Spring 5-19-2018

The Career Trajectory and Ambitions of Women Chief Student Affairs Officers

Mariel Pagan
paganmar@shu.edu

The Career Trajectory and

Ambitions of Women

Chief Student Affairs Officers

by

Mariel Pagán

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Higher Education Leadership, Management and Policy
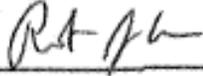

Seton Hall University
May 2018

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
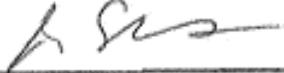## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Mariel Pagan, has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text

of the doctoral dissertation for the **Ph.D.** during this **Spring Semester 2018.**

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE
(please sign and date beside your name)

Mentor:
Dr. Robert Kelchen _____ 4/3/18 _____

Committee Member:
Dr. Joseph Stetar _____ 2/26/18 _____

Committee Member:
Dr. Martin Finkelstein _____ 2/26/18 _____

The mentor and any other committee members who wish to review revisions will sign
and date this document only when revisions have been completed. Please return this
form to the Office of Graduate Studies, where it will be placed in the candidate's file and
submit a copy with your final dissertation to be bound as page number two.

ABSTRACT

This study was inspired by a simple question: Why are there so few women leaders at the highest levels of higher education? The 2017 American Council on Education (ACE) American College President Study reported that only 30.1 % of presidencies were held by women in 2016. As the retirements of institutional leaders upsurge in the next few years, there will be increased demand for leadership in colleges and universities. Higher education needs more women prepared to assume executive leadership roles, both to fill the openings from anticipated presidential retirements and to provide their leadership as decision makers at all levels of the institution. With 49% of Chief Student Affairs Officers being women leaders, it could, in the future, serve as a pipeline to institutional leadership for women. Currently, the majority of university presidents are coming from the academic divisions of institutions. As the need for the services provided by student affairs continues to develop and grow, there is opportunity for institutional leadership to shift. This qualitative study used narrative inquiry to capture the experiences of 10 women Chief Student Affairs Officers from the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Regions of the United States. The purpose of the study was to learn more about their career trajectories and their professional aspirations. Four central themes emerged from the stories shared by the participants: (1) mentorship, (2) strategies for advancement, (3) the role of family, and (4) being a woman in the field of student affairs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As my mother has said at every major milestone in my life, "it takes a village". I am eternally grateful to all the family, friends, and colleagues that have supported my doctoral journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2016), in 2013-14, female students earned 61% of all associate's degrees, 57% of all bachelor's degrees, 60% of all master's degrees, and 52% of all doctoral degrees. Projections expect these percentages to continue to increase (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Despite this recent data indicating that female college students are enrolling and graduating at faster rates than their male counterparts, only 30% of women attain the highest level of leadership within colleges and universities (Fitzgerald, 2014). With regard to female leadership within academia, according to the Colorado Women's College Benchmarking Women's Leadership in the United States, report:

> Women in senior faculty positions and top-level leadership positions in academia provide all students, faculty and staff with an important opportunity to work with talented women- an experience that will prove increasingly valuable as the overall gender balance in the workforce changes. (University of Denver, 2013, p. 3)

In the 2006, American Association of University Professors faculty gender equity indicators, Curtis and West report that when prominent female academics are involved in research, for example, it can affect the nature of both the questions that are asked and the findings (Curtis and West, 2006).

In the next few years, there will be increased demand for leadership in colleges and universities. Over fifty percent of independent college presidents are likely to retire in the next five years (Song & Hartley, 2012). Seventy-five percent of community college presidents will retire within the next ten years, with slightly more than 40 percent of those presidents retiring in the next five years (Phillippe & Tekle, 2013). The American Association of Community Colleges membership database tracks transitions in leadership positions without accounting for

whether those transitions are due to employment changes, retirements, death or terminations (Smith, 2016). The association tracked 134 transitions in 2011-12, 158 in 2012-2013, 262 in 2013-14, 269 in 2014-2015, and 203 2015-March of 2016 (Smith, 2016). At this critical time, higher education needs more women prepared to assume executive leadership roles, both to fill the openings from anticipated presidential retirements and to provide their leadership as decision makers at all levels of the institution.

The 2017 American Council on Education (ACE) American College President Study reported that only 30.1 % of presidencies were held by women in 2016, an increase from 26.4 % in 2011 and 23 % in 2006 (Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017). The rate increase slowed in recent years, having grown from 9.5 % in 1986 to 21.1 % in 2001 (Gagliardi et al., 2017). The research shows that women have increased their share of college presidencies by only one percentage point every two years. If that trend stays consistent, it will take 48 years to hold half of the college presidencies (Lapovsky, 2014).

The relatively low percentage of women at the presidential level is not based on a lack of qualified candidates, considering that in 2014, forty five percent of all senior level administrators were women, (King & Gomez, 2008). Senior level positions were broken down as follows:

- 38%   Senior Academic Officer
- 36%   Dean
- 43%   VP for Administration
- 49%   VP for External Affairs
- 49%   VP for Student Affairs/Enrollment Management
- 50%   Central Academic Affairs
- 55%   Chief of Staff
- 56%   Senior Diversity Officer

(King & Gomez, 2008; Wesaw& Sponsler, 2014)

4

The American College President Report of 2017 shows that a majority of current college presidents (42.7%) were in Senior Academic Officer and Deans roles, immediately prior to serving as president. The other prior positions included: President/CEO/interim president/CEO system 23.9%; other senior campus executive 16.3%, and outside higher education 15%. With that said, the roles that most commonly lead to a presidency, are the ones that have a lower percentage of women.

Student Affairs is a division of higher education that has achieved gender parity. It is also an area of the university that continues to develop through government intervention such as Title IX and the increasing needs of college students (i.e. support services for mental health). Institutions of higher education develop students both inside and outside of the classroom, and therefore the administrators that play a role in the outside the classroom learning can and should be developed into institutional leaders. The services provided by student affairs can assist students in obtaining internships and other development opportunities that can support their path to graduation and eventually to a job.

A Chief Student Affairs Officer /Vice President of Student Affairs is the individual responsible for leading all student affairs efforts at an institution. In the majority of cases, this is a position that reports to the President and is at the peer level of other institutional division leaders such as: the Chief Academic Officer and Chief Business Officer (NASPA, website).   In 2014, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, (NASPA) produced a report entitled, *The Chief Student Affairs Officer*, based on the survey responses of 863 Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs), representing 240 public four-year institutions, 366 private not-for-profit four-year institutions, 234 two-year institutions and a handful of private for-profit four-year and two-year institutions, which mirrors that of the population as a whole. A key finding of

the report found that only twenty two percent of the responding CSAOs indicated a desire to become a college or university president, with a nearly equal number (23%) undecided about such a career step - a response comparable to that of chief academic officers. Notably, female CSAOs were less likely to aspire to the presidency than were their male colleagues. While 28% of male respondents indicated that they aspire to the college presidency, only 16% of female respondents made the same assertion (Sponsler & Wesaw, 2014). According to the report, when asked why they did not aspire to become a college or university president, CSAOs responded with a mixture of personal and professional reasons, ranging from concerns about time demands to questions about the politics of the search process.

Problem Statement

Without visible gender diversity at the top level of leadership, the position of college/university president may be perceived only as an option for male administrators. This perception may contribute to campus climate issues that impact the career advancement of women in higher education (Martinez Aleman & Renn, 2002).With a potentially significant gap in leadership in the near future, it will be important to better understand the gender disparity within university executive leadership. It is important to explore the career pathways of top-level administrators, such as Chief Student Affairs Officers, specifically the 49% of women in those roles, because attainment of those positions could lead to other executive-level positions.

While the current literature has discussed women's leadership in higher education in a variety of ways, there is a lack of literature that specifically looks at the potential of a student affairs pipeline to the university presidency for women. While there are a few quantitative studies and reports that provide important statistics, there is a gap in qualitative literature that seeks to understand the gender gap at the highest levels of institutions of higher education (Kim

& Cook, 2013; Sponsler & Wesaw, 2014; Gagliardi, Espinosa, Turk, & Taylor, 2017) . What are the stories behind the numbers? In 2014, Klotz's dissertation entitled *Journey to the Top-Women's Path to the Presidency*, explored the experiences of university presidents to better understand how they made meaning of their professional journeys. One of her recommendations for future research to add to the literature, was to look at the level below the presidency to better understand why the presidency is something women are pursuing or not. This study does just that, while also focusing on a division of higher education that has a more significant number of women leading it.

The 2014 NASPA CSAO survey probed into the career pathways of CSAOs in an attempt to generate a roadmap for those with interest in becoming a CSAO. By providing context about the perspectives and experiences that individuals may bring to the CSAO position and with data collected overtime, insight into trends and changes in the hiring of top institutional leadership posts can be gained (Sponsler & Wesaw, 2014). The report shows that a significant majority of internal and external CSAO hires come from within the field of student affairs. This finding suggests that the pipeline into the CSAO position runs strongly through student affairs divisions. With that said, it is important to better understand that pipeline and see in what ways, if any, organizations are supporting or hindering the advancement of women CSAOs.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative study explored the experiences of women Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs) that were one professional step below the president, to learn more about their career trajectories and their professional aspirations. With 49% of CSAO's being female leaders, it could, in the future, serve as a pipeline to the presidency. Currently the majority of presidents are coming from the academic divisions of institutions. The 2013 *On the Pathway to the Presidency*

report examined the demographic and professional backgrounds of senior campus leaders, and concluded that the pipeline is slow to change. The 2013 study focused on data on chief academic offers (CAOs) and senior academic officers, such as associates provosts or deans of graduate students, because in 2012's *American College President Study*, 45 percent of presidents list CAO or senior academic officer as their immediate prior position (Kim & Cook, 2013). As the need for the services provided by student affairs continues to develop and grow, there is opportunity for institutional leadership to shift in that direction.

Using narrative inquiry to interview female CSAOs, I had the opportunity to ask about the career trajectory, experience, and ambition of women in senior level positions at four year public institutions. By using a semi-structured format, there was enough guidance to start a dialogue while also allowing for other topics or issues to emerge.

Research Questions

For this study, I interviewed 10 women Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs) to learn more about their lived experiences in the field. Each of the women had served in their roles as CSAOs for at least 2 years, and were working at an institution in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast region of the United States.

The following research questions served as an anchor to the interviewing protocol that was developed to learn more about their career trajectories and ambitions:

What are the professional trajectories and professional ambitions of women chief student affairs officers?

- How do women chief student affairs officers explain their career advancement?

- To what extent are women chief student affairs officers interested in moving up to the presidential level?

- What strategies have women chief student affairs officers implemented for their career advancement?

- What role, if any, have mentors played in the professional advancement of women chief student affairs officers?

Conclusion

Chapter one provides an introduction to the proposed study. The next chapter presents a review of the literature. The existing literature provides historical context on the role of women both at home and in the workplace, with a look at how the balance of those two roles can cause tension. Chapter three outlines the methodology and rationale used to conduct the study. The fourth chapter outlines the findings and themes that emerged from the interviews with the 10 women Chief Student Affairs Officers. Finally, chapter five puts the study and its findings into the context of the literature and discuss future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This review of the literature starts with a historical context of women in American Higher Education. It then looks at the theories that have been used to frame the research on female leadership in higher education. Next, it explores the perceived barriers of advancement for women in higher education including familial obligations, gender bias in higher education, the concepts of the chilly climate and the glass ceiling, the gender differences in leadership styles, and the lack of mentors for women. The review then discusses studies that provide insight on some career advancement strategies that can be implemented to close the gender gap, including: obtainment of a terminal degree, relocation and the role of mentorship. From there, the role of mentorship is further discussed through the literature. The conclusion of the literature review summarizes the major findings and limitations of the literature and discuss how this study will contribute to the literature.

Historical Context

It is important to have a brief understanding of the history of women in American higher education and its impact on the current status of women in leadership positions (Madsen, 2007). In 1636, when Harvard College opened its doors, it set the foundation for student admissions and the selection of faculty and staff, creating a blueprint for higher education. At the time, the only higher education option for women was women's academies, which essentially were finishing schools that prepared women for marriage and domestic life (Madsen, 2007). This precedence for placing less importance on the education of women may have had a long-lasting impact on the ability of women to advance at the university (Basinger, 2001).

In the late 17th century, while male literacy in New England rose from 60 percent to 90 percent by the early days of the republic, is estimated that female literacy in the same period rose

from 31 percent to 48 percent, roughly half the rate of male literacy (Lockridge, 1974). This percentage steadily increased as common schools were created in the mid-1800s. By 1850, about 50% of women could read and write at a primary school level (Chliwniak, 1997). These common schools sought to provide basic instruction to girls. The curriculum focused on reading, writing, and introductory arithmetic. It became important for women to have at least minimal education that would allow them to raise the next generation of men, to become successful and gainfully employed (Nidiffer, 2001b; Reynolds, 2002).

In 1862, the passing of The Morrill Land Grant Act affirmed the importance of public education. As a result, women gradually gained access to the university as colleges expanded. The influx of women into institutions that had primarily been run by men, for men, caused disruption to the day to day way of life at colleges and universities (McCellan & Stringer, 2015). In response to this new challenge, several institutions created positions that were for the most part, filled by women who focused only on women students and their needs. At first, the needs of the women students were seen as avoiding faux pas such as: social errors that could ruin their reputations and how to maintain the expectations of restrictive clothing with the need to study and live in the college community.

Women, however, were often annexed to a certain section of the university that was deemed inferior and with fewer resources (Chliwniak, 1997). Those who objected to co-education felt that women forced to compete in a man's world would suffer nervous breakdowns and their pure benevolent natures would be corrupted. It was even believed by some that "a women's reproductive system might suffer irreparable harm under the rigors and stress of academic pursuits" (Lucas, 2006, p. 161). The establishment of all women colleges such as Vassar (1865) and Bryn Mawr (1885) provided higher quality education for women.

At most coeducational colleges, the Dean of Women was the highest-ranking woman on campus (Bashaw, 1992; Komives & Woodward, 2003). At the time, there were few other women on campus with whom the Dean of Women could consult. Deans of Women had to fight for equal recognition with Deans of Men; they fought even harder for the rights of women students (Komives & Woodward, 2003). In response to this reality, in 1916, the National Association of Deans of Women was organized (Komives & Woodward, 2003).

The first formal program of study for student affairs practitioners began at Columbia University's Teachers College in a program for women. The first professional diploma for an "Adviser of Women" was awarded in conjunction with the Master of Arts degree in 1914. In 1932, the program began to admit men (Komives & Woodward, 2003).

The societal role of women continued to develop as colleges started to open their doors to women and as men were leaving home to fight in the two World Wars (Reynolds, 2002). Women's growing independence and increased numbers in the workforce during World War II served as significant factors for the increased acceptance of women pursuing higher education (Nidiffer, 2001a).

In 1960, 37.9% of females were enrolled in college compared to 54% of their male counterparts (American College Testing Program, 1987). The women's liberation movement of the 1960s combined with the social ideas surrounding equity also accounted for the growing numbers of women entering higher education (Nidiffer, 2001b). By the early 1970s, there were fewer deans of women on campus, as advocates for women assumed new roles and titles (Bashaw, 1992). The 1970s and 1980s saw an influx of women students obtaining advanced degrees. For example, in 1975, 46% of bachelor's and master's degrees, and 19% of doctoral

degrees were obtained by women. Also, the Title IX Act of 1972, was a piece of legislation that drastically improved the landscape for women by prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded education programs.

Since 1988, the number of women in post-baccalaureate programs has exceeded the number of males. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of male full-time students seeking additional education after completion of a baccalaureate degree increased by thirty eight percent, compared with a sixty two percent increase for women (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Theoretical Framework

Previous research has implemented a variety of theories including: constructivist theory, exchange theory, critical theory, and gendered organizational theory.

According to the constructivist perspective, the underlying assumptions, "include the idea that truth is not objective but rather socially constructed from the experiences, background, perceptions, and thought processes of humans" (Manning, 1999, p. 13). Constructivist theory is helpful in approaching qualitative research because it helps to frame the perspective/data that is collected and analyzed. For this particular study, it is the participants that are helping us to better understand the experiences and the environments in which CSAOs have navigated their careers. There isn't much research on this particular topic, and constructivist theory is particularly useful as a means of discovering more. In their 2014 study of the mentoring relationship for entry-level men in student affairs, Calhoun and Taub used a constructivist framework to anchor their work. The qualitative study examined the experience of 61 entry-level men in student affairs and specifically focused on the function of mentors and role models. The study found that mentoring relationships play an important role in the experiences of entry-level men in student affairs.

