics for creating an effective learning (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003; Bush, 2003; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

While optimism and intentionality were rarely chosen as the most significant, participants acknowledged how important it was for a leader to possess these characteristics. As Dr. Cole commented, "I can't say any of them are not important. They're all, they're all really, really, important." Within an education environment, an optimistic leader is "...committed to the continuous appreciation and growth of all involved in the educative process," whereas, intentionality is a conscious choice to be respectful, trustworthy and optimistic (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 14; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Among the participants, there was a consensus on the ability of the administrator to incorporate all four characteristics into their leadership style. As one faculty person stated about Dr. Cole, "He's always looking for the best in people. He's always going to help you but he also, I think, his desire is to be respectful and trustworthy and optimistic." This is consistent with the existing literature that invitational leaders go beyond trust and

respect, and include optimism and intentionality for a holistic approach to leadership (Novak & Purkey; Purkey & Siegel).

*How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?*

Over the course of the data analysis, the demographic of students at each center were reviewed. Students were considered to be adult learners or non-traditional students, primarily attending part-time. As noted in the review of literature, these students want to gain practical knowledge, rather than participating in socialization customs traditionally offered on a main campus (Armstrong, 2001; Graham & Donaldson, 1999; Kasworm, 2009). Gabor and Heggan (1995) emphasized the goal of off-campus centers is to provide a comparable environment of quality instruction, similar student outcomes, and appropriate services for the adult learner. It was evident from the data collected that each of the administrators provided an equivalent or actually “nicer” educational environment than on the main campus. Some participants offered the reason that the environment is smaller and less bureaucracy exists at the off-campus center, thus, the administrator and staff could provide more personal service than on the main campus. As one Williams University Education Center staffer stated, “...because, we are smaller I think our environment calls for more personalized service and it would be offensive, probably, if we weren’t a little bit more personalized.” A majority of the individuals in the interviews and focus groups conveyed countless details on how the administrator and staff demonstrated the invitational characteristics of respect, trust, optimism and intentionality to students, faculty, and staff. As one faculty member from Payola University commented on Ms. Elmore:

You know when I tell her or ask her to do something that she would follow through and then she will be able to find answers for me and if I need something about the students, ... eh, because you know she's, she, she has more, eh, I think, time and ability to contact the students.

Moreover, faculty affirmed, they trusted their classroom would be set up and technology functioning every time they entered the site, as stated by one Williams University faculty person, "...I think the services here are great. If you need a copier you have it. If you need a computer, you have it. If you need time and space to do something within reason, you have it." Conversely, participants' commented there is sometimes a lack of transparency between the main campus and the off-campus center and the absence of being treated equally as their main campus counterparts. As a faculty member from Williams University commented:

But just the...interactions I have with people down there, they're in a complete different world and they have little to no appreciation of the missed opportunities that are happening up here in terms of enrolling more students and gaining greater awareness.

Nevertheless, even though there was consistency within the data analysis that these centers have less services, including the inability to purchase books on-site, a lack of a student lounge (Williams University Education Center), or an incapability to increase educational programming without main campus departments, it can be determined that the students, faculty and staff perceived their needs were being met as having a comparable educational environment to the main campus. Within this finding, it was necessary from the perceptions of supervisors, faculty, and staff that the administrators foster an optimistic and intentional leadership in delivering and negotiating programs and services to the off-campus center.

*How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?*

This finding had an overwhelming response to people being the primary environment for an administrator to address when creating an effective learning atmosphere for the adult learner. Invitational theorists believe people are the most important aspect and through developing and sustaining relationships is the foundation for creating a positive environment (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004). As one administrator stated:

They're [people] the life blood of this center. It's my job to set them up for success. I need to make sure they understand what their responsibilities are; what their tasks are; and, I constantly ask them what you need me to do; how can I help you; and I tell them that their success is the success of the Rutners's Adult Learning Center.

Participants' perspectives on places, policies, and programs perspectives had similar findings to the literature review on the needs of adult learners. Morey (2004) Giancola, Grawitch, and Borchert, (2009), Ritt (2008) and Ross-Gordon, (2011) affirmed adult learners have a whole host of demands; thus, their educational needs are centered on convenience. Within the student focus groups, comments about free parking, a student lounge and classes available at night and weekends, and technology access were often provided as positive responses when questioned about the physical environment (places). However, when discussing policies and programs at the off-campus center compared to the main campus, participants were adamant the administrator follows the same procedures. Dr. Cole's supervisor explained when discussing accreditation:

You do everything at this off-campus center following the exact same procedures then you really are answering any of their concerns that our accrediting body would be concerned about. As they are concerned about things that are different, or if students don't have access to the same things they have on campus, or that we have a different policy with respect to academic dishonesty or attendance or something else. With my ah, vice president of student affairs contacted me about four months ago and asked, he was revising the student conduct, code of student

conduct manual, and he says we always assumed that the graduate students follow the same code of conduct, you don't have a separate one, and I said absolutely not, and he said how about off-campus, and I said, every student follows all the same process, ah, that was easy for him, because that would be the best way to manage anything is not create an isolated set of rules and policies that people follow. That is not dependable in a management style or possibly a litigious situation.

The only policies that were indicated as different were the leasing agreements with the property's owner. As the Williams University Education Center supervisor conferred, "...well, the building is leased, so the policies have to be follow the building, building codes, fire, it is different than what it would be on the main campus." Students, who were attending or had attended the main campus, portrayed both campuses as having similar policies and program environments. As one Payola University Metro Center student commented, "...like, ah, anything that I directly deal with like on a day to day basis when I come here is exactly the same as it would be on the main campus."

When addressing processes, Purkey and Siegel (2003) contended, it is the culture created when the four assumptions of respect, trust, optimism and intentionality, are applied within the other four P's: people, places, policies, and programs. From the data analysis, the participants perceived the environment as learning and collaborative. As a Williams University Education Center student stated:

And it's got to go to networking opportunities and we all share and learn from each as well as learning from the professors and that is something that I think is very unique to this campus in a way that our program is structured. And then on weekends we all to go lunch together, we're going to drink afterwards. The way our program is structured is very nice.

Pappas and Jerman (2004) recognized that universities should consider the needs and desires of the adult student and provide an environment conducive for their learning (Gabor & Heggan, 1995; Manzo, 1997). All three off-campus centers were designed

specifically with the adult learners' needs in mind. Ms. Thomas believed their center was effective because,

Our student, what we offer the students is a place for them to complete a degree in an environment that is evening and online classes. So, it gives those students that maybe have a full-time job or they have a family, they can't travel somewhere else to a main campus to finish their degree and we offer that for them here.

The processes at the centers could be considered one of a collaborative learning environment. As one faculty member indicated, "...what we have is a learning community," as well Dr. Cole commented, "I think the culture is one of collaboration." This is consistent with the research completed by Flora and Hirt (2008) and Gabor Heggan (1995) on the environments of off-campus centers.

#### Conclusion Derived from the Findings

A qualitative research study was chosen to understand the phenomena of off-campus center and their administrator's leadership characteristics within their natural setting at a particular point in time (Creswell, 2007). The purposes of the research were not to prove or disprove a hypothesis, but rather provide a holistic view where themes emerge throughout the progression of the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). As Mertens (2005) stated, "...qualitative methods are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific program, practice, or setting" (p. 229).

Within the qualitative methodology, a multi-case study approach was chosen with the goal of exploring in-depth understanding of the off-campus center phenomena (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002). This approach expands upon analyzing an issue in one bounded case or setting to synthesize generalization from a chosen number of bounded cases (Creswell; Merriam; Merriam, 2009). Through the process of collecting data from a multitude of sources, including interviews, focus groups, observations, and historical

material over period of time consistent themes emerge to provide the researcher a thick description of the phenomena (Creswell; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Mertens, 2005). Accordingly, the following conclusions are derived from the findings of this study related to on off-campus center and their administrators in creating an effective learning environment through the lens of invitational leadership.

### *Intense Collaboration*

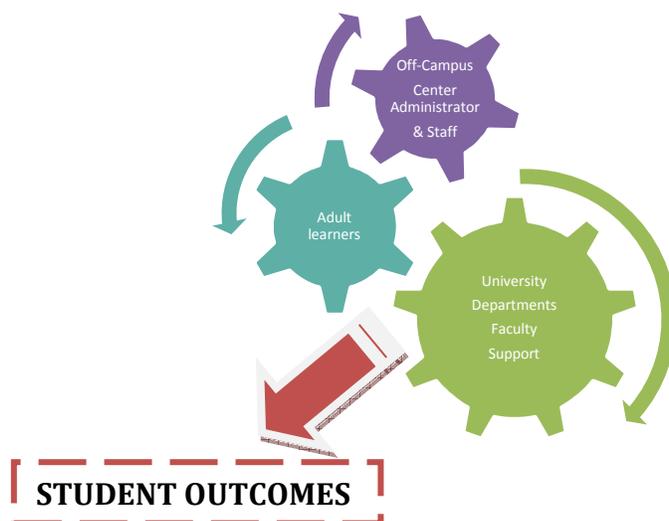
From the data findings, it can be concluded that an off-campus center administrator should possess the characteristics of trust and respect to create an effective learning environment. If a leader lacked one or both of these characteristics, it was determined within the research that the participants would become indifferent and less committed or enthusiastic towards their positional responsibilities or participation with the vision or goals. From the perspective of invitational theorists, respect is the most significant component for a leader to demonstrate; however, from the findings it can be concluded trust is as equally important characteristic (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Although, optimism and intentionality were considered desired characteristics for off-campus center administrators, it was evident from the interviews and focus groups, the participants highly regarded individuals whom they trust and respect.

Evolved from the finding of respect and trust, the intense collaboration administrators' conduct with a variety of their stakeholders was indicated throughout the interviews and focus groups. There were numerous accounts of the administrators involving faculty, staff and students within the decision making process. It was further indicated the administrators create a web of participation among the staff members through distributing and sharing of responsibilities at the center. In essence, the

participation in the decision making process and cooperation of facilitating role functions provided a sense of transparency creating an inviting environment to all stakeholders. As mentioned from one staff person when asked what the most significant characteristic her answer was, “can I add transparency?” The aspect of transparency is woven through the administrator consistently being a leader that is respected and trusted from all of the consumers of the center, including other university colleagues (i.e., faculty and administration) who primarily reside on the main campus. As Dr. Cole’s supervisor believed:

As a leader you are watched 100% of the time and 1% you might make a mistake, is almost too much, so literally you are always being judged by all stakeholders whether it is staff, faculty and students or people who aren’t engaged in it.

Therefore, it can be concluded from the research, the administrator serves as a key component in connecting the university’s academics, faculty, and resources to a population of students that might not have had the opportunity to engage in advanced learning. Depicted in Figure 1 is the relationship of the administrator and staff to the university and their primary audience, the adult learner.



*Figure 1: Represents the Role of the Off-Campus Center Administrator*

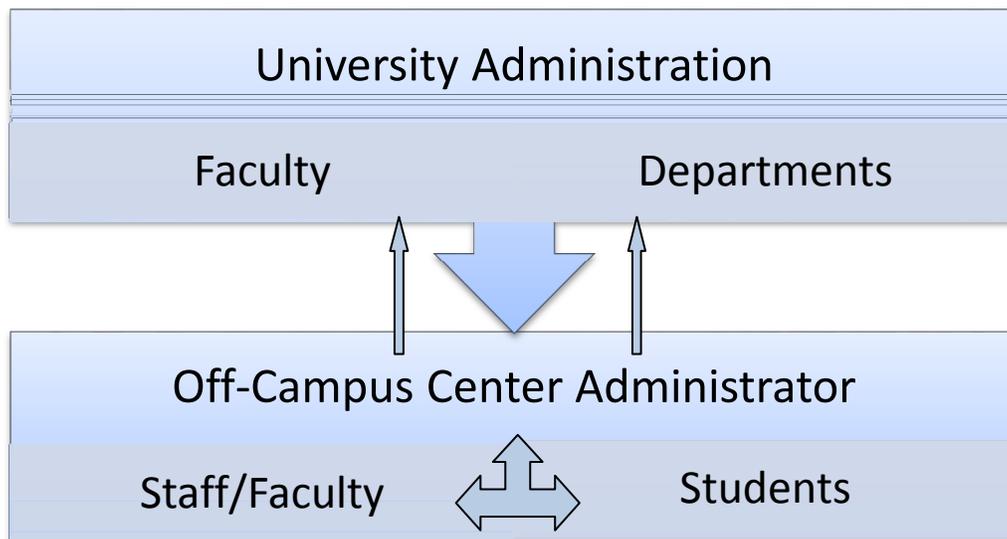
The gear metaphorically represents the administrator being a necessary mechanism to facilitate the connection between the university, students, and off-campus center. In considering invitational leadership as the driving force of this gear, for the environments to continue to revolve, there has to be trust and respect between the entities that the mechanisms will rotate consistently in all situations. Thus, as an invitational leader, it can be concluded an administrator should embrace these leadership characteristics throughout all aspects of his or her personal and professional life (Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

#### *Motivational Influence*

The administrators within this study all displayed a positive attitude when engaging with stakeholders, even when presented with a difficult situation. From the results, it can be concluded these administrators would be considered "...intentionally inviting," whereas the leader embraces the four characteristics of trust, respect, optimism and intentionality (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 67). Through the perceptions of the participants, the leaders, when presented with requests or new initiatives, demonstrated a willingness to engage in these challenges. The characteristic of optimism is a key component of being a leader because change is accepted as a necessary step for personal and professional enrichment instead of perceived as a threat (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). From the data collected, it can be concluded that the administrators are intentional when they demonstrated such acts as engaging in relationships with stakeholders, conducting meeting, and working with colleagues on their main campuses. When leading a quasi-autonomous operation within a larger organizational structure, it is imperative these administrators demonstrate intentional leadership to provide an inviting environment. As

Novak and Purkey (2001) stated “...educators are never neutral and that everything and everybody in and around schools add to or subtract from the educative process” (p. 15).

As mentioned throughout the data, though these leaders foster a positive way of life and have created an environment that is inviting at the off-campus center, their connection with their main campus colleagues have aspects of having an unilateral relationship. This is similar to Flora and Hirt’s (2008) research on the job satisfaction of higher education center administrators. Illustrated in Figure 2 is the relationship between the administrator and the main campus.