Sociologist, George Homans, first defined Social Exchange Theory in his work entitled, "Social Behavior as Exchange" in 1961. Exchange theory proposes that the relationships individuals choose to create and maintain are the ones that maximize their rewards and minimize their costs (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). In a 2005 study, Brown examined the mentoring relationships among female college presidents, using a sample of 91 female presidents at selected independent colleges. Brown used exchange theory as the theoretical framework for understanding mentoring relationships, noting that researchers agree that mentorship is an exchange of behaviors that are mutually beneficial to both the mentor and mentee. Brown found that a majority of the respondents had primary mentors (56%) and also served as mentors to others (64%).

Critical Theory emphasizes the reflective assessment and critique of society and culture. Critical theorists believe that their research should empower the powerless and work toward the elimination in inequality and injustice (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). In a mixed-methods study, Muñoz (2009) looked at the experiences of Latina community college presidents on their pathway to the presidency. The study used critical inquiry to examine how the structures of community college leadership may contribute to the fact that "little change has occurred in the makeup of community college leadership." (Muñoz, 2009, p. 155). Muñoz used critical theory as a theoretical framework to provide the lens to "investigate how the social and political aspects of the situation shape reality" (Muñoz, 2009, p. 155) In order to better understand the phenomena, critical inquiry looks at the issue of social justice and equity (Muñoz, 2009).

Since they were started, community colleges have been led primarily by white males. Muñoz's mixed-method study examined the career paths and early influences as well as external forces that brought the twenty-six Latina community college presidents to their current role. The

study found that trustees played a vital role in promoting diversity, and that while systematic barriers exist, the Latina presidents that participated refused to allow bias to prevent them from succeeding.

Another theory that has been used in previous literature, is gendered organizational theory. Acker (2004) defined organizational genderness as:

> … advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity are patterned through in terms of distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not an addition to ongoing process, conceived as gender neutral. Rather it is an integral part of those process, which cannot be properly understood without an analysis of gender. (p. 146)

While critical theory can address the issue of women being marginalized in society, it seems a bit broad for looking at senior level women on college campuses. Instead, gendered organizational theory provides a more narrow and focused way of looking at the specific organization and how gender has an influence.

Gender theory is based on the norms and practices of organizations that are to the advantage of men and not women (Jones, Warnick, & Taylor, 2015). Guided by gendered organizational theory, Jones, Warnick, and Taylor (2015) looked at overt and covert knowledge of genderness at community colleges.   Using a researcher-developed, web-based survey, the data of 934 female, non-faculty participants was collected and analyzed. The survey contained five sections: demographics, institution culture, institution climate, department climate and open discussion questions. The study found that "community colleges appear to be gender-neutral environments with equal opportunities for both sexes. However, the perceptions of the women in the study indicated a marked disagreement about the practice of gender neutrality in the

workplace, indicating that genderness exists in these institutions" (Jones, Warnick, & Taylor, 2015).

Although institutions of higher education implement policies and procedures promoting equity in opportunity, there is still a gap in the promotion and hiring of women to higher-level positions. Women continue to be disproportionately underrepresented as senior-level decision makers despite the fact that they have become the majority gender in higher education for the past 25 years (Jones, Warnick, & Taylor, 2015; Nidiffer, 2001b). As, Jones, Warnick, and Taylor (2015) explain, "For any institution to be considered un-gendered, it would need to be able to demonstrate that all genders are equally represented in the top administrative positions" (p. 5).

It is important that institutions develop policies and structures that provide equity to women. That said, it is also important to recognize that there are some women that might not be interested in positions for various reasons. This next section will discuss some of the issues and concerns that might get in the way of women pursuing advancement.

Perceived Barriers to Advancement

The research shows that there are various perceived barriers to advancement that result in professional compromises, personal trade-offs, and emotional tolls for women looking to advance in higher education. Perceived barriers include: familial obligations, gender bias in higher education, gender differences in leadership style, chilly climate and glass ceiling, the ambition gap, and a lack of mentorship.

Ambition Gap & Familial Obligations. When women consciously or unconsciously opt to stop striving for career advancement opportunities, they may be self-imposing their own glass ceiling, which is referred to as the ambition gap. While women are earning more undergraduate

degrees than ever before, that kind of academic progress is not translating into the workplace in terms of the number of women in senior-level leadership roles (Sandberg, 2013). In 2009, Marshall conducted a study that included 17 female college/university administrators that had children to learn more about how they made sense of and negotiated their multiple roles and commitments as parents and professionals. Marshall found that participants of her study of women administrators in higher education with children, made professional compromises such as "accepting only positions that were conducive for their families, foregoing education, limiting their involvement in professional organizations and making less money" (p. 197). Women may hold themselves back in conscious and unconscious ways and may stay at entry or mid-level professional roles because they have not been encouraged, inspired, or offered an opportunity to advance. Without internal or external motivation to professionally advance, some women may not believe that it is possible to make progress in their career trajectory. The ambition gap results in a large number of untenured women faculty and/or administrators who are stuck at middle management (LePan et al., 2013). A primary hindrance for women leaders includes time constraints due to family obligations such as raising children, parent/elder care, and home management (Marshall, 2009). In some executive level positions, the required job functions may not allow for women to balance work and familial obligations (Basinger, 2001; Marshall, 2009). As a result, some women stay in mid-level roles with less responsibility or leave the profession altogether and seek less time-consuming jobs (Marshall, 2009). Often, administrators in higher education work non-traditional hours and frequently may have evening and/or late-night obligations to attend faculty meetings or university events (Basinger, 2001). These extended hours of work-related events and activities result in less time for professionals to spend time with their children and families. It can also result in increased tension on their marriage/partnership if

women have a partner who works, particularly if the partner is the primary breadwinner in the family (Bornstein, 2005; Marshall, 2009).

While the number of women reaching the presidential level is slowly increasing, there is a disproportionate number of those women that remain single or childless compared to their male counterparts. The 2017 ACE American College President study found that 89.8% of male president were married compared to 74.7% of the female presidents. Even that statistic is not completely reflective of the differences when you consider that half of male college president have stay-at-home wives, supportive of their husbands, while only a quarter of spouses of female college presidents are in similar circumstances (Reid, Cole, & Kern, 2011). The Reid et al. (2011) study explored the identity, privacy, and relationships of 214 wives of college and university presidents. The participating wives in the study indicated that they had to deal with loss of privacy, conflicted personal relationships, and increased ambiguity about their own identity.

In a 2001 Chronicle of Higher Education article, Basinger shared that a lot of women presidents don't have a spouse that serves in the "wife" role, which means they are alone in having to juggle conflicting demands. Another telling statistic is that only 68% of women presidents had children versus 91% of male presidents. These numbers may be a sign that the women who are being promoted to the highest levels of the university may be more inclined to get there if they do not have the added responsibility of a partner, while this is not an apparent barrier for men.

According to the literature, a related potential barrier for women is that fact that career advancement in higher education often requires relocation, which typically is not an option for

women with children in school and in dual-career relationships (Marshall, 2009; Sagaria & Johnsrud, 1985).

In 2001, Jones and Komives offered information to contemporary and future CSAOs, as they chronicled the challenge women CSAOs have faced over twenty-five years:

While a "balanced life" continues to be an elusive goal for many women professionals, women in senior-level positions must reconcile the great demands of their work and with other interests and responsibilities. The irony in this situation is that successful women leaders often suggest that part of their success is due to the well-rounded lives they lead, which includes time for relaxation and renewal, family and interests outside of the workplace. However, the realities of senior leadership positions do not always support the matching of espoused values with such activities. (p. 242)

Gender Bias in Higher Education. The research shows that while strides have been made to reduce gender bias, it still remains in various levels of higher education. While the literature submits that overt forms of discrimination may have decreased significantly, subtler forms of gender bias are still experienced by many women. In a 2000 study by Blackhurst, a random sample of women student affairs administrators from the NASPA Member Handbook, were surveyed to determine the relationships between mentoring and role conflict, role ambiguity, organizational commitment, career satisfaction, and perceived sex discrimination. According to Blackhurst, subtle bias includes: systematic discrimination in the form of: salary inequity (reported by 60%) , working longer hours than male counterparts (27%), and being provided with less support than men and being assigned less rewarding or less visible tasks (33%) and 26% reported less autonomy (Blackhurst, 2000b).

In a 2000 article, Husu examined the experience of women in higher education in Finland because the country's history of gender equity in many public fields allows for uncovering more subtle forces that keep women from achieving leadership positions. Husu stated that there were more subtle, hardly conscious, and unseen processes at play, which with regard to male networks and the mutual support systems of men, the academic sociality of men, and the relative "invisibility" of women in regard to their male colleagues (p. 226). This research is also in line with literature that focuses on American higher education. In 1998, sociologist, Nijole Benokraitis, describes the many levels of sexist behavior in a book chapter, entitled *Working in the ivory basement: Subtle sex discrimination in higher education*. The chapter discusses how subtle sex discrimination intersects with race/ethnicity, age, and social class in higher education. It goes on to suggest remedies for overcoming this inequality, at each of the levels discussed: from societal to institutional to individual.

In a 2011 article, Eastery and Ricard examined the literature to learn why female faculty leave academia. Their review focused on literature that explored unconscious bias or gender schemas. Included in the literature reviewed was Valian's 1998 book, *Why So Slow?* The book uses "data from statistical studies of women and men in the profession and from psychological studies conducted in the laboratory and in the field" (p. xv). Valian described gender beliefs that are held by people and limit understanding of what women should, could, and can accomplish. According to Valian, while most people employ gender schemas to categorize life, using them to limit women or minorities makes them problematic. When schemas turn into prescriptive roles, sexism and discrimination occur. Also included in the review was a 2008 study by Phelan, Moss-Racusin, and Rudman, the purpose of which was to clarify the ways in which competent, confident women can be disadvantaged during the hiring process.

To examine shifting hiring criteria as a form of backlash toward agentic (i.e. confident, competent, and ambitious) women, we taped agentic and communal male and female confederates interviewing to be a computer lab manager, a male-dominated job. To manipulate agency, applicants presented   themselves as confident, ambitious, and competitive. To manipulate communality, applicants presented themselves as competent, but also modest and cooperative. Participants then evaluated the applicants' competence, social skills, and hirability. (p. 408).

The study found that agentic women were perceived as highly competent but deficient in social skills, compared with agentic men. Also, that social skills predicted hiring decisions more than competence for agentic women; for all other applicants, competence received more weight than social skills.

Through the literature, Eastery and Ricard discovered that unconscious bias and gender schemas were the major reasons. Some of the problems that female faculty face in higher education include: the tendency to devalue female scholars and their work, the shortage of successful role models, and the inadequate distribution of women in different departments. Included in the review was a 2003 examination of letters of recommendation, essential for new jobs and for promotion and tenure, revealed gender bias by Trix and Psenka. They found that women were two and a half times more likely than men to receive short letters of minimal assurance; these letters were twice as likely to contain "doubt raisers" such as negative language, faint praise, or irrelevancies, and more likely to include references to personal life. Attention to training and teaching was more common in letters for women, whereas research, skills and abilities, and career received more attention in letters for men. Recommenders unknowingly stereotyped on the basis of gender when writing the letters (Trix & Psenka, 2003). In 2005,

Valian, discussed differences in teaching responsibilities for new faculty. She cited an example

of a male faculty member teaching the same introductory course in his specialty every term,

whereas a woman was expected to teach many different introductory courses. Thus, the man

could focus time on his research, whereas the woman was constantly spending time developing

another course.

Other solutions presented in the article lie in making changes to the institutional structure

in the form of using initials to mask gender in letters of support and curricula vitae, when the

material is reviewed for tenure, promotion or other advantages and award opportunities;

modifying the promotion and tenure track process by clearly defining the requirements and

sharing them often and widely; clear and consistent definitions for merit and success within each

department; providing evidence of the discrepancies in the numbers of female and male faculty

at all ranks and in various departments, and educating faculty, chairs, deans, and administration

that unconscious gender bias exists.

The article goes on to present possible solutions for the gender bias including the

enforcement of laws such as Title IX which states that "no person in the United States shall, on

the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to

discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance"

(Title 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681—1688).

Meanwhile, within the field of student affairs, research has shown a steady and

significant decrease in the percentage of men relative to their female counterparts entering the

student affairs profession since 1972 (Hamrick & Carlisle, 1990; McEwen, Engstrom &

Williams, 1990; Taub & McEwen, 2006). In 1972-1973, women made up 43% of the student in

master's degree preparation programs (Phelps Tobin, 1998). More recent studies indicate that the

percentages of women have risen to approximately two-thirds (McEwen et al., 1990) to 80% (Talbot, 1996). In 2012, the total NASPA membership was only 32% male, and if chief student affairs officers are removed from consideration, only 30% (Calhoun & Taub, 2014). This statistic indicates that men are still disproportionately represented among CSAOs relative to other student affairs professionals. In addition to examining the changing demographics of men and women in student affairs, Hamrick and Carlisle (1990) examined the potential devaluation of the student affairs profession. In higher education, student affairs professionals are sometimes perceived by different campus entities as *helpers* and *counselors*, which are stereotypically feminine attributes (Hamrick & Carlisle, 1990). The article suggests that in general, as a career field or type of work becomes dominated by a minority (or perceived minority), it tends to become devalued over time. Hamrick and Carlisle (1990) cite the clerical/secretarial field as an example of a once highly regarded profession, decreasing in esteem, as the number of women in the profession increased. "In devalued fields, required skills are perceived as less complex and more accessible ("anyone can do that"), thereby justifying lower pay or prestige" (p. 309). The 2016-2017 Administrators in Higher Education Salary Survey, conducted by the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources, shows that depending on the institution type, Chief Student Affairs Officers make an average of $99,000-103,000. Meanwhile the average salaries of other senior level administrators include: Chief Academic Officers $192,000-368,000 Chief Facilities Officers $140,000-230,000; Chief HR Officer $115,000-$200,000; Chief Research Officer $146,000-293,000. (Bichsel, McChesney, & Calgano, 2017) So while women are reaching the higher ranks of student affairs, the field itself may be devalued and seen as "lesser than" compared to other divisions within the university structure.

Even with the gains being made in the advancement of women in higher education, a significant gap in the salaries of men and women remains. In February of 2017, Bichsel and McChesney released a research brief through the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources. The brief looks at the gender pay gap and representation of women in higher education administrative positions. The brief shows that salary gaps between males and females saturate executive positions in higher education. The highest gap is in the position of chief financial officer, in which females earn $.77 for every dollar that males earn (Bichsel & McChesney, 2017).

In 2013, LePan, Hodge, Peroff, & Henderson, study of strategies used by female faculty in negotiating their careers quoted a female instructor's experience:

My greatest challenge has been handling a department chair who doesn't relate professionally to women. I once asked why I had been overlooked for a raise, and his response was, "I didn't know you needed the money." He then added that he's heard that my husband did some kind of social work… and added "that real men support their families." (p. 8)

LePan et al. (2013) also found examples in which single women with no children felt taken advantage of because administrators didn't think they need the money because they have no life or responsibilities. While these examples may have stood out from the findings, they illustrate the prevalence of unequal pay in higher education.

This disparity may be the result of childhood socialization (MacDonald, 2002). Lessons learned in childhood regarding socialization carry over into adulthood and into the workplace (Tannen, 1995). An example of gendered socialization is known as "compliance" whereby women wait to be rewarded, not knowing if they deserve something unless someone else points

this out for them (Babock, Laschever, Gelfeld, & Small, 2003). In their 2009 study about salary

negotiations, Compton and Palmer interviewed 22 female executive and mid-level administrators

across four public universities, asking them to share their experiences and advice for future

higher education female administrators. They found that women spoke about relationships being

more important than the money they earned. This finding aligns with the feminine socialization

focus on lasting relationships while the masculine focus is frequently more on individualization

(Compton & Palmer, 2009).