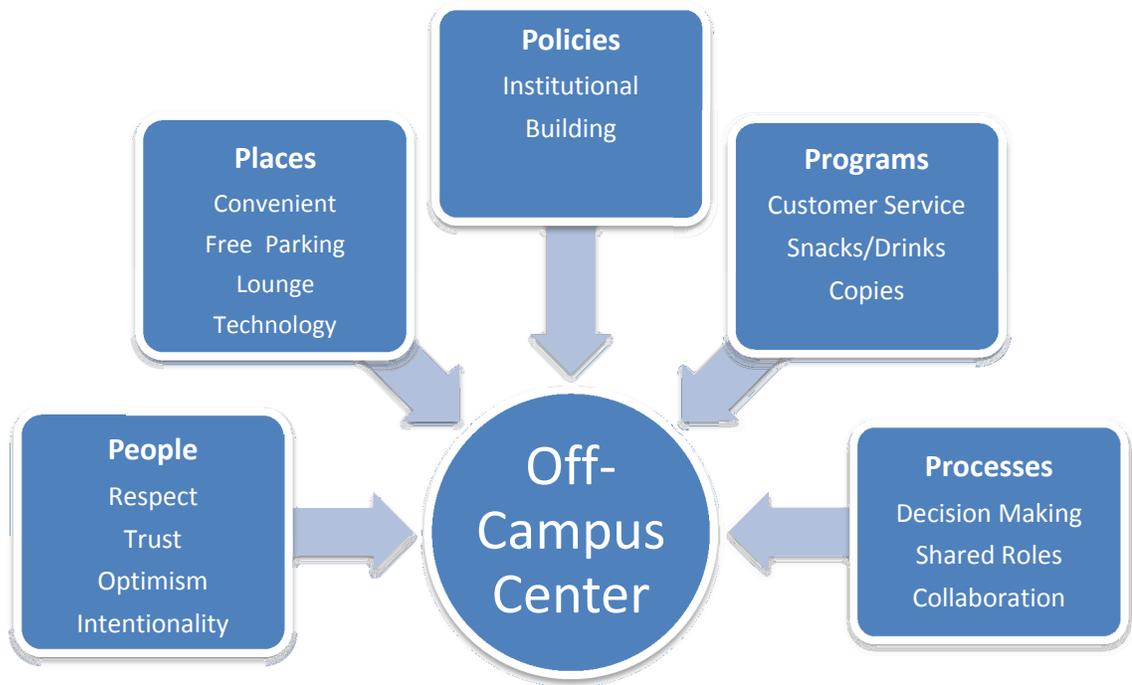
*Figure 2: Represents the Relationship between the Main Campus and Off-Campus Centers*

As the figure displays, the administrator and staff do have connective interrelationships with their main campus colleagues. This was further illustrated by several participants who confirmed the administrator was impactful in working with main campus colleagues to delivery programs and courses to the off-campus center, and dissolve misconception with main campus faculty about instruction and learning at a

distant location. However a caveat exists as well, because it can be concluded, outside of their job duties, the administrators motivational influence is not equally represented between the main institution and the off-campus center.

### *Inherited Sense of Kinship*

The inherited sense of kinship was portrayed by the participants as believing they were accepted and belong at the off-campus center. Delving through the data, it became apparent from the research how each administrator attended to the five environments, which provides an application progression for the four characteristics to create a holistic approach to leadership (Asbill, 2006; Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Examples of kindness, caring, excellent customer service demonstrated how the administrators and their staff attended to the aspect of people. As indicated in the findings, the centers were sometimes described as “nicer” than the main campus learning environment. Although, the participants sometimes were of the opinion it was necessary to provide reasons for the difference, it can be concluded the environment was effective for learning. Subsequently, when analyzing policies, there seemed to be no difference or just slight differences than the main campus, and this usually was the result of the center proximity or relationship with their landlord. In regard to programs, the findings concluded students believed there were similar services and resources as on the main campus, with just a few exceptions (e.g., books, lounge, etc.). Within the finding of the final P, processes, describing the culture or the synergy between the characteristics and the other four P’s, it was revealed by several participants that the atmosphere of the center is one of learning community for adult learners. Displayed in Figure 3 is how the Five P’s are represented at the off-campus centers.



*Figure 3: Representation of the Off-Campus Center's Five Environments*

As noted by Pappas and Jerman (2004), it is important to recognize the different needs of the adult learner when creating an educational environment. Therefore, it can be concluded from this research study, the off-campus centers took into account the adult learner when creating their center. Although it is not identical to their main campus with the vast number of degree programs offered or the extensive services provided for students, it was determined faculty, students, and staff considers the off-campus environment as comparable to their main campus.

#### Limitations

Marshall & Rossman (2006) believed there is no perfect design and every proposed research study has limitations. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the researcher acknowledges the existing limitations.

An initial limitation of the study was the location and size of each of the centers. Using purposeful sampling, the researcher intentionally chose public universities that are classified by the Carnegie Classification as Master's College and Universities and was located only within Midwestern states of the United States (Carnegie Foundation, 2011, <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/basic.php>; Merriam, 1988). Confining the research to a specific university type and geographical region hinder the opportunity to have a richer, diverse pool of participants that could potentially presented unique perceptions and insights (Yin, 1989).

In regard to the limitation of using a qualitative research design, with a multi-case study approach, the intent was to have a deeper illustration of the off-campus center phenomena (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002). A qualitative, multi-case study approach provided the reader a detailed description consisting of: "...time, place, context, and culture" which is imperative to demonstrate the nexus between the study sites (Mertens, 2005, p. 256). However, compared to quantitative statistical analysis, a qualitative study has to determine when saturation has occurred because there is "...no test of statistical significance to tell the researcher that the data analysis is at the end" (Mertens, p. 421)

A subsequent limitation is the researcher has worked in the field of higher education for over 15 years, and has served in the role of an off-campus center administrator for over 10 years. When conducting research from a social constructivists' lens, the researcher interacts with participants to "...construct the meaning of the situation" and has to acknowledge that prior experiences and opinions will shape the interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2003, p. 21). Bias are presented when participants and instead of eliminating these preconceptions, it is important for the researcher to

systematically reflect on his or her personal inquiry and how it influences the study (Creswell).

A final limitation was analyzing the off-campus center administrator through one specific leadership lens, invitational. Similar to servant and transformational leadership theories that foster the leader influencing the followers, Yukl (2006) claimed the dilemma is "...to determine when such influence is proper" (p. 421). While other theories, such as transactional or political might better address the power and influence that exists in larger institutional operations and how that affects the off-campus center and its administrator, for purposes of this inquiry, invitational leadership proved to be the better match (Bolman & Deal, 2008) .

#### Implications for Practice

The findings suggest off-campus center administrators' use of invitational leadership characteristics are directly related to creating an effective learning environment. From the study, the researcher gleaned future implications that can be applied to the practices of leadership within a university setting.

Within moral leadership theories, respect and trust are considered as essential characteristics for leaders to be effective (Novak & Purkey, 2001; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). This was also validated from a majority of the participants who choose respect or trust over the other two leadership characteristics. However, it was concluded from this study that off-campus administrators need to have the skill set of being optimistic and intentional in negotiating program delivery and services at an off-campus center. An implication would be for universities to emphasize internal preparatory training programs

for leaders. In addition, the aspects of optimism and intentionality should be incorporated as essential leadership characteristics within these programs.

A subsequent implication would be for universities to incorporate the off-campus administrator as a team member at administrative meetings. This would assist in bridging the gap that may exist and providing transparency between the two entities. As mentioned in one location, over half of the graduate credit hours were generated from their off-campus center. In addition, all three administrators were perceived as being leaders within their communities and regarded as innovative thinkers who could bring new ideas and initiatives for to their university. It is, therefore, imperative universities perceive the value of these off-campus centers as part of their core mission and position these administrators into their institutional administrative teams (e.g., dean's council, academic council, etc.).

As a final implication, revising the process of how new programs and services are offered at off-campus centers. In the case of all three centers, it was the departments driving the decisions of what is being offered as educational opportunities for the students. The professional bureaucracy engrained at universities hinders the nimbleness off-campus center administrators need to be responsive to a growing market of adult learners. For the future, universities would be well-positioned to incorporate a model of extending programs that are market driven within metropolitan areas and reverse the longstanding organization structure that exists on institutions campuses.

#### Recommendations for Future Study

The results of this study add to the body of knowledge that already exists on off-campus centers and their administrators. As indicated in the literature review, limited

research is available on these sites and their leaders (Flora & Hirt, 2008; Gabor & Heggan, 1995). Thus, the opportunity for a variety of research studies exist to bring awareness and understanding of this type of higher education phenomena and the leadership characteristics of their administrators. From this research study, three recommendations for future research are suggested and provided within this section.

An initial recommendation for future research would be conducting a single case study analysis of an administrator, including his or her engagement responsibilities of community and regional involvement within a single case study. Flora and Hirt (2008) believed the administrator is the representative of the center as well as the institution in the community and regional area. In this study, some participants offered examples of how their administrator is involved in the community, including relationships with local school districts, chambers, and rotaries. Furthermore, comments were made on how the administrator has to participate in regional activities (e.g., alumni events, recruiting, etc.) Since this study was designed to analyze the leadership characteristics and the environment of the center in relation to the perspectives of students, faculty and staff; and a subsequent intention of understanding the comparison to their main campuses. A focus on the administrator's community and regional involvement did not seem a suitable inquiry for this study. Further research on the impact on the role of the administrator in the community and region from a variety of different lens, including: political, cultural, or social, would add to the body of knowledge on the functions and roles of off-campus center administrators.

A secondary recommendation for further research would be conducting a select comparison study between main campuses and their off-campus center. The research

could be conducted through a quantitative design model, where the research utilizes a post-positivists' perspective on such outcomes as grade point averages, faculty to student ratio, demographics and variety of other recordable data. Conversely, a study designed using a qualitative approach and a constructivist's lens analyzing the perceptions of administrators (e.g., president, provost, deans, directors, etc.), faculty, staff and students that have attended an off-campus center and the faculty, staff and students that have never attended or taught at the off-campus center. This study could provide a diversity of perspectives on off-campus centers. Both of these research studies would add to the body of knowledge on the relationship or comparison of the learning environment at an off-campus center.

A final recommendation would be to replicate the study on different Carnegie Classifications of institutions, including Doctoral-Granting Universities, Baccalaureate Colleges, Tribal College, or Associate's Colleges (Carnegie Foundation, 2011, <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/basic.php>). Master's colleges and universities are primarily regionally focused and considered to be flexible in nature when providing programs and services for regional constituents (Henderson, 2009). All three off-campus centers were designed similarly in offering programs driven by main campus departments and faculty. These other off-campus center administrators might need a different skill set than what is required by a master college and university leader. Therefore, these investigations could add to the body of knowledge that exists related to off-campus centers and their administrators.

## Concluding Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate off-campus centers and their administrators in creating an effective learning environment from the perceptions of faculty, staff and students. Through a qualitative, multi-case study, the administrators were analyzed using the conceptual framework of invitational leadership theory. This theory provides an outline for a holistic approach of leadership (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Within the findings of this study, it was suggested that all four characteristics of respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality contributed to an effective leader and a successful learning environment. Although respect and trust were determined to be equally significant characteristics for a leader's skill set, it was also indicated that optimism and intentionality are necessary in providing an inviting atmosphere.

The data also revealed the environment created at off-campus centers are designed to serve the growing population of adult learners. The literature review presented an understanding of the practical knowledge sought by adult learners and the manner in which their needs and desires are unique from the 18-24 year old student (Kambutu, 2005; Levine, 1997; Thelin, 2004). It was further indicated the off-campus environment compared to the main campus provided this comparable learning community from the perceptions of the participants, even with the absence of identical services and programs (Gabor & Heggan, 1995).

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## Appendix A

### *Gatekeeper and Informed Consent Documents*

1. Gatekeeper Consent Form
2. Administrator Consent Letter
3. Supervisor and Faculty Consent Letter
4. Staff and Student Focus Group Consent Letter
5. Informed Consent Form

## University Gatekeeper Permission for Employee and Student Participation Letter

Dear Administrator,

I would like to please request your permission to invite applicable faculty, staff and students at {enter University name} to participate in a research study, entitled: *Creating an effective an educational environment for adult learners: A qualitative, multi-case study of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership*. My intention is examine the perceptions of these faculty, staff, and students on the leadership characteristics of off-campus administrators in creating an effective learning environment for adult learners. Since there is little research on off-campus centers, the information gathered should be beneficial for higher education administrators responsible for leading these centers. The study is a requirement of the dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

For this research study, a sampling was selected of individuals who have served as an off-campus center administrator for more than three (3) years at a public university classified by the Carnegie Foundation Classification System as a *Master's Colleges and Universities*. I am seeking your permission to contact the off-campus administrator and applicable {University} personnel and students, including: the administrator's supervisor and staff, and a select group of faculty and students who either teach or attend at the off-campus center to participate in the study. A copy of the interview protocol, consent letter and informed consent forms are attached for your review.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. The participant may withdraw at any time without penalty, including in the middle of interviews or after it is completed. Participants' answers and the off-campus center will be confidential and remain anonymous in the reporting of results. The participant or corresponding institution will not be listed in my dissertation or any future publications of this study. Risk for this research study is minimal, all tapes and transcripts will remain confidential, anonymous, and separate from any identifying information.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about granting permission either by phone at (816) 215-3092 or by electronic mail at carolynpmcknight@gmail.com. In addition, you are also welcome to contact the dissertation advisor for this research study, Dr. Barbara Martin at (660) 543-8823 or by electronic mail at bmartin@ucmo.edu.

If you choose to allow me to contact faculty, staff, and students at your institution regarding participation in this study, please complete the attached permission form. A copy of this letter and your written consent will be provided to you for your records.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Carolyn P. McKnight  
Doctoral Candidate

Administrative Permission for Faculty, Staff and Student Participation

I, \_\_\_\_\_, grant permission for the {university's} off-campus center to be contacted and identify administrators, staff, faculty and students willing to participate in the research study, entitled: *Creating effective educational environment for adult learners: A qualitative, multi-case study of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership*. The study is being conducted by Carolyn P. McKnight, a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

By signing this permission form, I understand that the following safeguards are in place to ensure protection of the participants:

1. All participation is completely voluntary and a participant may withdraw at any time throughout any phase of the research study.
2. All responses will be used for dissertation research and for potential future journal publications.
3. All identities and affiliations will be kept confidential in all phases of the research study.
4. A researcher will conduct on-site or phone interviews (administrator, administrator's supervisor and faculty) and two (2) on-site focus groups (administrator's staff and students) which will take approximately thirty (30) to forty-five (45) minutes each to complete.

Please keep a copy of this permission form, consent letter, and consent form for your records. If you choose to grant permission for faculty, staffs, and students to participate in this study, please complete this *Administrative Permission for Faculty, Staff and Student Participation* and fax it to: Carolyn P. McKnight at 816-347-9574 or by electronic mail at carolynpmcknight@gmail.com as soon as possible.

I have read the material above, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions and those questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I grant permission for {university's} faculty, staff, and students to be contacted and invited to participate in this study.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

University: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please return to: Carolyn P. McKnight • 1006 SW 11<sup>th</sup> Court, Lee's Summit, Missouri  
64081

Cell Phone: 816-215-3092 • Fax: 816-347-9574 • Email: carolynpmcknight@gmail.com

Administrator Consent Letter

**Dear Participant,**

Thank you for considering participation in a research study, entitled, *Creating an effective educational environment for adult learners: A qualitative, multi-case study of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership*. The study is a requirement of the dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. You have been invited to participate in this research study because of your position as an off-campus center administrator.

**Researcher:** Ms. Carolyn P. McKnight. University of Missouri, Doctoral Candidate, please contact the researcher by email at carolynpmcknight@gmail.com or by phone at 816-215-3092.