One potential solution to reducing the compensation gap is for women to improve their

salary negotiation skills (Barron, 2003). In 2009, Compton and Palmer conducted a qualitative

study of 22 female executive and mid-level administrators in higher education, to examine the

extent to which they negotiated for their compensation and, if so, what strategies and gendered

communication traits they used. What they found was that most of the female administrators

expressed that they tend not to consciously negotiate, which is consistent with literature that

looks at women and salary negotiation in outside of higher education (Wade, 2001; Leibbrandt &

List, 2014). Compton and Palmer found that the women did not negotiate for one of the

following three reasons: they were socialized not to; their jobs were more important than their

compensation; or their salary expectations were met or exceeded.

Gender differences in leadership style. Women's leadership styles including *relational*

and *flat leadership models*, have generally not been valued in executive leadership roles (Rich,

2000). A relational leadership model focuses on the notion that leadership effectiveness is based

on the ability of the leader to create positive relationships within the organization (Komives,

Lucas, & McMahon, 1998). Within a flat leadership model consensus building, collaboration,

and an absence of hierarchical leadership is the framework that guides decision-making

processes (Bornstein, 2005; Rich, 2000). This "team" approach, emphasizes relationship-building, which is traditionally a work strategy employed by women (Pierce, 2011). While recently, these styles of leadership are becoming more widespread, the male model of leadership, in which leaders are authoritarian decision-makers, still dominates the business world, and in many ways, the educational sector as well (Pierce, 2011).

This patriarchal style sets male leadership as the norm and women's ways of leading as marginalized or even excluded (Brown, 2005). This emphasis on only one type of accepted leadership creates a gender gap that divides the experiences and values of men and women into two distinct groups: male leadership is the standard and women's leadership is less valued (Chliwniak, 1997).

Street, Kimmel, and Kromrey (1999) used the Sex Role Trait Inventory to measure the sex role attitudes and to elicit perceptions of sex role traits of 321 administrators and administrative heads at a large southeastern metropolitan public university. They found that male and female administrators, expressed the "ideal woman" as having androgynous traits, combining the masculine-typed trait of intellect with the feminine-typed trait of compassion (Street et al., 1999).

In 2014, Klotz conducted a study of seven women college presidents from a diverse group of colleges. Each of the presidents observed that her leadership style was different from the style of her male counterparts. The themes of their self-described leadership style included: using participatory strategies, focusing on collaboration, employing empowerment techniques, and power-sharing (Klotz, 2014). College presidents require the ability to successfully navigate campus politics and constituents. It would seem, based on the difference in leadership styles, that

having female mentors and/or role models would be beneficial to females looking to step up to the presidential level (Klotz, 2014).

Also, the fact that there are so few women presidents means institutions of higher education may still be managed by antiquated models of leadership that may intern minimize women's leadership styles; this could result in even the most qualified candidate seeming like she is not a good "fit" for the position because her leadership style may be drastically different than what the institution is used to (Chliwniak, 1997; Fitzgerald, 2014). Until diverse leadership styles are seen as a value-added approach to the university, women may struggle to instill their leadership style into an environment that tends to hire, sustain, and promote based on male leadership characteristics (Basinger, 2001; Fitzgerald, 2014). One way to attempt to dismantle patriarchal leadership is to recognize and affirm the leadership style of women. The benefits of women's leadership need to be demonstrated and given merit despite any perceived differences.

Glass Ceiling, Chilly Climate and the Labyrinth. The phrase, glass ceiling, became popular in the mid-1980s and refers to the inability of women and minorities to achieve a critical mass at the top level of leadership (Morrison, 1987). Studies have discussed the challenges to career advancement, outlined the primary obstacles, and suggested a method to minimize these barriers (Chliwniak, 1997; Morrison, 1987; Williams, 2014). The conclusions of these studies indicate that there are only a few true differences between men and women in psychological, emotional, or intellectual qualities, but they found that contradictions in the professional expectations for women were a primary reason for the existence of the glass ceiling. Women employees were expected to be ambitious, yet not to expect equal treatment, thus reinforcing the chilly climate that maintains the glass ceiling (Morrison, 1987).

The glass ceiling still exists in higher education but within certain institutional types, it may be slightly less prevalent (Pierce, 2011; Rich, 2000). For example, there are much higher numbers of women in leadership positions at community colleges and small, private, liberal arts schools. The ACE 2017 report on the American College President reports that the 30% of college presidents that are women break down by institution type, including public and private, as: associates 36%, bachelors 32.8%, masters, 30.3% and doctorate-granting 23.2%.

An absence of women in positions of power could produce also a chilly climate on college campuses (Jablonski, 2000). A chilly climate refers to environments that do not provide equal resources for the diversity of people they serve which may also be proportional to the lack of opportunities for women administrators. This climate of gender inequity on campuses contributes to the glass ceiling that prevents women from advancing (Reynolds, 2002). Some examples of how women experience this chilly climate include (August & Waltman, 2004; Chilly Collective, 1995; Hall & Sadler, 1982):

1. Grouping women in ways that indicate they have less status or are less capable.
2. Making seemingly helpful comments that imply women are not as competent as men.
3. Doubting women's work and accomplishments.
4. Addressing women in ways that reinforce social and/or sexual roles rather than intellectual ones.
5. Expressing stereotypes that discourage women from pursuing academic and professional careers.

Klenke (1996) introduced the metaphor of the labyrinth to capture women's journeys as leaders as an alternative to the glass ceiling and related concepts. Eagly and Carli (2007) also used the term labyrinth in their research. Eagly and Carli (2007) believe that obstacles to women's career progression have been characterized by three distinct eras: the concrete wall, which asserts that no women shall obtain or be promoted into certain roles based on barriers that

have been imposed; the glass ceiling, which allowed some women to rise to high-level roles but still often prevented them from the top position within an organization; and a new metaphor, the labyrinth, which captures the complexity, twists and turns, false starts, and dead-ends of women's career progression. Mavin, 2009 used Eagly & Carli's metaphor in framing a study on senior women managing emotions and gendered expectations of women leader's emotionality. McDonagh & Paris, 2012 used the labyrinth term in their study about top executive roles in healthcare that have generally eluded women.

Lack of Mentorship. The literature has established the importance mentorship can play in career advancement. It can however, be challenging for women aspiring to a presidency given the fact that some research has established that people tend to seek out and mentor those who are like them and there is a scarcity of women in that role (Calhoun & Taub, 2013; Taub & McEwen, 2006). Meanwhile, their male counterparts have plenty of potential mentors in other male presidents (Bornstein, 2005). Presidents require mentoring throughout their career, and while there is no clear-cut data that concludes that the gender of mentors is a support to success, the necessity of mentors is clearly an important strategy for career advancement (Basinger, 2001; Sandberg, 2013).

Blackhurst (2000b) outlines the factors that previous research attributed to the limited mentoring opportunities for women in student affairs as:

- The tendency for mentoring relationship to involve a supervisor and employee
- The fact that up to 64% of women protégés report that their mentors are also women. (p. 582)

Career Advancement Strategies

      The literature has presented ways in which women have navigated their careers using a variety of strategies to advance such as obtaining a terminal degree, relocating for a job opportunity and achieving a sense of work/life balance.

      Researchers have found that women do not set career goals and plans in the same way that men do (Jones, Warnick, & Taylor, 2015; Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989; Sederburg & Mueller, 1992; Touchenton, Shavlik, & Davis, 1993). Based on previous research, Jones, Warnick, and Taylor (2015) stated, "Women often experience more career interruptions due to caring for an elderly parent, raising a child, or moving to support a spouse's career development. As result, women's career paths tend to be more circuitous or non-linear than men's" (p. 2). Sometimes, women choose not to pursue top positions in higher education institutions because they believe that they must sacrifice their families, social lives, and wellbeing in order to be effective college presidents (Brown, 2005; Harrow, 1993). With that said, as the number of women working in college and university administrations increases, research that attempts to understand how they successfully manage work and family are important to determining a strategy for advancement and retention.

      Terminal Degree. A primary factor affecting administrative mobility is a terminal degree, which increases opportunities for career advancement (Biddix 2011, Townsend & Mason, 1990). The degree can open doors to mid- and upper-level positions while also providing credibility among university faculty. Biddix's 2011 study about career paths to Senior Student Affairs Officers surveyed 151 men and 99 women at 4-year institutions, and found a significant disparity between men and women who held or pursued terminal degrees at both masters (86%

vs. 68%) and baccalaureate (72% vs. 52%) institutions. The cause of this disparity is not yet fully explained by the literature nor by the 2011 study (Biddex, 2011).

Relocation. Another factor in career advancement is the need to relocate, for a change in jobs and/or institutions (Biddix, 2011). This factor can pose challenges particularly for women as they navigate family responsibilities, such as having children (Marshall, 2009). In 1988, Sagaria and Johnsrud looked at the administrative mobility of 474 student affairs administrators over a 10-year span at 4-year institutions. The study found that women moved more frequently in the beginning of their careers but were less likely to make changes later in their careers, perhaps due to family responsibilities (Biddix, 2011). In a study of 1,648 managerial and professional employees, including both those who had and had not previously relocated, found that women indicated significantly less willingness to relocate either for career enhancement or for company needs than did men (Landau, Shamir, & Arthur, 1992).

Achieving Balance. The literature has explored the ways in which female college presidents develop strategies for solving professional problems and addressing the issues of juggling work and private demands. In 1998, the Office of Women in Higher Education of the American Council on Education (ACE) held a series of 13 roundtables around the United States to explore the status of women as college presidents. Approximately, 110 women presidents from a variety of institutions took part in the formal discussions and 22 participated in informal discussions. In 2001, Brown, Van Ummersen and Sturnick wrote a report based on the roundtable discussions. The report indicated among the keys to success shared by participants, is achieving balance in professional and personal lives. In 2005, Havice and Williams conducted a qualitative study that investigated the strategies in balancing their professional and personal lives. The study looked at four college university presidents of colleges and universities in the

United States ranging in size from 3,500 to 11,000 on campus students. While the study was not specifically focused on women, three of the four participants were women. The participants discussed the importance of being in shape both physically and mentally, along with other areas for self-oriented commitments such as: hobbies and activities outside the university; developing relationships outside of the institution; maintaining a faith life; and being creative in scheduling time with significant others in their lives.

Role of Mentorship

The role of mentorship is consistently cited as a significant factor in career advancement of women within higher education (Blackhurst, 2000b; Brown, 2005; Calhoun & Taub, 2014; La Pan et al., 2013; Marshall, 2009; Schmidt & Wolfe, 2009; Twale & Jelinek, 1996). In fact, the positive impact a mentor can have on career advancement is further confirmed by a plethora of studies on mentoring relationships across disciplines, such as business, education, and psychology (Brown, 2005). In 1996, Twale and Jelinek summarized how researchers have broadly defined mentorship to include the following career and psychosocial functions:

- o Being a sponsor and promoting the protégé to others
- o Coaching the protégé
- o Offering advice and guidance and boosting self-esteem
- o Offering professional and career counseling
- o Aiding in socialization into the field
- o Assisting with career planning, development and advancement
- o Empowering
- o Sharing expertise
- o Offering personal critique and constructive criticism of the protégé, while providing emotional support and connection. (p. 204)

As women have continued to climb the ladder of leadership in academia, mentorship has consistently been cited a critical component of career advancement (Blackhurst, 2000b; Brown, 2005; Calhoun & Taub, 2014; Marshall, 2009). Therefore, it can be concluded that seeking out mentorship is a strategy towards advancement for women. However, some research has shown that people tend to seek out and mentor those who are like them, which could be a disadvantage to women seeking mentorship as a strategy for career advancement (Basinger, 2001; Calhoun & Taub, 2013; Taub & McEwen, 2006).

In 2000a, Blackhurst explored the effects of mentoring on the employment experience and career satisfaction of women student affairs administrators. The study included a random sample of 500 women student affairs administrators, which resulted in 307 participants. The research data was collected through the use of a mailed questionnaire that included the following scales: Role Conflict and Ambiguity, Organizational Commitment, Career Satisfaction and Commitment, Sex Discrimination, and a Demographic Survey. Blackhurst found that mentoring may result in reduced role conflict (conflict between the roles they are expected to fulfill in the workplace and the demands place on their time) and ambiguity about performance expectations. She also found that mentoring increased organizational commitment which refers to the degree to which respondents express satisfaction with their work settings, compatibility with organizational values, and commitment to their organization. The results of the study did not however support the idea of previous studies that mentoring would improve the career satisfaction of women student affairs professionals.

Brown (2005) examined the mentoring relationships among female college presidents. The study consisted of a sample of 91 female university presidents that were surveyed about their experience in mentor/mentee relationships. The findings indicate that most of the

respondents had received mentoring, supporting research that found that mentorship is a significant contributor to career development in higher education (Cullen & Luna, 1993; Scanlon, 1997). More than two-thirds (68.6%) of the respondents' primary mentors were male. Brown also found that despite having multiple demands such as marriage, children and careers, female college presidents are mentoring men and women, nearly equally. This finding was a departure from previous studies that showed women primarily mentor women.

The importance of mentorship is not exclusive to the career advancement of women; men can also greatly benefit from a mentoring relationship. Calhoun and Taub (2013) examined the experiences of 61 entry-level men in student affairs, a profession with a steady and significant decrease in the percentage of men relative to their female counterparts entering the profession since 1972. In 1972, women comprised 43% of the students in master's degree preparation programs in the field of student affairs (Phelps Tobin, 1998), while more recent statistics indicated the percentage of women is two-thirds (Keim, 1991) to 80% (Talbot, 1996). The findings of the qualitative study found that mentors had not only played a significant role in their development, but were the reason they were in the field of student affairs.

Conclusion

A significant gap that this study can help to fill is looking at the potential student affairs pipeline to the presidency. There isn't much qualitative research that looks at the viability of a pipeline. NASPA's Chief Student Affairs reports provide, data of the numbers of the pipeline by reporting the percentages of CSAOs that aspire to the presidency. While 28% of male respondents indicated that they aspire to the college presidency, only 16% of female respondents made the same assertion (Sponsler & Wesaw, 2014). What is limited in the data is the "Why". The stories of this study's participants provide a better understanding of what could be

contributing to the data. To further narrow the focus of looking of the potential pipeline, this study looked at CSAOs in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast Region of the United States.

Another gap in the literature is exploring the role children play in the decision of women administrators. In 2009, Marshall addressed this issue in her study entitled, *Women Higher Education Administrators with Children: Negotiating Personal and Professional Lives*. In her discussion of the literature she states:

> "the current research on women administrators with children is largely negative, outdated and limited in scope… Most studies did not offer positive examples of women administrators with children, including their strategies for negotiating multiple roles, advice for others in the same position, or suggestions for improving higher education work environments. (Marshall, 2009, p. 193)

Marshall explored these topical areas with women administrators that had school aged children. The study found although their lives had complications, and came with some sacrifice, "managing fulfilled lives as senior-level administrators and parents 'could be done'" (Marshall, 2009, p. 214). With that said, overall, researchers in this area of study, have done a solid job of building on previous research while identifying new avenues of looking at the issue. While women with children are not necessarily the focus of this study, participants were asked if they have children, so that the information was be taken into account through the data analysis.

While literature on female students in higher education is very rich, the literature on female administrators in higher education is somewhat limited. There is some research that looks at current college presidents and how they got to be where they are, but there is very little that looks at the women at the level below the presidency to better understand their career trajectory and their view on the presidency. This study sought to fill that gap by focusing on women

CSAOs, their pursuits to date, and future aspirations. To date, there is little research that looks at

student affairs as a possible pipeline to the presidency, much less that focuses on the path of

women CSAOs.   By focusing on student affairs, this study sought to learn more about whether

or not this female dominated field could serve as a pipeline to the college presidency. A narrative

inquiry provided stories and insight into the "why" of the statistics presented in prior research.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Introduction

Chapter two discussed several areas of literature that provided context to the study of women chief student affairs officers. This chapter outlines the methodology and methods that were used to conduct the research and analyze the participant narratives. I conducted a qualitative study with a narrative inquiry methodology organized around the following research question and sub questions:

- What are the professional trajectories and professional ambitions of women chief student affairs officers?

  - How do women chief student affairs officers explain their career advancement?

  - To what extent are women chief student affairs officers interested in moving up to the presidential level?

  - What strategies have women chief student affairs officers implemented for their career advancement?