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Barbara Martin, University of Central Missouri, please contact Dr. Martin by phone at 816-543-8823.

**Institutional Review Board:** University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board, 483 McReynolds, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211. If you have questions regarding your right as a research participant please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to explore the role of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership in creating an effective educational environment for adult learners as perceived by the students, faculty and staff.

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?
2. How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?
3. How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

**Procedures:** If you give your consent to participate in this study, the researcher will conduct a thirty (30) to forty-five (45) minute interview on your campus, in a designated room or office. The interviews will be audio and video-taped. The questions will be semi-structured with the opportunity to provide open-ended answers. In the event significant new findings develop during the course of the study, the researcher may ask you to participate in additional audio-recorded interviews either in person or via telephone. In addition to being recorded, all interviews will be transcribed verbatim for use by the

researcher. The researcher may also ask additional questions of you via electronic mail. All participants will be allowed to review the transcripts to ensure accuracy.

**Consent:** To participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form indicating you understand and agree to participate in the study. A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records.

Sincerely,

Carolyn P. McKnight  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Missouri

## Supervisor and Faculty

### **Dear Participant,**

Thank you for considering participation in a research study, entitled, *Creating an effective educational environment for adult learners: A qualitative, multi-case study of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership*. The study is a requirement of the dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. You have been invited to participate in this research study because of your relationship to the off-campus center administrator.

**Researcher:** Ms. Carolyn P. McKnight. University of Missouri, Doctoral Candidate, please contact the researcher by email at carolynpmcknight@gmail.com or by phone at 816-215-3092.

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Barbara Martin, University of Central Missouri, please contact Dr. Martin by phone at 816-543-8823.

**Institutional Review Board:** University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board, 483 McReynolds, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211. If you have questions regarding your right as a research participant please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to explore the role of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership in creating an effective educational environment for adult learners as perceived by the students, faculty and staff.

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?
2. How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?
3. How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

**Procedures:** If you give your consent to participate in this study, the researcher will conduct a thirty (30) to forty-five (45) minute interview on your campus, in a designated room or office. The interviews will be audio and video-taped. If a campus interview is unavailable a phone interview, with only audio recording will be a secondary option. The questions will be semi-structured with the opportunity to provide open-ended answers. In the event significant new findings develop during the course of the study, the researcher

may ask you to participate in additional audio-recorded interviews either in person or via telephone. In addition to being recorded, all interviews will be transcribed verbatim for use by the researcher. The researcher may also ask additional questions of you via electronic mail. All participants will be allowed to review the transcripts to ensure accuracy.

**Consent:** To participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form indicating you understand and agree to participate in the study. A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records.

Sincerely,

Carolyn P. McKnight  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Missouri

## Staff and Student Focus Group Letter

### **Dear Participant,**

Thank you for considering participation in a research study, entitled, *Creating an effective educational environment for adult learners: A qualitative, multi-case study of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership*. The study is a requirement of the dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. You have been invited to participate in this research study because of your relationship to the off-campus center administrator.

**Researcher:** Ms. Carolyn P. McKnight. University of Missouri, Doctoral Candidate, please contact the researcher by email at carolynpmcknight@gmail.com or by phone at 816-215-3092.

**Dissertation Supervisor:** Dr. Barbara Martin, University of Central Missouri, please contact Dr. Martin by phone at 816-543-8823.

**Institutional Review Board:** University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board, 483 McReynolds, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211. If you have questions regarding your right as a research participant please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to explore the role of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership in creating an effective educational environment for adult learners as perceived by the students, faculty and staff.

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What assumptions, including: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality of invitational leadership do administrators, staff, faculty, and students observe as significant to creating an effective off-campus center?
2. How do off-campus administrators use invitational leadership characteristics in creating an educational environment comparable to their main campus as perceived by students, faculty, and staff?
3. How are the five P's: people, places, policies, programs, and processes of invitational leadership significant to the educational environment of the adult learner?

**Procedures:** If you give your consent to participate in this study, the researcher will conduct a thirty (30) to forty-five (45) minute focus group on your campus, in a designated room or office. The focus groups will be audio and video-taped. The questions will be semi-structured with the opportunity to provide open-ended answers. In the event significant new findings develop during the course of the study, the researcher may ask you to participate in additional audio-recorded interviews either in person or via

telephone. In addition to being recorded, all interviews will be transcribed verbatim for use by the researcher. The researcher may also ask additional questions of you via electronic mail. All participants will be allowed to review the transcripts to ensure accuracy.

**Consent:** To participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form indicating you understand and agree to participate in the study. A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records.

Sincerely,

Carolyn P. McKnight  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Missouri

\_\_\_\_\_, gives consent to participate in the research study, entitled: *Creating an effective educational environment for adult learners: A qualitative, multi-case study of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership*. The study is being conducted by Carolyn P. McKnight, a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

By signing this consent form and participating within the interview process, you understand that the following safeguards are in place to ensure protection:

1. You have been given the opportunity to ask questions prior to the research study and those questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. Your responses during the research study will be used for the dissertation and future potential publications regarding this subject.
3. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from participation at any time without penalty, including in the middle of interviews or after it is completed.
4. Your identity and the off-campus center will be confidential in the reporting of results. Your name or your corresponding institution will not be listed in the dissertation or any future publications of this study.
5. Your consent to participate or refusal to participate will not affect employment in any way.
6. You understand this is minimal risk study.

Please keep a copy of the consent letter and a signed copy of the consent form for your records. If you have any questions, please contact the researcher.

You have read the information above, and you voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

University: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information:

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (circle one) Work Home Cell

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please return to: Carolyn P. McKnight • 1006 SW 11<sup>th</sup> Court, Lee's Summit, Missouri  
64081

Cell Phone: 816-215-3092 • Fax: 816-347-9574 • Email: carolynpmcknight@gmail.com

Appendix B

*University of Missouri – Columbia Campus Institutional Review Board Approval*



**Campus Institutional Review Board**  
University of Missouri-Columbia

485 McReynolds Hall  
Columbia, MO 65211-1150  
PHONE: (573) 882-9585  
FAX: (573) 884-0663

February 8, 2012

Principal Investigator: McKnight, Carolyn P  
Department: Educational Leadership

Your Application to project entitled *CREATING EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ADULT LEARNERS: A QUALITATIVE, MULTI-CASE STUDY OF OFF-CAMPUS CENTER ADMINISTRATOR'S USE OF INVITATIONAL LEADERSHIP* was reviewed and approved by the MU Campus Institutional Review Board according to terms and conditions described below:

IRB Project Number	1201232
Initial Application Approval Date	February 8, 2012
IRB Expiration Date	February 8, 2013
Level of Review	Exempt
Project Status	Active - Open to Enrollment
Regulation	45 CFR 46.101b(2)
Risk Level	Minimal Risk

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects and conduct of this study. The PI must comply with the following conditions of the approval:

1. No subjects may be involved in any study procedure prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
2. All unanticipated problems, serious adverse events, and deviations must be reported to the IRB within 5 days.
3. All modifications must be IRB approved by submitting the Exempt Amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk.
4. All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to being used.
5. The Annual Exempt Certification Form must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval at least 30 days prior to the project expiration date.
6. Maintain all research records for a period of seven years from the project completion date.
7. Utilize the IRB stamped document informing subjects of the research and other approved research documents located within the document storage section of eIRB.

If you have any questions, please contact the Campus IRB at 573-882-9585 or [umcresearchcirb@missouri.edu](mailto:umcresearchcirb@missouri.edu).