  - What role, if any, have mentors have played in the professional advancement of women chief student affairs officers?

Research Design

I used a qualitative design in order to add meaning and answer questions that the current quantitative studies have been unable to answer. The interview protocol covered the following areas/topics: entering the field of student affairs, jobs and experiences that have led participants to the current roles, skills developed for effective university leaders, the role of mentorship, professional challenges, and what's next along their career path. The protocol was developed to better understand the stepping stones in student affairs. The information gathered can be

beneficial to professionals at all career levels, advisors/mentors, and researchers seeking to better understand preparation and attrition in the field.

This qualitative study used a narrative inquiry design. In narrative inquiry, data is gathered through the collection of stories that are used to construct a narrative about the participants' experiences. Narrative inquiry looks at how people share and discuss their lived experiences. Its roots were originated in the field of education and were shaped through the work of educator John Dewey (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Sampling method

I chose to study female chief student affairs officers for this study. To provide additional perspective into the divisions of academia, it should be noted that Chief Student Affairs Officers traditionally oversee a mixture of the following departments at a college or university: residence life, commuter services, graduate student services, admissions, new student orientation, financial aid, counseling center, advising centers, leadership development, Greek affairs, student activities, student unions, community service, service learning, career planning and placement, discipline and judicial affairs, alumni relations and development, services for students with disabilities, development learning services and advocacy and support programs [e.g., for students of color, lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender students, veterans, women, international students adults] (Love, 2003). Many of the participants of this study have had roles in one or more of these areas before rising to their current positions.

This study focused on Chief Student Affairs Officers because according to Wesaw& Sponsler (2014), forty-nine percent of Vice Presidents for Student Affairs/Enrollment Management are women, making the population extensive enough to pull a sample from. Additionally, by narrowing the focus to a particular segment within the field of higher

education, I was able to use data analysis of the interviews to identify trends in that particular segment of higher education.

The sample of participants was identified using a criterion sampling. Criterion sampling's intent is for participants to meet a set of pre-determined criteria. I used criterion sampling to narrow the parameters of the study and give focus to the study.   The selection criteria of participants for this study included:

   a. Participant identifies as a woman,

   b. Participant is currently employed as the Chief Student Affairs Officer at a medium or large four-year public institution in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions of the United States, and

   c. Participant has been employed in her current role for at least three years.

The study focused on medium and large public institutions because sometimes at small or private institutions there may be is a smaller scope of responsibilities. With more limited resources, there may be fewer departments that fall under student affairs. I also focused on participants in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Regions- New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.   I hypothesized that because the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Regions are rich with institutions for higher education in these regions, there would be a higher probability of identifying enough CSAOs that met the criteria.

In the spring of 2016, one year prior to starting data collection for this study, I conducted a similar study for my qualitative research course. One thing that I learned from the smaller study conducted, was that it is better to interview CSAOs with at least a couple years of experience in the role/institution. If someone is too new to the position, it is more challenging for them to reflect on their responsibilities, or to be open to discuss 'what's next'.

Within qualitative research, the determination of an appropriate sample size isn't clear (Trotter, 2012). I referred to the literature to determine an appropriate sample size for this study. Creswell (2007), recommends a sample size of two to three for narrative research, unless a larger pool of participants is used to develop a collective story. Creswell recommends, three to ten for phenomenological studies. For the smaller scale 2016 study, six male participants were interviewed, and within that smaller sampling, there was already a level of patterns/saturation found in the trajectory, mentorship experience and career goals of the participants. I planned on conducting ten interviews in the summer of 2017 in order to gather the data necessary to achieve a level of saturation.

Jette, Grover and Keck (2003) suggested that expertise in the topic by the researcher can reduce the number of participants needed in a study. Trotter (2012) stated that expert sampling designs rarely exceeds 15. As a professional in student affairs, I am able to use my experience and knowledge of the field to interview Chief Student Affairs Officers. A researcher with no background in student affairs may have required many more interviews in order to gain sufficient background data to understand the career trajectory of the participants.

Participant Selection. To identify potential participants to interview, I conducted an online search of profiles of women Chief Student Affairs Officers on university websites, LinkedIn, in conjunction with the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' (NASPA, website) membership directory.

Stratified sampling was used to select participants from the pool that met the selection criteria. The pool contained about 24 women Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs). In the initial round of recruitment, 15 women CSAOs from the original pool were invited via email to participate in the study. To determine who was contacted first, I divided the potential

participants into strata by race, using my best guess of their race. My guesses were based on the information I found on their university website or LinkedIn profile pictures. My guesses were confirmed as having been correct through the Demographic Open-Ended Questionnaire that I issued to the participants. The pool of 24 included: 19 white women, 4 black women and 1 Latina woman. Then participants were then randomly selected from each racial strata, using a simple random sample method. To make the selection, the names were each added to a spreadsheet with an assigned number and I used a random number selector to pull the number of participants needed from each stratum. The number from each stratum was based on recent statistics of the racial/ethnic composition of Higher Education Administrators as a guide- White 86%, Black/African American 7%, Hispanic/Latino 3%, Asian 2%, Other 1% (Bichsel & McChesney, 2017). For my initial email, I invited 10 of the white women, all of the black women (4) and the Latina (1). The pool of potential participants had no Asian women, so during the interviews I asked some of the participants if they knew of any Asian women that met the criteria of the study, and they did not know of any in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions.

The email inviting individuals to participate also identified the purpose of the study, criteria for participation, and other related information (e.g., overview of the research problem to be studied, proposed research questions, significance of the study, assurance of anonymity, and a consent form). Those interested in participating were asked to submit their resume and answer a brief questionnaire, providing some additional background demographic information prior to the interview. The additional demographic information included questions about the number of years in the field, current institution, and current role; race/ethnicity; marital status, and number of children. The demographic information was collected in order to verify that they met the criterion of the study, and to show the diversity of the participants. Using the Dedoose software,

I was also able to see if there were patterns based on the demographic information provided. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2. This information was used to provide additional context in the final write up of the study.

Data Collection Method. Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary research approach for this study. The interviews were expected to take 30 - 45 minutes. The length of the interviews ranged from 14 - 54 minutes. The semi-structured approach allowed for the discussion of specific topics based on the literature and the research questions, while also allowing for new themes and questions to be added, based on the interviews themselves. Semi-structured interviewing, according to Bernard (1988), is best used when the researcher will not have the opportunity to interview someone more than once, which was the case for this study.

Data for qualitative research tends to be collected in the field where participants experience the issue or problem that is being studied (Creswell, 2014).The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the natural setting of the participants. I offered the participants two options for the interview. I could visit them in their offices to interview them in person or set up a phone interview where again they were in their home or offices. Of the ten participants, nine arranged phone interviews, one arranged an in person interview in her office.

Reliability and Validity. Another goal of the study was to establish trustworthiness through the implementation of best practices in reliability and validly. The four components of trustworthy research include: dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability.

Credibility refers to the likeness between the participants' point of view and how the researcher portrays and analyzes the interview. The interview protocol contained familiar language that resonated with the vocabulary of an administrator in higher education. The

questions were intended to allow participants to describe their careers and talk about how their experiences have shaped their career trajectories.

In 2016, in my smaller scale study in which male chief student affairs officers were interviewed was conducted. The 2016 study, provided an opportunity to test and solidifying the interview protocol for this study. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Within 72 hours of an interview, the recording was reviewed and field notes and/or a reflective memo was written.

Credibility also involves identifying and owning any bias that the researcher may bring to the study. Self-reflection and self-monitoring of this potential for bias is an important step researchers can take to ensure high levels of credibility (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). In addition to reflective memos discussing potential bias, developing insights were debriefed with colleagues/peers (Sattin-Bajaj, 2015). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest finding a professional colleague who is not involved with the research to assist with accountability. A peer reviewer was selected to review the interview protocol, interview transcripts, and codes. The peer reviewer was a student in the Education Leadership, Management and Policy doctoral program, and was also conducting a qualitative study. He and I sat down and discussed my interview protocol and he provided me with some suggested revisions. When I completed my first interview and my draft of potential codes, I emailed them to him requesting feedback.

Thick description is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as a way of achieving a type of external validity. By describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail, one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people. Details would include many perspectives about the themes that emerge in the data collection (Creswell, 2014). By using criteria sampling, and narrowing the focus of the

study, patterns emerged, and there was some repetition in the experiences of participants, resulting in a level of saturation, which was evident after 5 interviews.

Confirmability requires showing that the findings of the study are a result of the participants' perspective and not any potential researcher bias. An audit trail was used to establish confirmability. The audit trail included information about how the data was collected, reviewed, and interpreted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability requires that the researcher ensure that the process is logical, traceable, and documented. It helps to assure that the findings from the study are consistent and can be duplicated. The techniques used to ensure credibility and confirmability (i.e. audit trail, and peer review) also helped to established dependability.

Additionally, informed consent was sought from all participants. In doing so, the ethical practice of research was discussed. Obtaining informed consent helped to ensure transparency from a human subjects perspective, about the study, the responsibility of the researcher, and the rights of the participant.

Interview Protocol

The following is the interview protocol for the semi-structured interviews with chief student affairs officers that aimed to learn about their career paths and professional plans for the future. The interview protocol was updated after the small-scale study was conducted in the Spring of 2016. The protocol was reviewed and updated again in the Spring of 2017, after the second interview for this study. Brief memos outlining the need for changes were written at the time. For this particular study, the changes were minor. Question # 3 was originally written as: " What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position?". The two participants that had been interviewed at that point, had brief answers that seemed to list their experiences rather than

describe them. After adding "Can you walk me through your resume…" to the beginning of the sentence, participants tended to tell the story of their job path and the background of what led to changes on the resumes.

1. Tell me about your duties/functions/responsibilities at your institution.

   - Can you walk me through a typical day/week?

2. How did you get started in this field?

3. Can you walk me through your resume and tell me about the jobs and experiences that have led you to your present position?

4. What particular hard and soft skills are important to be an effective university leadership?

   - How did you come to develop your skills?

5. What role, if any, has mentorship played on your professional career path?

   - How did that relationship come to be?

6. Can you tell me about the biggest professional challenges have you faced along your career path?

   - How, if at all, has your being a women effected your professional advancement?

7. What's next for you on your career path?

8. What advice would you give to someone who is looking to become a university leader?

Data Analysis

Ongoing data analysis took place throughout the study. An inductive analysis was used to examine the data and to create meaning out of the rich data from the participants' responses. This approach simultaneously views participants as both the primary source of data and as those who can offer insight on their interpretation of the world around them (Mason, 2002; Merriam,

2002). All of the recorded interviews, resumes, memos, and field notes were entered into digital

files. The resumes and interview transcripts were uploaded into *Dedoose*. *Dedoose* is a software

program that uses a coding system organized around different topics and themes found in these

files will be used for analysis. A scheme of colors and short names was used to designate major

categories and subcategories. Below is a listing of the categories and subcategories that were

used in the coding process, along with some brief descriptions :

Figure 1: Listing of the Categories and Subcategory Codes

Strategies for Advancement

      Internal Advancement- advancing within an institution

      External Advancement – seeking advancement outside of current institution

      Necessary Skills- participants describe skills needed to reach the VP level

Mentorship

      Relationship Development – how did mentoring relationships come to be

            Current/Former Supervisor

            Peer

            Professional association- mentor found in professional organizations

            Formal- mentoring relationships that was established in a formal manner

            Informal- mentoring relationship that emerged naturally from an existing relationship

      Role of a mentor

            Sounding board

            Role model

            Advice

            Advancement- mentor assisted in professional advancement

            Support

      Sponsorship- someone who promoted advancement of participant without them necessarily knowing at the time

Professional Challenges

    Home Balance- balancing demands of work and home life

    Bureaucracy of institutions- politics of institutions

    Changing landscape of Student Affairs- new challenges and focus within the profession (i.e. Title IX, Mental Health)

    Institutions with financial challenges

    Gendered environments- participants speaking to issues of being a woman within the works place

    Being a minority (racial minority)

    Less mentorship at the higher levels

    Struggling to advance

    Student Affairs seen as a "lesser field"- Student affairs being seen as less important than other divisions within Higher Education

    Overcoming challenges

        Change communication style- finding ways to communicate message in a way it can be received

        Invite self to the table

        Participate in "male-oriented" activities- participants intentionally participate in activities such as golf or pool

Role of Family

    Staying close to home

    Caring for aging parents

    Children- participant identifies ways in which being a parent has effected their career decisions.

    Partner support- having the support of a partner in career matters.

    Partner's career- considering partner's career when making career decisions

Participants' perceptions of being a woman in the field

    Positive

    Negative

    Neutral

Future Ambitions

    What's next- What is next on the participant's career trajectory

Presidency

Continue at VP level

Politics

Consulting

Retirement

Teaching

Factors in decision making- What are the factors particpants are considering when discussing what's next

Family

Changes in the field

Age

Interests

View of presidency

Researcher Stance

As with all qualitative studies, narrative inquiry research is subject to the interpretations of the researcher. For this reason, it is important to acknowledge the role and perspective of the researcher conducting the study. At the time this study was conducted, I was employed at a four year, public, institution of higher education as a professional staff member within the division of student affairs. I had 10 years of professional experience working in higher education; therefore I brought practical knowledge and an environmental understanding of the nature of college and universities to the study. As a student affairs professional, I was a member of NASPA, which helped me to connect to a sample.

In order to explore any potential bias that I may have as a student affairs professional I wrote memos throughout the research process. In the memos I discussed conclusions that I was making and discussed the reasoning behind those conclusions. Also, the peer reviewer that I worked with was a male that is not in the field of student affairs, thereby reducing the chances that he and I would have the same bias.

Limitations

The specificity of the criteria for participants was somewhat limiting, and therefor the pool of potential participants was relatively small. Within the pool, there was also a lack of diversity, as most of the potential participants were white. Most of the respondents were also white. Part of why the pool was so small was because I chose to focus on women in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Regions. My thought was that perhaps, there would be some commonalities in the experiences or upward mobility within the regions. I found however, that the participants had had experiences all over the country, and while being close to family played a role, it did not necessarily keep them within the region.

Another limitation of the study with regard to the participants, was the task of setting up interviews with women that had busy professional schedules. Also, because the interviews were scheduled for the summer, there were participants that were on vacation and so that became a factor in scheduling as well. With that said, I was able to secure and interview 10 participants, without losing anyone along the way.

One note is that Donna, one of the participants, had only been at her institution for two years, instead of the three years that was outlined in the criteria of the study. After receiving the email that outlined the study, Donna responded that she was willing to participate, but that she had only been at her institution for two years. At the time, I was not getting many responses to my request for participation, so I made the decision to include Donna in the study. I thought her experiences would add value to the study. In interviewing Donna, I didn't find there to be much difference in her responses. My impression was that she had been in her role long enough to be able to reflect on her experience and respond to my questions.

After scheduling eight interviews, I was especially interested in setting up an interview with Isabel, because she was the only Latina in the pool. Her inclusion in the study would provide an additional layer of diversity and insight to the study. After three attempts to email Isabel directly, I reached out to her assistant, with general information about the study to see if she could ask Isabel if she was interested. By communicating with Isabel's assistant, I was able to arrange an interview.

Participant Biographies

Between July 1 and August 4, 2017, I interviewed 10 female Chief Student Affairs Officers in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. Their tenure ranged from two to 32 years at four-year medium or large public sized institutions.

Below are descriptions of the 10 participants and their respective institutions. To protect anonymity, pseudonyms have been assigned to each Chief Student Affairs Officer and some identifying details have been disguised.

Ana. For the past five years, Ana has served as Vice President of Student Affairs at a medium sized, primarily residential institution, serving just under 8,000 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Ana has been in student affairs for 29 years, and has been at her current institution the whole time. She has a D.Ed. in Administration and Leadership. Ana is a white woman that is married with two children.

Beth. For the past 16 years, Beth has served as Vice President of Student Affairs at a large, primarily residential institution serving about 38,000 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Beth has been in the field of student affairs for 45 years, 42 of which have been served at her current institution. She has a Ph.D. in College Student Personnel Administration. Beth is a white woman that is married with one child.

Cara. For the past four years, Cara has served as Vice President of Student Affairs at a medium, primarily residential institution serving nearly 11,000 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Cara has been in the field of student affairs for 28 years, four of which have been served at her current institution. She has a Ph.D. in College Student Personnel Administration. Cara is a White woman that is married and has one child and two step-children that do not live in the home.

Donna. For the past two years, Donna has served as Vice President of Student Affairs at a medium, primarily residential institution serving about 6,000 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Donna has been in the field of student affairs for 17 years, two of which have been served at her current institution. She has a Ph.D. in the Advancement of Learning and Service in Higher Education. Donna is a White woman that is married and has two children. As was previously noted that Donna did not meet the three years in current role criterion.

Evelyn. For the past four years, Evelyn has served as Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at a medium, highly residential institution serving about 8,000 students. Evelyn, has been in the field of student affairs for 33 years, four of which have been served at her current institution. She has a Ph.D. in Urban Higher Education. Evelyn is an African American woman that is single and has one child.

Fiona. For the past three years, Fiona has served as Vice President for Student Development at a medium, primarily residential institution serving about 11,000 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Fiona has been in the field of student affairs for 32 years, three of which have been served at her current institution. She has an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. Fiona is a White woman that is married and has 1 child.

Giselle. For the past four years, Giselle has served as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at a large, primarily residential institution serving over 48,000 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Giselle has been in the field of student affairs for 29 years, four of which have been served at her current institution. She has an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. Giselle is a Black woman that is single and has no children.

Heather. For the past 13 years, Heather has served as Vice President for Student Affairs at a large, primarily residential institution serving over 22,000 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Heather has been in the field of student affairs for 38 years, 13 of which have been served at her current institution. She has a Ph.D. in Higher Education, Work & Adult Development. Heather is a White woman that is widowed and has one child.

Isabel. For the past nine years, Isabel has served as Vice President for Student Affairs at a medium, primarily residential institution serving about 8,500 students in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Isabel has been in the field of student affairs for 35 years, 32 of which have been served at her current institution. She has a Ph.D. in Social Work. Isabel is a Latina woman that is single and has one child.

Jane. For the past three and a half years, Jane has served as Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Success at a medium, primarily nonresidential institution serving nearly 10,000 students in the Northeast Region. Jane has been in the field of student affairs for 18 years, five and a half of which have been served at her current institution. She has a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration. Jane is a White woman that is married and has two children.

Conclusion

　　Chapter 3 described the methodology used for the collection and analysis of data of the study. The qualitative design described was used to learn more about the career trajectories and ambitions of the women Chief Student Affairs Officers that participated. Figure 2 is a table that outlines that demographic information of the participants. Chapter 4 will discuss the findings of the data analysis described in Chapter 3.

Figure 2: Demographic Information of Participants

Participant	Race	Relationship Status	Children	Highest Degree	Total Years in SA	Years in Current Position	# of institutions from resume
VP1 Ana	White	Married	2	D.Ed	29	5	1
VP2 Beth	White	Married	1	Ph.D.	45	16	2
VP3 Cara	White	Married	2	Ph.D.	28	4	5
VP4 Donna	White	Married	2	Ph.D.	17	2	3
VP5 Evelyn	African Am.	Single	1	Ph.D.	33	4	4
VP6 Fiona	White	Married	1	Ed.D.	32	3	2
VP7 Giselle	African Am.	Single	0	Ed.D.	29	4	6
VP8 Heather	White	Widow	1	Ph.D.	38	13	6
VP 9 Isabel	Latina	Single	1	Ph.D.	35	32	2
VP 10 Jane	White	Married	2	Ph.D.	18	3.5	3

CHAPTER FOUR: Findings

This chapter presents data gathered from conducting individual interviews with 10 women Chief Student Affairs Officers. I will present four central themes that emerged from the data: (1) mentorship, (2) strategies for advancement, (3) the role of family, and (4) being a woman in the field of student affairs. Theses themes emerged from the data that was collected in the interviews. After coding the interviews, I looked at what areas were discussed most often by the participants. The most commonly used codes became the themes that will be discussed among the findings. These themes tell an overall story about how these chief student affairs officers explain their career advancement and ambitions. The first theme discusses the role mentorship has played along their professional journeys and how those relationships developed. The second theme describes specific advancement strategies these women have employed. The third theme discusses the ways in which families have played a role as these professional navigate their careers. Finally, in the fourth theme, the participants share their reflections on the ways in which they have experienced gender along their career trajectories.

Theme One: Mentorship

The first emerging theme was the role mentorship plays for chief student affairs officers. The literature has looked at mentoring relationships from a variety of angles including: scarcity in higher education of women in presidential roles that can serve as mentors (Calhoun & Taub, 2013, Taub & McEwen, 2006); the necessity of mentors as a strategy for career advancement (Basinger, 2001; Sandberg, 2013); and limited mentoring opportunities for women in student affairs (Blackhurst, 2000b).

Because mentoring was prevalent in the literature, I wanted to learn how these professionals describe the role and development of mentoring relationships. Each of the 10

participants described having a mentor at some point in their career. In line with the literature, that participants spoke to the importance and the role mentorship has played on their careers. Most, would describe the mentoring relationship as informal ones, that emerged from a pre-existing relationship, and that it was only when looking back that they saw the person as a mentor.

Evelyn, an African American woman that has been in her role for three years, described the importance of these relationships as:

> I don't think that anyone gets to these positions without having someone to mentor them or having someone to set an example, whether that example is good or bad or whether you call that person a mentor or not. You're able to watch and see, 'well I'm going to put that in my portfolio or I'm not going to keep that in my portfolio'.

This finding about the importance of mentorship, is consistent with previous research (Basinger, 2001). The protocol included questions to ask participants specifically about how their mentoring relationships developed. Of the 10 participants, eight identified current or previous supervisors as having served as a mentor at one point or another. Cara described the emergence of the supervisory/mentoring relationship in this way:

> They were all natural, based on a relationship that we had. They became more than just a supervisor. They really became someone who was invested in me and who I continue, in many cases, to have meaningful relationships with.

This finding reveals that in most cases, mentorship isn't something that needs to be actively sought out. The participants discussed times in which their supervisors began mentoring them through their one on one regular supervisory meetings. It can often be developed from the supervisory relationships that develop in various roles along the way.

Because many of these mentoring relationships seem to emerge naturally through a supervisory relationship, many of the participants described the relationships as being informal mentoring relationships rather than formal relationships.

Fiona, a White woman that has served in her current role for three years described the informality like this:

> My supervisors or the people that I was impacted by, wouldn't necessarily define themselves as mentors. It's almost like you do that in retrospect, because you realize that was a mentoring relationship, even if it wasn't tagged as such. I never had a formal mentor, but I had mentoring relationships through much of my career. That's a conscious decision on the person who's offering that information, but it's also a conscious decision, it had to be, for me. I'm going to try to get what I can learn from this person, ask questions, and ask for feedback, so that I can do better and be better. So, informally, it was key. I was lucky. I had it built in. My relationships with my supervisors, for the most part, were wonderful. I didn't have to go seek out other people to mentor me. Many people do. I have to admit, I was very fortunate, if not privileged, in that way.

In contrast, there was one participant, Isabel that spoke to having a strategy to formalize a mentoring relationship, by identifying a person whose role or attributes she aspired to. Isabel, is a Latina who has been in her role for nine years, and at her institution for 32 years. She described her approach as:

> It's almost like looking for a good pair of silk gloves. You have to try them on and try them on and then you find the right ones… What I did was, I asked, I said, "Well, I like the way that you have handled these things. When I was new in this position in particular, I'm going into this position and I would like to establish a relationship where we can maybe meet once every two weeks and talk about the things that are going on.", or if not that, it just became more of calling when I needed help to get better in a position.

The participants' stories of mentors' roles in their lives had some consistencies. For example, most participants shared that one of the roles their mentors play was to provide encouragement.

Evelyn described an important piece of advice she received.

> The reason I have my Ph.D. today is because one of my presidents said you gotta get it, you gotta have your Ph.D. I fought against it and I fought against it, but because of his encouragement I went back to school and I got my Ph.D.
> I work for another president now who is the same way. She pushes me to do better and do better. I feel that I've been doing this for a long time, I have some other aspirations now, and she's right there behind me pushing me on to get that done. I think mentorship is very important, very, very important.

In addition to encouragement, participants spoke to the role modeling that they observed. Often lessons and information gained from mentors and supervisors, were provided through observation as opposed to direct contact.

Heather, who has served in her role as Vice President for 13 years, described the influence of role modeling as:

> I feel like there was a number of people along the way that helped get me where I am today. I would say that a lot of it is just watching the way that other people operate. Having people around me who were really good at what they did. That form of mentorship where it's just observing how somebody can be effective in a certain role and figuring out either how do I model that role or adapt that to my own style. And I think you learn as much from those bad leaders that you have. Every leader that you work for isn't going to be an inspirational, wonderful leader. So I do believe that mentorship can also come in the form of working with people who aren't very effective and showing you how not to do it.

One of the original research questions sought to better understand the role of mentorship. While mentorship was discussed at length, there were three participants that also spoke to the role sponsorship has played in their career. Sponsorship refers to individuals that advocate on your behalf, and connect you to opportunities and others that can support your advancement, at times without you being aware (Sandberg, 2013).

Within our interview, Cara, who has served in her current role for four years, spoke of a VP who recommended her for an opportunity that provided advancement within her career. While they had remained in contact, his role in her life was not that of a mentor, but rather a sponsor. Cara described the story of sponsorship in her career as:

> The Vice President for student affairs at my alma mater, had nominated me for a Dean of Students position. He's retired now, but he was prominent in the field, and so I think the search firm reached out to him, looking for nominations and he gave them my name. In part, I think because he had the confidence in me, even though you know, it was several years now since I'd been an undergraduate student. We had stayed in touch. We have not worked together. He just has enough confidence that I might be able to do the job that I decided to apply and see how things went.

This study's first central theme of mentorship further confirms the importance of mentoring relationships within student affairs. All the participants had had at least one mentor, and most found those relationships in their supervisors. The participants spoke about the ways in which their careers have been influenced and inspired by these individuals. Most of the mentoring relationships seemed to emerge as informal relationships that grew and developed.

Theme Two: Strategies for advancement

I asked participants to describe the jobs and experiences that led them to their present position, and the skills that are necessary to be an effective university leader. Through those discussions, the second theme that emerged through the interviews relates to the strategies participants have used in order to advance their careers, including: advancing within an institution vs. seeking advancement outside of an institution; having a variety of roles and experiences within student affairs along the way; and obtaining a terminal degree. In discussing this theme, the stories and experiences of the participants help to answer the question of how they explain their own career advancement.

Internal vs External Advancement

Of the ten participants of this study, only one rose through the ranks of a single institution for the entirety of her career. The others have worked at 2-6 institutions, throughout their tenure, suggesting that the more common advancement strategy requires that student affairs professionals seek advancement outside of their own institutions. This finding is in line with

national statistics, which can be found in NASPA's 2012 The Chief Student Affairs Officer report. NASPA surveyed of 836 CSAOs and reported that 34% of CSAOs remained at one institution for the majority of their career, 35% of CSAOs changed institutions one or twice, 28% changes institutions three or more times, and 4% moved in and out of higher education.

Jane, who has been in her role for three and a half years, has worked at three institutions throughout her 18 years in student affairs. She initially rose through the ranks of her first institution, and spoke to the advantages and disadvantages to rising the ranks of a single institution as:

> The two or three jobs on campus that I wanted, I had friends in them already and I knew they weren't going to leave, they weren't retiring, they knew it too, we had talked about it. But close to the end of my tenure [at previous institution] when I went to apply for one or two things on campus and I didn't get them, I started to realize that after a while people start to peg you and your skills. They saw me as that admissions counselor they knew 20 years before, and it was hard for them to see me in the leadership role they were envisioning. Actually changing jobs and moving campuses was important. The challenge of, if you're staying in the same place, making sure people see you as your skills grow and selling yourself, I think, is a little different than if you move organizations.

For some, they were able to use rising in one institution to their advantage. They had demonstrated they had skills that were transferable and had developed positive reputations that worked to their advantage when opportunities became available. But while mid-level opportunities at an institution are plentiful, the executive ranks become smaller. Fiona described the challenge of needing to move on when seeking an executive level position as:

> There are pros and cons to how long you stay [at an institution]. I felt like I was not as successful as I could have been, perhaps because of where I was. Because, when you grow up in an organization, people see you differently. When I left [Randolph University], the president said to this my [new] president that I had outgrown the institution that it was time for me to go.
>
> As much as I loved it there, I was respected, I kind of hit a wall, and I could see myself starting to get frustrated. When you're there, when you're some place so

long, you get overly comfortable. I think. I got the degree [Ph.D.], and then I hoped that it would launch me into something greater there, and it did. But, I got as far as I could get. There was no VP position. So, there are times, I think, that staying in one place could have offered challenges for me.

All but one of the participants have risen within at least two institutions. Ana has risen the ranks of a single institution:

Way back, many, many years ago, in the early 80s, back in those days you did not have to have a degree. And while I went to school for several years, I did not have my degree. I got a civil service job working in the field of drugs and alcohol. So I was a drug and alcohol prevention specialist. So I stopped out to have my children and I was gone for 10 years. When I returned, the role of drug and alcohol prevention, you had to have a bachelor's degree. So I took a job at my university in the drug and alcohol office but I came back in a clerical position.

And so through that time, I ended up getting my associate's degree, my bachelor's degree, my master's degree here [current institution]. The person that I reported to who at that time was an associate vice president, and he was going to get his doctorate. And so in my role, my clerical role, he leaned on me to do a lot of his homework. And a lot of the proofreading of things that were submitted. And I thought, "Wait a minute, I can do this." And so that's sort of how that happened.

It wasn't until I had got my master's degree that I actually moved from a clerical position. And then eventually went on to get my doctorate. I held a variety of different jobs here doing student activities, Director of the Women's Center, Director of Special Events.

Wide Array of Experiences

As Chief Student Affairs Officers, these professionals oversee several departments within their division. There is a broad range of departments that often fall within student affairs including residence life, commuter services, graduate student services, admissions, new student orientation, financial aid, counseling center, advising centers, leadership development, Greek affairs, student activities, student unions, community service, service learning, career planning and placement, discipline and judicial affairs, alumni relations and development, services for students with disabilities, development learning services, and advocacy and support programs [e.g., for students of color, lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender students, veterans, women, international students adults] (Love, 2003). It is impossible to imagine that any Chief Student

Affairs Officer would have experience in all of the departments that they oversee. With that said, all of the participants of this study had experience in multiple departments prior to reaching the level of Chief Student Affairs Officer, indicating that varied experience is a strategy for advancement in the field of student affairs.

Giselle, who has been in her Vice-Presidential role for four years, learned about the importance of diversity of experiences from a mentor. Giselle started in admissions and new student programing, doing recruitment for her university. In the role, she was working in a satellite office, away from campus. Because she was representing the university away from the campus, she had to learn about financial aid, registrar's procedures, and about the programs and majors the university had to offer. She described the lessons as:

> One of the things that my mentor told me, he since became a president, was it was important to be a generalist, and to get a broad swath of experiences throughout student affairs. I am one of those people who has done a little bit of everything, and that I believe has informed my leadership style, has informed my understanding of the work at the unit level, and I think has helped me to be a better senior officer.

The idea that diversification of experience emerged not only through hearing about the various positions each participant held, but also in the advice they would give to anyone looking to rise the ranks of student affairs.

Cara provided the following advice to those looking to advance:

> I think diversifying experiences is important, but not just for the sake of having different experiences. Really with a sense of gaining a greater institutional lens in whatever way a person can.

The following table lists the jobs each participant has had prior to their current role. The data was collected from the resumes provided by the participants when they agreed to take part in the study. It is interesting to note, that there doesn't seem to be a clear and direct path to a

CSAO positions. The participants reached that level within their careers in a variety of ways.

One thing that they did have in common is that they all had varied experiences that eventually,

led to their current roles.