Thank you,

Charles Borduin, PhD  
Campus IRB Chair

## Appendix C

### *Definition of Invitational Leadership Terms for Interviews and Focus Groups*

## Definition of Invitational Leadership Terms for Interviews and Focus Groups

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research study, entitled: *Creating effective educational environment for adult learners: A qualitative, multi-case study of off-campus center administrator's use of invitational leadership*. To aid in the interview process, I have provided a list of key leadership terms and definitions. It is my intention that these definitions will present a framework of understanding that will be of assistance during the interview process.

*Invitational leadership*. Invitational leadership upholds the belief that all "...people are motivated" and rather than spending time on motivation, leaders instead "...seek to unleash each person's intrinsic energy by summoning people cordially to see themselves as capable of tackling tough challenges, overcoming obstacles, and accomplishing great things" (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, p. 5). They do this by applying four assumptions: *respect*, *trust*, *optimism*, and *intention* within the total environment of the five P's: *people*, *places*, *programs*, *policies*, and *processes*.

Purkey & Siegel defined the four assumptions of invitational leadership as:

*Respect* - believing all people are valuable and should be treated in a caring manner;

*Trust* - possessing confidence and predictability of others' abilities and integrity;

*Optimism* - understanding that human potential is untapped and that every person is "...capable of self-direction and should be treated accordingly" (p. 15);

*Intention* - implying leaders have "...a choice and a desire to be respectful, trustworthy, and optimistic" (p. 20).

These assumptions take the form of an "...inviting stance" which is applied to the total environment, known as the five "P's": *people, places, policies, programs, and processes* (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p.12).

*People* - People as an aspect of leadership is developing relationships, because people maintain positive patterns through interpersonal communication (Novak & Purkey; Stanley, Juhnke, & Purkey, 2004).

*Places* - "Places are powerful, and they can influence the performance and satisfaction of all who inhabit the school" (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17). The environment should represent an inviting atmosphere. (Asbill, 2006)

*Policies* - Policies consist of the written and unwritten "...directives, codes, and rules" used to regulate schools (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 17).

*Programs* - Programs should be designed to "...work for the benefit of everyone and...encourage active engagement with significant content" (Novak & Purkey, 2001, p. 18).

*Processes* - "...Processes reveals how the other four 'P's' fit together to support a culture of *respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality*" (Purkey & Siegel p. 132).

Thank you,

Carolyn P. McKnight  
Doctoral Student  
University of Missouri

## Appendix D

### *Interview and Focus Group Protocols*

1. Administrator's Interview Protocol
2. Supervisor's Interview Protocol
3. Faculty's Interview Protocol
4. Staff Focus Group Protocol
5. Student Focus Group Protocol

## Administrator Interview Protocol

Participating Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

Good afternoon. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions focusing on your perceptions and experiences as an off-campus center administrator. My name is Carolyn McKnight, and I will be conducting the interview. In order to ensure accuracy, I will be audio and video taping the interview.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answers. If you want to follow-up on a question or give an example, feel free to do so. I want this to be more of a conversation between professionals. If needed, please refer to the invitational leadership definition letter provided. Our session will last about 30 to 45 minutes and we will not be taking a formal break. Please let me know if you need to leave the table for any reason. Let's begin by finding out more about each other.

Questions	Research Question(s)
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Opening Questions: 5 min.

1. Tell me your name and your position at your university? 2. Can you please tell me a brief history of your center? <i>Probe: How do you believe your off-campus center is effective or successful?</i>	Learn about participant  Q1
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Introductory Questions: 5-7 min.

3. When discussing leadership, how important do you believe is the aspect of <i>respect</i> ? 4. As an off-campus administrator how do you attempt to build a sense of <i>trust</i> among your staff, faculty, and students? <i>Probes: How is this different from building respect and trust with</i>	Q1  Q1, Q2  Q2
--	----------------------------

<i>your main campus colleagues?</i>	
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Transition Question: 5-10 min.

5. From your perspective how do you create a sense of <i>optimism</i> when engaging with staff, faculty, and students?	Q1, Q2
<i>Probe: How do you create the same sense of optimism with your main campus colleagues?</i>	Q2
6. How do you exhibit <i>intentionality</i> as an aspect of your leadership behaviors?	Q1

Key Questions: 10-15 min.

7. When considering invitational leadership's environments of the five P's: people, places, policies, programs and processes, how do you attend to the subject of <i>people</i> within your off-campus center?	Q3
<i>Probe: What type of students are you serving?</i>	Q3
8. As an administrator how do you address the issue of <i>places</i> at an off-campus center environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: How do you believe places at an off-campus center compare environment to the main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3
9. How are <i>policies</i> addressed at your off-campus center?	Q3
<i>Probe: How do you believe policies are addressed similarly or differently than the main campus learning environment?</i>	Q2, Q3
10. From your perspective, how do you attend to the concern of <i>programs</i> when trying to create a successful environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: Could you provide some examples of programs/services that you believe make your off-campus center effective or successful?</i>	Q3
	Q2
11. How are <i>processes</i> addressed within an off-campus center?	Q2, Q3
<i>Probe: How might these processes look differently than a main campus learning environment?</i>	

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Key Questions: 10-15 min.

<p>12. In reflecting on the invitational leadership four assumptions: <i>Optimism, Respect, Trust</i> and <i>Intention</i>, in your viewpoint which is the most important component for an off-campus administrator?</p> <p><i>Probe: How do you believe any of the other assumptions has assisted you in creating an effective learning environment?</i></p> <p><i>Probe: Do you think these assumptions are regarded on your main campus similarly or differently than at the off-campus center?</i></p>	<p>Q1</p> <p>Q1, Q2</p> <p>Q1, Q2</p>
<p>13. In considering the invitational leadership's five P's: <i>people, places, policies, programs, and processes</i>, what do you believe is the most significant component for an off-campus administrator to address?</p> <p><i>Probe: Do you believe this component is addressed similarly or differently on your main campus?</i></p>	<p>Q3</p> <p>Q2, Q3</p>

Ending Question: 5 min.

<p>14. Is there anything else you would wish to tell me that I have not asked?</p>	<p>Q1, Q2, Q3</p>
--	-------------------

Thank you for your time today. I will be sending a copy of the transcription to you via email. If you have any corrections or changes, at that time, please let me know. Again, this interview will be confidential and you and your off-campus center will not be identified in the research or further publications.

## Supervisor Interview Protocol

Participating Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

Good afternoon. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions focusing on your perceptions and experiences as the supervisor of an off-campus center administrator. My name is Carolyn McKnight, and I will be conducting the interview. In order to ensure accuracy, I will be audio taping the interview.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answers. If you want to follow-up on a question or give an example, feel free to do so. I want this to be more of a conversation between professionals. If needed, please refer to the invitational leadership definition letter provided. Our session will last about 30 to 45 minutes and we will not be taking a formal break. Please let me know if you need to take a break for any reason. Let's begin by finding out more about each other.

Questions	Research Question(s)
-----------	----------------------

### Opening Questions: 5 min.

<p>1. Tell me your name and your position at your university and how long you have been with this university?</p> <p><i>Probe: How long have you known your off-campus administrator and how long have you been this person's supervisor?</i></p>	<p>Learn about participant Q1</p>
<p>2. Can you please tell me about your experience/history with the off-campus center?</p> <p><i>Probe: How do you feel your off-campus center is effective or successful?</i></p>	<p>Q1</p> <p>Q1</p>

### Introductory Questions: 5-7 min.

<p>3. When discussing leadership, in what ways do you feel your off-campus center director demonstrates the aspect of <i>respect</i>?</p>	<p>Q1</p>
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4. How does your off-campus center administrator attempt to build a sense of <i>trust</i> among your staff, faculty, and students?	Q1
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Transition Question: 5-10 min.