Participant	Roles leading to current role in chronological order based on resume
Ana	Assistant Dean for Student Affairs Dean for Student Services Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students
Beth	Director of Undergraduate Admissions Assistant Vice President and Director of Undergraduate Admissions Interim Chief of Staff, Office of the President
Cara	Assistant Coordinator for Residence Life Assistant Director, Activities Director, Activities and Leadership Programs House Director Instructor Academic Advisor Staff Assistant, Student Honor Council Senior Instructor Director, First Year Experience and Academic Advising Center Dean of Student Life Associate Vice President of Student Affairs Search Consultant
Donna	Director of Student Activities Student Life Coordinator Director of Student Development/Dean of Students
Evelyn	Instructor/Counselor Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life Dean of Student Life Vice President for Student Affairs Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and enrollment Management Acting Chief Operating Offices Executive Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff Vice President for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Diversity Interim Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Visiting Associate Professor
Fiona	Adjunct Faculty Member Coordinator of College Events and Conferences Acting Director of the Student Center Director of Special Programs and Conferences

	Director of Student Development Director of the Student Center Associate Dean of Students
Giselle	Part Time Faculty Program Coordinator, New Student Programs Program Coordinator II, New Student Programs Assistant Director and Coordinator of Student Activities Academic Advisement Coordinator Assistant Director Director, New Student Experience Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Associate Vice President for Student Engagement Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Heather	Program Coordinator Senior Student Affairs Officer Assistant Dean Program Review Specialist Consultant Program Coordinator Director of Special projects Assistant to the Vice president for Student Affairs & Director of Leadership Initiatives Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Isabel	Coordinator of Neighborhood Services Counselor Family Therapist Consultant Academic Advisor Assistant Director of Counseling Center Associate Director of Counseling Center Adjunct Faculty Member Director of Counseling & Health Services Associate Dean of Student/Director of Counseling and Health Services Dean of Students
Jane	Admissions Counselor Graduate Assistant, Office of Student Life, Greek Affairs & Leadership Advisor/ Counselor, Student Services Sr. Assistant Director of Operations, Admissions Office Associate Director- Management Information Systems Program Clinical Assistant Professor Chief Enrollment Officer and Director of Student Information Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management Acting Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Success

Doctoral Degree

All the participants of this study had obtained a terminal degree, which was not a requirement to participate in the study, but was something they all had in common. One of the participants had a D.Ed., two had an Ed.D. and seven had a Ph.D. The fact that they all had terminal degrees suggests that obtaining a terminal degree is another strategy for advancement in the field of student affairs. On December 31, 2017, I did looked up job postings for Chief Student Affairs Officers on HigherEdJobs.com and found that of the 15 current listing, 7 mentioned that the doctoral degree was either required or preferred, the other 8 required a master's degree, or did not mention the degree requirement. That said, according to NASPA's 2014 Chief Student Affairs Officer report, 56% of CSAOs held a terminal degree, making this sample somewhat unusual. In the report, of those holding a doctoral degree, three of four completed their degrees in either general education or higher education. The diversity of their degrees also suggests that one degree isn't necessarily more advantageous than the others, to advance to the Vice-Presidential level in student affairs.

Giselle described the story of what inspired her to stay in the field of student affairs, and pursue a terminal degree:

> I had earned my master's degree, and I was starting to think about law school. One day, I was looking through Black Issues in Higher Education (now it's called Diverse Issues in Higher Ed). Every year, they'd publish the number of African-Americans who earn terminal degrees by discipline, and I remember looking at that and thinking, I don't think the world really needs another attorney. At that point, I settled in my mind that I could make the greatest impact in higher ed, and I wanted to stay in higher ed. So, I decided to get my doctorate and pursue a career in student affairs.

Evelyn spoke to the doors that were opened after she earned a terminal degree as:

> When I decided to move again, I had a new Ph.D. and I wanted to see how much it was worth. I wanted to get out and shop around and see what was going on. I found out that it was a good thing. I had interviewed at many different places and ended up in New York at a hefty price tag.

64

Although her Ph.D. opened doors, Evelyn warned that a terminal degree is not a strategy that will lead to success on its own. She explained that it needed to be combined with the strategy of diversifying your experience:

> I would say whatever position at the executive level that you're aspiring to do, make sure you've done your homework before you get to that point. Some people think that because they get a Ph.D. they can get a Vice Presidency, and it doesn't work that way. You have to do all the work before that……. The Ph.D. is not the only thing that will lead to a senior position; it's the work that you have done. The Ph.D. is the icing on the cake. It's just about hard work and keeping track of who you are and where you are and being very strategic in making moves. Oftentimes your next position won't come at the institution where you are, you may have to move several times, but that just broadens your experience and gives you diversity in your experience.

Within the second theme, there are similarities in the methods and strategies that these women Chief Student Affairs Officers used, to advance in their careers. It is clear that a variety of experiences and a terminal degree are becoming a standard for the executive levels of this field.

Theme Three: The Role of Family

As participants shared stories of their careers and experiences, the role of family seemed to be naturally entwined in the conversations.   Of the ten participants, seven were married, one was a widow, and two were single. Also, nine of the ten participants had children. Those with partners and children, discussed their roles naturally, without provocation. There was no question within the protocol that spoke to families or children. I intentionally decided not to ask participants about their families in an effort to see what did or did not come up as they discussed their career trajectories and ambitions.

Some of the participants spoke to the decisions and compromises that were made to support their own careers or those of their partners. Heather spoke to the shifting career priorities that were made when her late husband was alive:

> So my husband was a college coach, and I think that our initial decision was that he was at the peak of his career in his mid to late 30's and that we needed to capitalize on that. And that my career would continue to grow beyond that point in time, and so he had been offered two really incredible opportunities as an Olympic coach, and we were like, "okay let's do this because ten years from now you might not have this opportunity."
>
> When we decided to go back to the university, we again did that by looking for full time positions for him thinking that with my experience and where I was at in terms of my Ph.D. program that I would have lots of flexibility in finding a job, and a coach obviously doesn't have much flexibility in finding a job. And so after we had been there for eight years, he was ready to step back and explore other options, and we at that point decided to follow my career.
>
> It was really kind of prioritizing who can - just the timing in terms of what makes sense for us as a family now. When we were in Michigan we started our family, so it was really nice while he was fully immersed in his career and I had a very much a 9 to 5 kind of job, it made it a lot easier to expand our family at that point.

Some of the participants spoke to the ways in which their families' shifting priorities, presented relocation and advancement challenges. Having met her partner when they were living in Florida, Cara spoke to the need for relocation for her partner's career and children:

> After we got married, we knew we needed to be back in New England. He needed to be back in New England because he had daughters who lived in Vermont with their mother and the distance was too great. He had taken a job down there [in Florida], and it just wasn't a good choice for him, and so we decided to move to New England.
>
> We moved to central Massachusetts because that's where he was from. That's where he had connections and where he got a job. Six months later, I followed him, quit my job without a job, which was huge for me, because I had always been a professional. That was my identity. My career was kind of what I had known from my adult life up to that point in time, but this is what I needed to do, so I moved. We moved at the end of June. I continued to look and by September still didn't have a job, so I was a little bit lost, and wayward.

Cara eventually got a job with a higher education recruiting firm and then had a baby, and decided to become a full-time mom for the first eight months of his life. Eventually, she did

a job search that focused on a three-hour radius from where her stepdaughters live and landed a

Vice Presidency at a university in Connecticut:

> That's when I landed this job. We moved from Massachusetts to Connecticut. Unfortunately my husband still commutes to central Massachusetts because he never found a job in Connecticut, so he drives an hour and a half each way every day to work, but his parents live there, so that's his home. That's where he grew up, so he does spend one night a week with them.
>
> I do all the primary care for my son in terms of his school, his day care, and what has now been his pre-k all close to my work. I do all the doctor's appointments. We sort of have decided that if Tom, my husband, has to drive to Massachusetts, one of us has to be close to home and close to what our son needs, so I do all of that, but now it's been four years. We've kind of figured that routine out.
>
> We are in New England because my stepdaughters live in New England. I'll be candid. I don't really like living in New England. I would give anything to raise my son close to my family, but this is what we do. You do what you have to do. We are in New England for six more years. Then, my younger step daughter graduates from high school and we have the freedom of thinking about living somewhere else. In my mind ideally back in Florida. My husband and I talk about this, moving back to Florida. Probably the next six years are in my current job unless we got a really good reason to move somewhere else in New England, but we will not be any further than three hours from the city in Vermont where my stepdaughters live, so that's my parameter in terms of my immediate future.

In addition to shifting career priorities with their partners, many of the participants

discussed the effect their roles as parents has had on their career paths. Donna, explained her

parent perspective:

> To speak to some of the personal issues of being a parent. I don't even know that it has to do with necessarily being a mom, but being a mom who is an executive. My husband and I were just having a conversation ... He's very, very supportive of me. He has held down the home front while I've been out doing all this crazy stuff and we were just talking about an event that, as the vice president, I'm expected to drive an hour and a half to this fancy country club and my spouse is supposed to be with me, for this alumni event and we have two children at home. So I was saying [to husband] the other vice presidents have that problem too, three of the four of us, have children, and he's like "well none of them are as young as yours." And I said, "No, but they're school age." I mean, it shouldn't matter, but juggling the personal demands, and I know that moms and dads have

come a long way in equalizing who's staying at home and all of that family and work life balance, but being a mom is still really hard. Being a mom and an executive is even harder.

While Donna spoke to the ways in which parents' work-life balance evolved, Fiona spoke to the challenges dads still had within today's society:

> Now, things that naturally happen with women in terms of childbirth and caregiving, the things that are biological or just a necessary part of at least how I lived my life, certainly made what I needed to do more challenging. I probably felt that work-life balance conflict without even thinking about it.... I'm going to be a little sexist, maybe, but in traditional roles… I still think that many of our environments are still sometimes unfair to men, more open to women having bonding time or maternity leave than men. But, at the same time, you're disadvantaged if you're not in the game. So, if you have to be out for something, you're missing something. But, people, I, personally, have just had to ... I didn't let that stress me out.

Theme Four: Being a Woman in Student Affairs

The fourth theme to emerge was that of how the participants experienced their gender within higher education. One of the protocol sub-questions specifically asked about what effect, if any, being a woman had on their career. Seven of the ten participants described the ways in which their gender impacted their experiences along their career trajectory.

Some of the participants spoke to the fact that they were the only woman in the presidential cabinet and the effect that had on their approach to communication and managing their working relationships.

Heather spoke specifically about having been the only woman at the table and excluded from off-the-clock gatherings:

> When I started at my university, I was the only female vice president on the President's cabinet and so there were some interesting things. I could hear the guys coming back on Wednesday when we had President's council, and say, "oh yeah, dinner at the President's house last night," and I was like, "What dinner at

68

the president's house?" So, I feel like I was left out of things but I was never left out of sitting at the table.

I went on to ask Heather how she handled having been excluded and she explained:

> Because I golfed, I insisted - I'm not a very good golfer - but I pretty much insisted early on, if the boys were all going on a golf outing, I was going with them. If the boys were gonna go retreat to the back room to play pool, I was gonna play pool with them. Not in a way that was forceful or pushy, I just made sure that I was included as much as I wanted to be.

Fiona spoke to rare occasions in which she suspected she was being treated differently based on her gender:

> There are times around a cabinet table or around a board table or in meetings where I've had a moment in time where I've felt like, "I'm being treated differently here, and I don't think it's about my ability." But, I have to say that those are pretty rare, and I don't think, or I never was consciously aware of a time where I was overlooked for something or it made a big difference in my ability to move.

The ways in which participants experienced their gender was not limited to the presidential cabinet. For Donna for example, the experience came from somewhat external constituents:

> I know there are times when the males are probably approached about topics that I wouldn't be approached about and I'll give you an example. I, as the Vice President, who oversees athletics ... Athletics, obviously we have very passionate alumni, who are advocating for this team, or that team, or they want us to build up this, or add a coach to that, or change these facilities, or whatever. But the male alumni will not come to me with these issues, they go to male vice president for advancement and he doesn't oversee athletics.

In addition to speaking to the challenges for women in the field of higher education, two of the three participants of color spoke to the challenges of women of color specifically.

Giselle, an African American woman, spoke to the challenges for women of color as:

> Women in general have a particular challenge in senior leadership, and women of color have it ... it can be tough. Sometimes, we either get overlooked or we don't get invited to the table. There's the cabinet [presidential cabinet], and then there's the kitchen cabinet, and so who are really those closest advisors and confidantes,

and those people who are in the inner circle? It's usually men. At least in my experience, it's usually men. When there are women, it's usually not women of color, and so I think that there can still be a challenge to have credibility at the boardroom table from time to time, because whether intended or not, people can regress into some of the gendered behavior.

Isabel, a Latina woman, described a time in which this challenge prevented her from advancing as:

One of the biggest challenges is being a woman and being a minority woman. There have been times where you know that you're ready, qualified, for the next position and the position becomes vacant, and somebody else gets it. That is not only enraging, but very painful.

As participants spoke to some of the gender-related challenges they had experienced, I asked them how they managed to overcome the challenges. Some described the ways they modified their communication style in order to have their message heard. Giselle described the conscious communication styles she practices to ensure she is effective:

I think for women, how we show up in those spaces, how we speak out in those spaces, it's still judged in some ways. If I'm passionate about something, and I want to make a point, then I do that, but I do that, thinking about how can I say this in a way that is heard and that it's not being viewed as me being shrill or emotional? I don't think my male colleagues ever think about if people perceive them as being emotional, and so I just think that's part of that gender stuff that we deal with.

I tend to just be pretty head-on in terms of being assertive. I've worked on that. I try to choose my language so it doesn't sound accusatory or inappropriate, and I always am very professional in my e-mail communication, but [when excluded from a meeting] I will go and make the case to say, "I understand there is this discussion, or there's a meeting involving this. I think it would be appropriate for me to join this group because I do have something to add to the conversation."

If I don't get invited to a meeting, and I think that it's an important meeting that I should be at, I will invite myself. Not in a far-reaching way, but to say, "It might not have occurred to you, but ..." And talk about how I can contribute to that discussion. So I put it out there. It's just, it can be a little off-putting, because I don't think men usually have to justify why they should be somewhere.

Ana spoke to the ways in which she used humor to get her message across:

This university does not have many female administrators. It's getting better. So often when you sit around cabinet, you may be the only woman. And sometimes it's been more difficult to have your voice heard and to make a point. But I think I

have a pretty loud voice. And I usually make my point with humor and so it usually plays out pretty well.

Heather explained how she learned lessons on being a woman in the field from a female mentor:

> I think as a woman, you have to be a little bit more careful. I think one of my strongest role models was the woman who was the President at a university in Michigan. She was very feminine and really embraced her womanhood and was very, very effective in her job. And I think that was the first time that I realized I don't have to be like a man, dress like a man, in order to get to where I want to be. If I'm good at what I do, then I'm gonna get there.

What's Next?

In part, the purpose of this study was to see if CSAOs have interest in the presidency. In 2014, NASPA conducted the first survey of college and university Chief Student Affairs Officers which was completed by 863 CSAOs. The Chief Student Affairs Officer Report reported along gender lines, 51% of CSAOs identified as male, 49% identified as female. Given the equality that seems to exist at the highest levels of this area of higher education, it would seem to be an area where women could be supported to move forward to the presidential level. The American Council on Education report, American College President Study of 2017 included statistics about the college/university presidents' immediate prior position. According to the study, 16.4% of college/university presidents were "Other senior campus executive", which is likely where student affairs would fit in, compared to 42.7% that had previously served as Chief Academic Affairs Officers or Provost/ Other Senior Executive in Academic Affairs/Dean. In order to learn about the ambitions of the participants, I asked them: "What's next for you?" Of the ten participants, seven shared their interest in staying at the Vice Presidential level for the remainder of their career, two referenced their ages, and stated their next move would be retirement, two were open to a presidency as an option.

When asked "What's next for you?" Evelyn was clear, and unambiguous in simply stating her

ambitions as:

> A presidency.

It should be noted that Evelyn was selected to serve as University President within 9 months of

the interview.

Fiona was less clear on her next move, and didn't see a presidency as an aspiration. In explaining
her ambitions she said:

> I never aspired to be more than a vice president, and I still don't. I know that I
> don't want to be a president. So, I can either finish my career here or keep it new
> and interesting. ….It won't be something beyond a vice president at a college or
> university. This is where I want to be.

In telling me more about what's next, the participants also shared some of the reasons behind

their ambitions. Cara explained:

> I think about the fact, though, that I'm going to raise my son in pivotal years in his
> life. Can I manage a presidency and be at his soccer game or baseball game or
> chess competition? I don't know what his future is going to have, he's four and a
> half. I don't know what his future holds, but that really shapes how I think about
> my career. Could I find a job where I could be the mom that I want to be and be
> the professional that I want to be? I do think about a presidency, but I don't know
> if that's in my future. Otherwise, I imagine I will be a vice president for student
> affairs, but it will need to be in an environment that challenges me and continues
> to be interesting. Like I said, I just added athletics, so that gives me a whole new
> sort of thing to learn, which is really exciting. I'm very interested in enrollment
> management, so maybe it would be a vice presidency that was student affairs and
> enrollment management. That would be sort of where the growth is, but I need to
> keep learning and growing and providing meaningful contributions, so that will
> all shape how I think about what the rest of my career looks like.

Donna also spoke to the ways in which familial factors contributed to her ambitions while also

speaking to a possible shift in the field of student affairs:

> Sometimes I think, yes I'd like to stay put for a while and let my girls get through
> high school and get into whatever college they want to go to. But sometimes I
> battle with the fact that it's pretty uncommon for a vice president to be in a
> position for 12 years. It used to be. There used to be plenty of vice presidents that

retired from a vice president position and would be there for 20 years and things like that. I don't know how realistic that is for Gen Xers. There is a generational twist into it.

I never put a timeline on things. I never assume I know what's coming next. If I were to make decisions about a next position, regardless of what it is, it would really need to be the right fit for my family. Which is how I made the decision in coming to where I am now too.

While some participants spoke to the familial factors affecting their view of a possible presidency, Jane spoke more about the role and skills of a president as:

I do not, DO NOT, have any interest in being president. That is not my thing. I've drawn the line. No presidency for me. The skill set you need, I don't see myself having them.

Another contributing factor to "What's next" may lie in the changes that higher education and specifically student affairs is experiences in today's society. This was explained by Giselle:

I'm thinking about what's next, and I also don't ... So I love what I do. I love student affairs. I love working with and for college students, and that's my passion. But I do think about the fact that I have a very high pressure, high burnout job, right? And the jobs are different depending on where you are. If you talk to people who are at large, public institutions, we have similar challenges, right? Large, public, state institutions, we have similar challenges. It is, those folks in those SSAO jobs at places like this, that's high burnout, and people are leaving the profession. People are retiring early, or just moving on because it's too much.

I think about staying on my A-game, and enjoying my work because when I stop enjoying it, when I lose the passion for it, it'll be time to go. And I don't want to do that while I'm still on my job, right? But there is a point where somebody ... I don't think I'm going to want to work 65 hours a week in my 60s. I probably won't want to do that, at least not at the same intensity, right? So the "what's next" is important, it is very important. And it's also, it's hard I think ... These jobs become less attractive because they have become so compliance-oriented, and so wrought with ... it's just everything. It's the scrutiny of all of it. It's dealing with legislative bodies. It's dealing with non-affiliates, and then dealing with students, so it ... Unfortunately, I don't think, if these were a hard sell, these jobs, they're a harder sell now, because they're not very much fun.

Instead, Jane, like others, spoke to challenging herself at the Vice-Presidential level at a variety of institutions:

I personally would love to change the type of institution and go back to a more of a, what do you call it, a Research 1 school, and I am thinking that maybe, not in

73

student affairs or in enrollment management traditionally, but more and more jobs are coming up overseeing support of undergraduate education, of these co-curricular, how do we do more to get those high-impact practices going?

The findings for the forth theme of being a women in student affairs spoke to the experiences participants had of reaching the vice presidential level and their future ambitions. Based on the interviews with these participants, a presidency was an option for a select few at the Vice-Presidential level. For most, the Vice Presidency was the highest level they were seeking for their careers either because this was work they liked to do, that is what fit in with the family's lifestyle, or because the presidency was simply not a job they were particularly interested in. None of the participants referred to being a woman as a reason why they would or would not pursue a presidency.

Conclusion

In this chapter, four emergent themes were discussed: (1) mentorship, (2) strategies for advancement, (3) the role of family, and (4) being a woman in the field of student affairs. The participants discussed their career trajectories and ambitions, along with the factors that contributed to decisions. All four themes revealed an overall story about the experiences of these women, including common challenges and strategies for overcoming them.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusions

This study originated with my interest in seeing women reach the highest levels of leadership in any given field. My interest developed and evolved after I watched a video of Sheryl Sandberg's December 10, 2010, Ted Talk, entitled *Why we have too few women leaders.* Within the talk, Sandberg discusses the fact that while women have made progress towards equality, this is not reflected in high-level leadership positions. She also discusses that women need to make tougher decisions between work and lifestyle. The talk made me wonder about the professional field I have chosen in student affairs in higher education. I began to wonder about the leaders at the highest levels of colleges and universities and I realized that up to that point, I had never worked at an institution with a female president nor had I come across many women whose ambitions included a presidency and I wondered - why?

The original idea for my study was to interview women college/university presidents to learn about how they got to where they were, and what the obstacles they faced were. About a year before I started work on the study, I met Dr. Ann Marie Klotz, and learned that is what she had done for her 2014 dissertation *Journey to the Top: Women's paths to the university presidency*. Klotz interviewed current women presidents at institutions of higher education across the United States. She found that gender does influence how women leaders make meaning of their professional experience (Klotz, 2014). I decided to read her dissertation and in doing so, I read her suggestions for future research, in which she suggested learning more about those at the level directly below the presidential level. This study provides an additional layer of understanding and further explores the path of leadership for women in Higher Education.

Summary of Findings

      This study captured the experiences of 10 chief student affairs officers with diverse backgrounds including: years of experience from 17-45 years in the field; racial diversity (white, black and Latina), and familial status (marital, children). At the time of the study, all the participants worked in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions of the United States, and had terminal degrees. These 10 chief student affairs officers have found ways to reach the highest level of the division of student affairs. While their journeys have not always been easy, their stories can serve as a guide for other women in the field that are looking to advance.

      This study was anchored by the research questions, and so I will now return to those questions and respond briefly to each:

Central question: What are the professional trajectories and professional ambitions of women chief student affairs officers?

      The central question seeks to understand the trajectory and professional ambitions of the participants. The interviews provided stories about how the participants got to where they are and what their future careers plans were. With the wide breadth of offices and areas within student affairs, there was no direct path or trajectory to reach the highest levels of student affairs, other than having a variety of experiences along the way. One consistent advancement strategy implemented by all the participants was obtaining a terminal degree.

      There were four areas that emerged in terms of contributing factors to their professional ambitions: their age, changes in the field of student affairs, familial considerations, and views of the presidency. The participants who discussed their ages were referring to the fact that they were approaching retirement age, and would consider that their next step. Those who discussed

the changes in the field of student affairs referred to regulation changes and the increased

demands of student issues, such as mental health. They shared that there had been significant

changes in the field since they first entered. In referring to familial considerations, participants

discussed the ages of their children or their partner's career as things they must consider in

determining what's next along their professional journey.

Sub Question: How do women chief student affairs officers explain their career advancement?

Through the interviews, participants shared the stories of their advancement and the

stumbling blocks along the way. Without provocation, the stories were woven with family

decisions and the needs to balance home and work life. This is consistent with previous literature

that speaks to the needs of women leaders juggling home and work responsibilities (Basinger,

2001; Klotz, 2014).

Sub Question: To what extent do women chief student affairs officers have an interest in

moving up to the presidential level?

A presidency was not the clear and obvious choice for most participants. Most weren't

interested in advancing beyond the vice presidential level. One clearly aspired to a presidential

roll, while others saw it as a possibility they might consider in the future. Although this sample is

relatively small, the findings are consistent with national data that shows that only 16% of

women CSAOs aspire to the college presidency, while 59% do not, and 24% are undecided

(NASPA website, 2016). What this study has added to the quantitative research is a some insight

into the factors that may be contributing to the lack of aspiration to the presidency.

Sub Question: What strategies have women chief student affairs officers implemented for their

career advancement?

Participants implemented several strategies to advance their careers over time. The most consistent was obtaining a terminal degree. Another strategy that was implemented in different ways was knowing when to move on to a new institution. Some participants found opportunities for advancement within a single institutions, while others found that to go on to the next level, they would need to move on to a new place. Finally, a diverse professional portfolio with varied experiences and skillsets were developed by each of the participants. While there doesn't seem to be any single formula of what you need to know to be successful, managing the political landscape of the institution and relationship building were consistently mentioned.

Sub Question: What role, if any, have mentors played in the professional advancement of women chief student affairs officers?

All the participants discussed the important role mentors played and continue to play along their professional trajectory. Many of the mentoring relationships that the participants discussed started from supervisory relationships. This study adds to previous literature that discussed the importance mentorship can play on advancement, by finding that supervisory relationships can be a pipeline to securing a mentor (Blackhurst, 2000b).

While mentorship was discussed at length, three participants also discussed having had sponsors that advocated on their behalf, to connect them to opportunities or supported their advancement. The support of sponsors can sometimes happen without the beneficiary of the sponsorship knowing it is happening, making it more of a challenge to identify and nurture those relationships. But knowing that sponsors exist, can be a helpful tool in nurturing professional relationships in general.

Areas for Future Research

This research looked specifically at the experiences and ambitions of Chief Student Affairs Officers. It adds a branch to the research that had not previously been explored. The research raised attention to areas that can be further investigated. The research shows that 30.1% of college and university presidents are women (Gagliardi et al., 2017). Which leads to the question of the impact having a woman at the helm has for other women at an institution. When I began this research, I had worked at three institutions, none of which had women presidents. It was two years later, that I started to work at an institution with a female president. That same institution also has a woman athletic director (only 30.3% of Division III athletic directors are women [Vollman, n.d.]). Future research should look to see what differences might exist between institutions that have female vs. male presidents.

Another area of further exploration stems from the fact that participants of this study often, found mentoring relationships through current or previous supervisors. Blackhurst, found that only 35% of the study's participants reported having mentors in their current work settings (2000b). It would seem that student affairs professionals should consider who their supervisor will be as they navigate their job searches. A supervisor could become a mentor or perhaps even a sponsor that can foster growth and professional development.

The years of experiences for the participants ranged from 17-45 years in the field. Future research could focus on the "generations" in higher education to see what differences there may be in the experiences of women in the field over time. This question arose from my interview with Donna when she said: "There used to be plenty of vice presidents that retired from a vice president position and would be there for 20 years and things like that. I don't know how realistic that is for Gen Xers. There is a generational twist into it." Another possible generational

component to explore is the fact that all the participants of this study had a doctorate. All the

participants sited a terminal degree as an important point to their advancement, while, NASPA's

Chief Student Affairs Officers Report, sited that only 56% of CSAOs had degrees. It would be

interesting to see if a terminal degree becomes necessary to advance to the CSAO level.

Finally, for a class project, I interviewed male CSAOs to better understand their career

trajectories and ambitions. Unfortunately, it was small scale and didn't require IRB so I can't use

the information to inform this study, but it would be interesting to compare the experiences of

male and female CSAOs. While there is research that looks specifically at female mentoring,

work-life balance, there was little that focused on males, making it challenging to draw

comparisons.

Conclusion and Implication for Practice

This study was inspired by a simple question, "Why are there so few women leaders at

the highest levels of higher education?" The 2017 American College President Reports, confirms

that higher education remains slow to diversity. Only 30.1% of presidencies were held by women

in 2016. Up from 26.4% in 2011 and 23% in 2006.

One of the indirect questions this study explores is whether or not student affairs can

become a pipeline to a university presidency. Based, on the fact, that only one of the participants

saw that as the next step in her career, it does not seem as though the field of student affairs will

serve as a significant pipeline at this time. However, it is the field of student affairs that is seeing

more and more change in the landscape of the profession. Issues that are currently dominating

news coverage of higher education include issues such as Title IX, Violence Against Women Act

(VAWA), and the mental health of students. All of these issues are being addressed under the

leadership of student affairs. Therefore, in the future, it could become a more "relevant" field of study for institutional leadership.

The stories shared from the participants' can hopefully motivate and drive women forward in the ranks of higher education. Although these are distinct stories of 10 individuals in a specific time and place, there are several commonalities that can provide a better understanding of the experiences of Chief Student Affairs Officers which might echo the experiences of women in the academy and may provide a guide for other women to develop and achieve their own professional aspirations.

This research provides insight about the lived experience of the women CSAOs at four-year public institutions in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions of the United States. There is not much research about how women have experienced this professional path. This study provides several important examples of strategies for women who aspire to be leaders in higher education. It also provides stories to the numbers obtained within the broader literature that is available to date.

This research helps to illuminate some of the factors that contribute to the mindset of women rising the ranks of Student Affairs, which leads to implications for future practice:

Mentorship Programs- The National Association of Student Personnel Administration (NASPA) recently developed a more formal mentoring program for women, entitled *Candid Conversations 365* (NASPA website, 2016). Within the program, participants complete a short questionnaire and are paired with a mentor. Each month, the mentors and mentees are provided with a discussion guide on a particular personal/professional development topic (i.e. financial wellness and value-driven goals). While the Chief Student Affairs Officers that participated in

this study all talked about more natural relationships, I am curious to learn more about the long-term outcomes of this more formal program.

Colleges and Universities can and should establish similar programs on campus to help establish supportive communities for potential internal mentors and mentees. Such a program could help professionals to navigate the political climate of their campuses. By making it an institutional initiative, it could also provide a safe space to identify areas or policies that could be improved upon in order to be more supportive. Kosoko-Lasaki, Sonnino & Voytko looked at the mentoring programs of two institutions of higher education in their 2006 study and found the programs to be effective in the short term, siting the need for longer term evaluation.

Train search committees to have a commitment to hiring diverse candidates. Institutions should commit to providing the necessary training and resources to search committees so that diversity in hiring is seen as a necessary and important component in the hiring process. Helping search committees to better understand gender bias (Benokraitis, 1998; Blackhurst, 2000b) can help to decrease the likelihood that it take place in the search. Fraser & Hunt, 2011, have found that training search committee can lead to significant progress in recruiting candidates from underrepresented groups. It is also important that when posting the position, institutions share it with a variety of diverse organizations and job posting sites, to help increase a diverse applicant pool.

Advocate for more women to be at the table. There are many important tables at institutions of higher education including the board of trustees, faculty senate, and the president's cabinet. Professionals at these institutions should advocate that more women be represented in these important spaces. As women continue to have high level of enrollment in institutions the leadership and decision makers of those institutions should reflect that.

As a final point, despite the minimal gains in the number of women leaders in the public and private sectors, there remains much work to do.

References

Acker, J. (2004) Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: a theory of gendered organizations. In M.S. Kimmel & A. Aronson (Eds.), The gendered society reader (2nd ed., pp. 264-277). New York, NYL Oxford University Press.

American College Testing Program, unpublished tabulations, 1987, derived from statistics collected by the U.S. Bureau of the Census; and U.S. Department of Labor, College Enrollment of High School Graduates, various years. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d99/d99t187.asp

August, L. & Waltman, J. (2004). Culture, climate, and contribution. Career satisfaction among female faculty. Research in Higher Education, 45(2), 177-192.

Babcock, L., Laschever, S., Gelfand, M., & Small, D. (2003). Nice girls don't ask. *Harvard Business Review*, *81*(10).

Basinger, J. (2001). Struggling for a Balanced Life as a President. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *47*(33).

Barron, L.A. (2003). Ask and you shall receive? Gender Differences in negotiators' beliefs about requests for a higher salary. *Human Relations*, 56 (6), 635-662.

Bashaw, C. T. (1992). *"We who Live'off on the Edges'": Deans of Women at Southern Coeducational Institutions and Access to the Community of Higher Education, 1907-1960*.

Bender, B. E. (1980). Job satisfaction in student affairs. *NASPA journal*, *18*(2), 2-9.

Benokraitis, N. V. (1998). Working in the ivory basement: Subtle sex discrimination in higher education. *Career strategies for women in academe: Arming Athena*, 3-35.

Bichsel, J., & McChesney, . (February, 2017). The Gender Pay Gap and the Representation of Women in Higher Education Administrative Positions: The Century So Far. Research report. CUPA-HR. Available from: www.cupahr.org/surveys/briefs.aspx.

Biddix, J. P. (2011). "Stepping Stones": Career Paths to the SSAO for Men and Women at Four-Year Institutions. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, *48*(4), 443-461.