5. From your perspective as a supervisor how does your off-campus center administrator create a sense of <i>optimism</i> when engaging with off-campus center staff, faculty, and students?	Q1
<i>Probe: How does your administrator create the same sense of optimism with main campus colleagues?</i>	Q2
6. How important is it to exhibit <i>intentionality</i> as a leadership behavior?	Q1
<i>Probe: How does your administrator demonstrate this characteristic at an off-campus center environment?</i>	Q2

Key Questions: 10-15 min.

7. When considering invitational leadership's environments of the five P's: people, places, policies, programs and processes, how you're your administrator attend to the subject of <i>people</i> within your off-campus center?	Q3
<i>Probe: What type of students are you serving?</i>	Q3
8. How do you believe your administrator addresses the issue of <i>places</i> at an off-campus center environment?	Q2, Q3
<i>Probe: How do you believe places at an off-campus center compare environment to the main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3
9. In what ways does the off-campus center administrator address <i>policies</i> when creating an effective off-campus center?	Q3
<i>Probe: How do you believe policies are addressed similarly or differently than the main campus learning environment?</i>	Q2, Q3
10. How does your off-campus center administrator attend to the issue of <i>programs</i> when trying to create a successful environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: Could you provide some examples of programs/services that you believe make your off-campus center effective or</i>	Q3

<p><i>successful?</i></p> <p>11. In what ways does the off-campus administrator address <i>processes</i> within an off-campus center?</p> <p><i>Probe: How might these processes look differently than a main campus learning environment?</i></p>	Q2, Q3
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Key Questions: 10-15 min.

<p>12. In reflecting on the invitational leadership four assumptions: <i>Optimism, Respect, Trust</i> and <i>Intention</i>, in your viewpoint which is the most important component for an off-campus administrator?</p> <p><i>Probe: Do you think these assumptions are regarded on your main campus similarly or differently than at the off-campus center?</i></p>	Q1
<p>13. In considering the invitational leadership's five P's: <i>people, places, policies, programs</i>, and <i>processes</i>, what do you believe is the most significant component for an off-campus administrator to address?</p> <p><i>Probe: Do you believe this component is addressed similarly or differently on your main campus?</i></p>	Q1, Q2 Q1, Q2 Q2, Q3

Ending Question: 5 min.

<p>14. Is there anything else you would wish to tell me that I have not asked?</p>	Q1, Q2, Q3
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Thank you for your time today. I will be sending a copy of the transcription to you via email. If you have any corrections or changes, at that time, please let me know. Again, this interview will be confidential and you and your off-campus center will not be identified in the research or further publications.

## Faculty Interview Protocol

Participating Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

Good afternoon. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions focusing on your perceptions and experiences as the faculty person in relation to your off-campus center administrator. My name is Carolyn McKnight, and I will be conducting the interview. In order to ensure accuracy, I will be audio taping the interview.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answers. If you want to follow-up on a question or give an example, feel free to do so. I want this to be more of a conversation between professionals. If needed, please refer to the invitational leadership definition letter provided. Our session will last about 30 to 45 minutes and we will not be taking a formal break. Please let me know if you need to take a break for any reason. Let's begin by finding out more about each other.

Questions	Research Question(s)
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### Opening Questions: 2-3 min.

<p>1. Please tell me your name and your position at the university?  <i>Probe: How long have you worked for this university and how many years have you been teaching at your off-campus location?</i></p>	<p>Learn about participant</p>
<p><i>Probe: How long have you known the off-campus center administrator?</i></p>	<p>Q1</p>

### Introductory Questions: 5-7 min.

<p>2. When discussing leadership, how important do you believe the aspects of <i>trust</i> and <i>respect</i>?  <i>Probe: How does your off-campus administrator display trust and respect for you as a faculty person?</i></p>	<p>Q1</p>
<p>3. How does your off-campus administrator create a sense of <i>optimism</i> for your program or classes?</p>	<p>Q1</p>

<i>Probe: How does the administrator create a sense of optimism with main campus colleagues?</i>	Q1, Q2
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Transition Question: 5-10 min.

4. How important is it to exhibit <i>intentionality</i> as a leadership behavior?	Q1
<i>Probe: How does your administrator demonstrate this characteristic at an off-campus center environment?</i>	Q1, Q2

Key Questions: 10-15 min.

5. When considering invitational leadership's environments of the five P's: people, places, policies, programs and processes, how you're your administrator attend to the subject of <i>people</i> within your off-campus center?	Q3
6. How do you believe your administrator addresses the issue of <i>places</i> at an off-campus center environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: How do you believe places at an off-campus center compare environment to the main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3
7. In what ways does the administrator address <i>policies</i> similarly or differently than the main campus learning environment?	Q2, Q3
8. What types of programs/services are provided at the off-campus center that you believe make your off-campus center effective or successful?	Q3
<i>Probe: How are the programs/services different than the main campus environment?</i>	Q2, Q3
9. In what ways does the off-campus administrator address <i>processes</i> within an off-campus center?	Q3
<i>Probe: How might these processes look differently than a main campus learning environment?</i>	Q2, Q3

Key Questions: 5-10 min.

10. In reflecting on the invitational leadership four assumptions: <i>Optimism, Respect, Trust</i> and <i>Intention</i> , in your viewpoint which is the most important component for an off-campus administrator?	Q1
<i>Probe: Do you think these assumptions are regarded on your main</i>	

<i>campus similarly or differently than at the off-campus center?</i>	Q1, Q2
11. In considering the invitational leadership's five P's: <i>people, places, policies, programs, and processes</i> , what do you believe is the most significant component for an off-campus administrator to address?	Q1, Q2
<i>Probe: Do you believe this component is addressed similarly or differently on your main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3

Ending Question: 5 min.

12. Is there anything else you would wish to tell me that I have not asked?	Q1, Q2, Q3
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Thank you for your time today. I will be sending a copy of the transcription to you via email. If you have any corrections or changes, at that time, please let me know. Again, this interview will be confidential and you and your off-campus center will not be identified in the research or further publications.

## Staff Focus Group Protocol

Participating Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction:

Good afternoon. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions focusing on your perceptions and experiences as a staff person for the off-campus center administrator. My name is Carolyn McKnight, and I will be conducting the interview. In order to ensure accuracy, I will be audio and video taping the interview.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answers. If you want to follow-up on a question or give an example, feel free to do so. I want this to be more of a conversation between professionals. If needed, please refer to the invitational leadership definition letter provided. Our session will last about 30 to 45 minutes and we will not be taking a formal break. Please let me know if you need to take a break for any reason.

Questions	Research Question(s)
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### Opening Questions: 2-3 min.

1. Please tell me your name, your position at the university and how long you have worked for this off-campus administrator?	Learn about participant
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### Introductory Questions: 5-7 min.

2. When discussing leadership, how important do you believe the aspects of <i>trust</i> and <i>respect</i> ? <i>Probe: How have you witnessed your off-campus administrator displaying trust and respect to students, faculty and staff?</i>	Q1
3. In what ways does your off-campus administrator create a sense of optimism when engaging with faculty, students and staff? <i>Probe: How does the administrator create a sense of optimism with main campus colleagues?</i>	Q1
	Q1, Q2

### Transition Question: 5-10 min.

4. How important is it to exhibit <i>intentionality</i> as a leadership behavior?	Q1
<i>Probe: How does your administrator demonstrate this characteristic at an off-campus center environment?</i>	Q1, Q2

Key Questions: 10-15 min.