Blackhurst, A. E. (2000a). Career satisfaction and perceptions of sex discrimination among women student affairs professionals. *NASPA journal*,*37*(2), 399-413.

Blackhurst, A. (2000b). Effects of mentoring on the employment experiences and career satisfaction of women student affairs administrators. *NASPA journal*, *37*(4), 573-586.

Blackhurst, A., Brandt, J., & Kalinowski, J. (1998). Effects of personal and work-related attributes on the organizational commitment and life satisfactions of women student affairs administrators. *NASPA journal*, *35*(2), 86-99.

Bloomberg, L. D., & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*. Sage Publications.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S.K. (2006). Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theories and Methods, Fifth Edition. Boston, MA. Pearson.

Bornstein, R. (2005). The nature and nurture of presidents. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *52*(11), B10-B11.

Brown, G., Van Ummersen, C., & Sturnick, J. (2001). From Where We Sit: Women's Perspectives on the Presidency. Advancing Women's Leadership I.

Brown, T. M. (2005). Mentorship and the female college president. *Sex Roles*, *52*(9-10), 659-666.

Burns, M. A. (1982). Who leaves the student affairs field? *NASPA journal*, *20*(2), 9-12.

Calhoun, D. W., & Taub, D. J. (2014). Mentor relationships for entry-level men in student affairs. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, *51*(2), 183-194.

Chilly Collective. (1995). Breaking anonymity: The chilly climate for women faculty. Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press.

Chliwniak, L. (1997). Higher education leadership: Analyzing the gender gap. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report*, *25*(4).

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.

Compton, S., & Bierlein Palmer, L. (2009). If you don't ask, you'll never earn what you deserve: Salary negotiation issues among female administrators in higher education. *NASPA Journal about Women in Higher Education*, *2*(1), 169-189.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, *9*(5), 2-14.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

Cullen, D.L. & Luna, G. (1993). Women mentoring in academe: Addressing the gender gap in higher education. Gender and Education, 5(2), 125-137.

West, M. S., & Curtis, J. W. (2006). *AAUP faculty gender equity indicators 2006* (p. 85). Washington, DC: American Association of University Professors.

Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2003). The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. *The leadership quarterly*, *14*(6), 807-834.

Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2007). Through the labyrinth: The truth about how women become leaders. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Easterly, D.M. & Ricard, C.S. (2011). Conscious efforts to end unconscious bias: Why Women leave academic research. *Journal of Research Administration*, 62, 61-73.

Fitzgerald, T. (2014). Women leaders in higher education: Shattering the myths. London, UK: Routledge.

Fraser, G. J., & Hunt, D. E. (2011). Faculty diversity and search committee training: Learning from a critical incident. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 4*(3), 185-198.

Gagliardi, J. S., Espinosa, L. L., Turk, J. M., & Taylor, M. (2017) American College President Study 2017. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Harrow, A. J. (1993). Power and politics: The leadership challenge. *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration*, 141-158.

Hall, R. M., & Sadler, B. R. (1982). The classroom climate: A chilly one for women? Washington, DC: Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges.

Hamrick, F.A., & Carlisle, L.W. (1990). Gender diversity in student affairs: Administrative perceptions and recommendations. *NASPA Journal*, 27 (4), 306-311.

Havice, P. A., & Williams, F. K. (2005). Achieving balance: Lessons learned from university and college presidents. *College Student Affairs Journal*,*24*(2), 128.

Husu, L. (2000). Gender discrimination in the promised land of gender equality. *Higher Education in Europe*, *25*(2), 221-228.

Jablonski, M. (2000). The leadership challenges for women as college presidents. In J. Glazer-Raymo et al. (Eds.), Women in higher education: A feminist perspective (pp. 98-121). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Jette, D. U., Grover, L., & Keck, C. P. (2003). A qualitative study of clinical decision making in recommending discharge placement from the acute care setting. *Physical Therapy*, *83*(3), 224-236.

Jones, S. J., & Komives, S. R. (2001). Contemporary issues of women as senior student affairs officers. Women administrators in higher education: Historical and contemporary perspectives, 231-248.

Jones, S. J., Warnick, E. M., & Taylor, C. M. (2015). Identification of Institutional Genderedness through Organizational Operations: An Analysis of Community College Working Environments. *NASPA Journal About Women in Higher Education*, *8*(1), 1-16.

Keim, M.C. (1991). Student personnel preparation programs: A longitudinal study. NASPA Journal, 28(3), 231-242.

Kim, Y. M., & Cook, B. J. (2013). *On the pathway to the presidency 2013: Characteristics of higher education's senior leadership*. American Council on Education.

King, J. E., & Gomez, G. G. (2008). *On the pathway to the presidency: Characteristics of higher education's senior leadership*. American Council on Education.

Klenke, K. (1996), *Women and Leadership: A Contextual Perspective*, Springer, New York, NY.

Klotz, A. (2014). The journey to the top: Women's paths to the university presidency. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). DePaul University, Illinois.

Komives, S.R., Lucas, N., & McMahon, T.R. (1998). Exploring Leadership: For College Students Who Want to Make a Difference. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.

Komives, S. R., & Woodward, D. B. (2003). Student services: A handbook for the profession.

Kosoko-Lasaki, O., Sonnino, R. E., & Voytko, M. L. (2006). Mentoring for women and underrepresented minority faculty and students: experience at two institutions of higher education. *Journal of the national medical association*, *98*(9), 1449.

LaPan, C., Hodge, C., Peroff, D., & Henderson, K. A. (2013). Female Faculty in Higher Education: The Politics of Hope? *Schole*, *28*(2).

Lapovsky, L. (April 13, 2014) Why So Few Women College Presidents? *Forbes.com*. retrieved from web on 14 Dec. 2016.

Landau, J. C., Shamir, B., & Arthur, M. B. (1992). Predictors of willingness to relocate for managerial and professional employees. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *13*(7), 667-680.

Leibbrandt, A., & List, J. A. (2014). Do women avoid salary negotiations? Evidence from a large-scale natural field experiment. *Management Science*, *61*(9), 2016-2024.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (Vol. 75). Sage.

Lockridge, K. A. (1974). *Literacy in colonial New England: An enquiry into the social context of literacy in the early modern West*. New York: Norton.

Love, P. (2003, September). Considering a Career in Student Affairs. Retrieved November 22, 2016, from http://www.myacpa.org/considering -career-student-affairs

Lucas, C. J. (2006). American higher education: A history. *Palgrave Macmillan*.

MacDonald, E. (2002). Gender theory and the academy overview. In A. M. Martinez Aleman & K.A. Renn, Women in Higher Education: An encyclopedia (pp. 71-76). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Madsen, S. R. (2007). Learning to lead in higher education: Insights into the family backgrounds of women university presidents. *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership*, *5*(3), 183-200.

Manning, K. (1999). Giving voice to critical campus issues: Qualitative research in student affairs. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Martinez Aleman, A. M., & Renn, K. A. (2002). Women in Higher Education: An Encyclopedia. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Marshall, S.M. (2009). Women higher education administrators with children: Negotiating personal and professional lives. *NASPA Journal about Women in Higher Education*, 2, 188-221.

Mason, J. (2002). Qualitative researching. *London: Sage, 2nd edition, ISBN 0*, *7619*(7428), 8.

Mavin, S. (2009). Navigating the labyrinth: senior women managing emotion. *International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion*, *3*(1), 81-87.

McDonagh, K. J., & Paris, N. M. (2012). The leadership labyrinth: Career advancement for women. *Frontiers of health services management*, *28*(4), 22-28.

Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. Jossey-Bass Inc. Pub.

McClellan, G.S. & Stringer, J. (2015). The Handbook of Student Affairs Administration. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass

McEwen, M. K., Engstrom, C. M., & Williams, T.E. (1990). Gender diversity within the student affairs profession . *Journal of College Student Development*, *31*(1), 47-53.

McEwen, M. K., Williams, T.E., & Engstrom, C. M. (1991). Feminization in Student Affairs: A Qualitative Investigation. *Journal of College Student Development*, *32*(5), 440-46.

Merriam, S. B (Ed.). (2002). Qualitative research in practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Morrison, A. (1987) Breaking the glass ceiling: Can women reach the top of America's largest corporations? Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Muñoz, M. (2009) In their own words and y the numbers: A mixed Methods Study of Latina Community College Presidents. Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 34:1-2, 153-174

NASPA.org N.p., n.d. The Chief Student Affairs Officer. naspa.org/careers/chief-student-affairs-officer retrieved on November 21, 2016

NASPA.org N.p., n.d. Candid Conversations 365. naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/center-for-women/initiatives/CC365 retrieved on December 2, 2016

National Center for Education Statistics [NCES]. (2016)."Digest of Educational Statistics 2015," U.S. Department of Education, Washington D.C. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/

Nidiffer, J. (2001a). Crumbs from the boy's table: The first century of coeducation. *Women administrators in higher education: Historical and contemporary perspectives*, 13-34.

Nidiffer, J. (2001b). Women administrators in higher education: Historical and contemporary perspectives. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Patitu, C. L., & Hinton, K. G. (2003). The experiences of African American women faculty and administrators in higher education: Has anything changed? *New Directions for Student Services*, *2003*(104), 79-93.

Phelps Tobin, C.E. (1998). Recruiting and retaining qualified graduate students In N.J. Evans & C.E. Phelps Tobin (Eds.), The state of the art of preparation and practice in student affairs; Another look (pp. 83-104). Washington, DC: American College Personnel Association.

Phillippe, K. A., and Tekle, R. 2013. Pending CEO retirements. *Data Points*.

Pierce, S. (2011). *On being presidential: A guide for college and university leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Ragins, B. R., & Sundstrom, E. (1989). Gender and power in organizations: A longitudinal perspective. *Psychological bulletin*, *105*(1), 51.

Reeves, M. E. (1975). An Analysis of Job Satisfaction of Women Administrators in Higher Education. *Journal of the NAWDAC*.

Reid, P.T., Cole, E., & Kern, M.L. (2011) Wives of College and University Presidents: Identity, Privacy and Relationships. Psychology of Women Quarterly, 35 (4), 547-557

Reynolds, C. (2002). Women and school leadership: International perspectives. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Rich, A. (2000). Toward a women-centered university. In J. Glazer-Raymo et al. (Eds.), Women in higher education: A feminist perspective (pp. 77 – 101). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Bernard, R. H. (1988). Research methods in cultural anthropology. *Qualitative and*.

Sagaria. M., & Johnsrud, A. (1985). Administrative mobility and gender: Patterns and processes in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education*, 59 (3), 305-326.

Sagaria, M. A. D., & Johnsrud, L. K. (1988). Mobility within the Student Affairs Profession: Career Advancement through Position Change. *Journal of College Student Development*, *29*(1), 30-40.

Sandberg, S. (2010, December 21). Sheryl Sandberg: Why we have too few women leaders [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/sheryl_sandberg_why_we_have_too_few_women_leaders.html

Sandberg, S. (2013). Lean In: Women, work, and the will to lead. New York, NY: Random House.

Sattin-Bajaj, C. (2015, December 10). Reliability & Credibility in Qualitative Research. Lecture presented in ELMP 8986 Qualitative Research Methods.

Sederberg, N., & Mueller, C. (1992). Career Paths of Women Administrators: The Intersection of Work and Family.

Scalon, K.C. (1997). Mentoring women administrators: Breaking the class ceiling. *Initiatives*, 58(2), 39-59.

Schmidt, J. A., & Wolfe, J. S. (2009). The mentor partnership: Discovery of professionalism. *NASPA Journal*, *46*(3), 371-381.

Smith, A. A. (May 20, 2016) Tension at the Top. Inside Higher Ed, retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/05/20/many-community-college-presidencies-are-upheaval on April 4, 2016.

Sponsler, B. A., & Wesaw, A. J. (2014). The chief student affairs officer: Responsibilities, opinions, and professional pathways.

Song, W., & Hartley III, H. V. (2012). A Study of Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities. *Council of Independent Colleges*.

Street, S., Kimmel, E., & Kromrey, J. (1996). Gender Role Preferences and Perceptions of University Students, Faculty, and Administrators. *Research in Higher Education, 37*(5), 615-632.

Talbot, D. (1996). Master's students' perspectives on their graduate education regarding issues of diversity. NASPA Journal, 33(3), 163-178.

Tannen, D. (1995). The Power of Talk: Who gets heard and why. Harvard Business Review, 73, 138-148.

Taub, D.J., & McEwen, M.K. (2006). Decision to enter the profession of student affairs. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47 (2), 206-2017.

Tinsley, A. (1985). Upward Mobility for Women Administrators. *Journal of the National Association of Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors*,*49*(1), 3-11.

Title 20 U.S.C. Section 1681-1688.

Touchton, J. G., Shavlik, D. L., & Davis, L. (1993). *Women in Presidencies: A Descriptive Study of Women College & University Presidents*. American Council on Education, Office of Women in Higher Education.

Townsend, B.K. & Mason, S.O. (1990) Career paths of graduates of higher education doctoral programs. *Review of Higher Education*, 14 (1), 63-81.

Trix, F., & Psenka, C. (2003). Exploring the color of glass: Letters of recommendation for female and male medical faculty. *Discourse & Society*, *14*(2), 191-220.

Trotter, R. T. (2012). Qualitative research sample design and sample size: Resolving and unresolved issues and inferential imperatives. *Preventive medicine*, *55*(5), 398-400.

Twale, D. J., & Jelinek, S. M. (1996). Protégés and mentors: Mentoring experiences of women student affairs professionals. *NASPA journal*, *33*(3), 203-217.

University of Denver. (2013) Benchmarking Women's Leadership in the United States. Denver, CO: University of Denver Colorado Women's College. http://www.womenscollege.du.edu/media/documents/ newbwl.pdf.

United States Department of Education. (2012). *Digest of education statistics, 2011*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2012001

Valian, V. (2005). Beyond gender schemas: Improving the advancement of women in academia. *Hypatia*, *20*(3), 198-213.

Vollman, A. (n.d.) Female Athletic Directors: A Scarese but Positive Influence. Retrieved from http://www.insightintodiversity.com/female-athletic-directors-a-scarce-but-positive-influence/

Wade, M.E. (2001). Women and Salary Negotiation: The Costs of Self-Advocacy. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 25, (1), 65-76.

Williams, D. A. (2014), Organizational Learning as a Framework for Overcoming Glass Ceiling Effects in Higher Education. New Directions for Institutional Research, 2013: 75–84.

APPENDIX 1 INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Name:_____ Date/Time:_____

Tell me about your duties/functions/responsibilities at your institution.

      Can you walk me through a typical day/week?

How did you get started in this field?

Can you walk me through your resume and tell me about the jobs and experiences that have

led you to your present position?

What particular hard and soft skills are important to be an effective university leadership?

      How did you come to develop your skills?

What role, if any, has mentorship played on your professional career path?

      How did that relationship come to be?

Can you tell me about the biggest professional challenges have you faced along your career

path?

      How, if at all, has your being a women effected your professional advancement?

What's next for you on your career path?

What advice would you give to someone who is looking to become a university leader?

APPENDIX 2 DEMOGRAPHIC OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

Request copy of resume or CV

Number of years in current role

Number of years in current institution

Number of years in the field of student affairs.

Race/Ethnicity

Marital Status

Number of Children

SETON HALL ▦ UNIVERSITY.

1 8 5 6

May 10, 2017

Mariel Pagan

Dear Ms. Pagan,

The Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board has reviewed the information you have submitted addressing the concerns for your proposal entitled "Career Trajectory and Ambitions of Women Chief Student Affairs Officers". Your research protocol is hereby approved as revised through expedited review. The IRB reserves the right to recall the proposal at any time for full review.

Enclosed for your records are the signed Request for Approval form and the stamped original Consent Form. Make copies only of these forms.

The Institutional Review Board approval of your research is valid for a one-year period from the date of this letter. During this time, any changes to the research protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

According to federal regulations, continuing review of already approved research is mandated to take place at least 12 months after this initial approval. You will receive communication from the IRB Office for this several months before the anniversary date of your initial approval.

Thank you for your cooperation.

In harmony with federal regulations, none of the investigators or research staff involved in the study took part in the final decision.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Ruzicka, Ph.D.
Professor
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Dr. Robert Kelchen

A   H O M E   F O R   T H E   M I N D,   T H E   H E A R T   A N D   T H E   S P I R I T