5. When considering invitational leadership's environments of the five P's: people, places, policies, programs and processes, how you're your administrator attend to the subject of <i>people</i> within your off-campus center?	Q3
<i>What is your typical student you serve at your off-campus facility?</i>	Q3
6. How do you believe your administrator addresses the issue of <i>places</i> at an off-campus center environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: How do you believe places at an off-campus center compare environment to the main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3
7. In what ways does the administrator address the issue of <i>policies</i> when trying to create a successful environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: How are these policies addressed similarly or differently than the main campus learning environment?</i>	Q2, Q3
8. What types of programs/services are provided at the off-campus center that you believe make your off-campus center effective or successful?	Q3
<i>Probe: How are the programs/services different than the main campus environment?</i>	Q2, Q3
9. In what ways does the off-campus administrator address <i>processes</i> within an off-campus center?	Q3
<i>Probe: How might these processes look differently than a main campus learning environment?</i>	Q2, Q3

Key Questions: 5-10 min.

10. In reflecting on the invitational leadership four assumptions: <i>Optimism, Respect, Trust</i> and <i>Intention</i> , in your viewpoint which is the most important component for an off-campus administrator?	Q1
<i>Probe: Do you think these assumptions are regarded on your main</i>	

<i>campus similarly or differently than at the off-campus center?</i>	Q1, Q2
11. In considering the invitational leadership's five P's: <i>people, places, policies, programs, and processes</i> , what do you believe is the most significant component for an off-campus administrator to address?	Q1, Q2
<i>Probe: Do you believe this component is addressed similarly or differently on your main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3

Ending Question: 5 min.

12. Is there anything else you would wish to tell me that I have not asked?	Q1, Q2, Q3
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Thank you for your time today. I will be sending a copy of the transcription to you via email. If you have any corrections or changes, at that time, please let me know. Again, this interview will be confidential and you and your off-campus center will not be identified in the research or further publications.

## Student Focus Group Protocol

Participating Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:**

Good afternoon. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions focusing on your perceptions and experiences as a student at an off-campus center. My name is Carolyn McKnight, and I will be conducting the interview. In order to ensure accuracy, I will be audio and video taping the interview.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answers. If you want to follow-up on a question or give an example, feel free to do so. I want this to be more of a conversation. If needed, please refer to the invitational leadership definition letter provided. Our session will last about 30 to 45 minutes and we will not be taking a formal break. Please let me know if you need to take a break for any reason.

Questions	Research Question(s)
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**Opening Questions: 2-3 min.**

1. Please tell me your name, your program and how many semester/years you have attended at this campus?	Learn about participant
<i>Probe: Could you please let me know if there are any participants who attended on the main campus?</i>	Q2

**Introductory Questions: 5-7 min.**

2. When discussing leadership, how important do you believe the aspects of <i>trust</i> and <i>respect</i> ?	Q1
<i>Probe: How have you witnessed your off-campus administrator displaying trust and respect to yourself or other students?</i>	Q1
3. In what ways does your off-campus administrator create a sense of <i>optimism</i> when engaging with faculty, students and staff?	Q1
<i>Probe: How does the administrator create a sense of optimism with main campus colleagues?</i>	Q1, Q2

Transition Question: 5-10 min.

4. How important is <i>intentionality</i> as a leadership behavior?	Q1
<i>Probe: How does your administrator demonstrate this characteristic at an off-campus center environment?</i>	Q1, Q2

Key Questions: 10-15 min.

5. When considering invitational leadership's environments of the five P's: people, places, policies, programs and processes, how does this off-campus center address the subject of <i>people</i> ?	Q3
6. How does the administrator or other staff address the issue of <i>places</i> at this off-campus center environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: How do you believe places at an off-campus center compare environment to the main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3
7. In what ways does the administrator address the issue of <i>policies</i> when trying to create a successful environment?	Q3
<i>Probe: How are these policies addressed similarly or differently than the main campus learning environment?</i>	Q2, Q3
8. What types of programs/services are provided at the off-campus center that you believe make your off-campus center effective or successful?	Q3
<i>Probe: How are the programs/services different than the main campus environment?</i>	Q3
9. In what ways does the off-campus administrator address <i>processes</i> within an off-campus center?	Q2, Q3
<i>Probe: How might these processes look differently than a main campus learning environment?</i>	Q2, Q3

Key Questions: 5-10 min.

10. In reflecting on the invitational leadership four assumptions: <i>Optimism, Respect, Trust</i> and <i>Intention</i> , in your viewpoint which is the most important component for an off-campus administrator?	Q1
<i>Probe: Do you think these assumptions are regarded on your main campus similarly or differently than at the off-campus center?</i>	Q1, Q2

11. In considering the invitational leadership's five P's: <i>people</i> , <i>places</i> , <i>policies</i> , <i>programs</i> , and <i>processes</i> , what do you believe is the most significant component for an off-campus administrator to address?	Q1, Q2
<i>Probe: Do you believe this component is addressed similarly or differently on your main campus?</i>	Q2, Q3

Ending Question: 5 min.

12. Is there anything else you would wish to tell me that I have not asked?	Q1, Q2, Q3
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Thank you for your time today. I will be sending a copy of the transcription to you via email. If you have any corrections or changes, at that time, please let me know. Again, this interview will be confidential and you and your off-campus center will not be identified in the research or further publications.

Appendix E

*Interview Observation Form*

Interview Observation Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Observations:

Appendix F

*On-Site Observation Form*

On-Site Observation Form

Date:

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Participant(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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Beginning Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time:

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Location:

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Observations:

## Appendix G

### *Review of Document Form*

## Review of Document Form

Date:

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Name of Document:

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Type of Document:

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Origin Date of Document:

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Received From:

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Location:

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Document Coding Number:

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Notes:

## Appendix H

### *Predetermined Coding for Participants and Observations*

1. Administrator 1 (A1)
2. Administrator 2 (A2)
3. Administrator 3 (A3)
4. Supervisor 1 (S1)
5. Supervisor (S2)
6. Supervisor 3 (S3)
7. Staff 1(S1)
8. Staff 2 (S2)
9. Staff 3 (S3)
10. Staff 4 (S4)
11. Staff 5 (S5)
12. Staff 6 (S6)
13. Staff 7 (S7)
14. Staff 8 (S8)
15. Faculty 1 (F1)
16. Faculty 2 (F2)
17. Faculty 3 (F3)
18. Faculty 4 (F4)
19. Faculty 5 (F5)
20. Faculty 6 (F6)
21. Student 1 (ST1)
22. Student 2 (ST2)
23. Student 3 (ST3)

24. Student 4 (ST4)
25. Student 5 (ST5)
26. Student 6 (ST6)
27. Student 7 (ST7)
28. Student (ST8)
29. Student (ST9)
30. Student 10 (ST10)
31. Student 11 (ST 11)
32. Student 12, (ST12)
33. Student 13 (ST13)
34. Field Observation 1 (FO1)
35. Field Observation 2 (F2)
36. Field Observation (F3)

## VITA

Carolyn P. McKnight was born in Junction City, Kansas, to William and Marilyn O’Keefe. She graduated in 1991 from Nemaha Valley High School in Seneca, Kansas. In 1996, she received a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Sciences from Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas. She later earned a Master’s of Science in Sports Administration from the University of Central (formerly, Central Missouri State University), Warrensburg, Missouri in 1998, followed by a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri – Columbia in 2012.

Carolyn’s work experience has been dedicated to serving students pursuing advanced education. Carolyn has formerly held positions as academic advisor and transfer advisor at the University of Central Missouri (UCM). For the past 11 years, she has served as the site director for the UCM Summit Center located in Lee’s Summit, Missouri. Her research interests include: continuing education, student development, educational leadership and invitational leadership.

Dr. McKnight currently resides in Lee’s Summit, Missouri, with her husband, Spencer McKnight and their son, William.