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FROM THE EDITOR
The Need for Assessment

Dr. Douglas Lindsay, Editor in Chief, *JCLD*

Assessment. It is a word that evokes different responses from those that hear it. To some, it is a hallmark of accountability where we can validate what we are doing (i.e., programs, processes, etc.). To others, it is a nice thing to have, but not seen as a core function. Still others see it as a bridge too far, and either too difficult to undertake or they just don't have the time and resources to adequately do it. As a result, the leadership and character development landscape is littered with good ideas, underperforming (or failed) programs, missed opportunities, disconnected success, confusion, etc. This creates a minefield for those attempting to understand assessment and a desire to determine the efficacy of what they are doing. In order to provide guidance on the topic of assessment in the areas of character and leadership development, this issue is focused squarely on examining that topic by looking at what assessment looks like, what should be considered, why it is important and other critical questions. The goal with this issue is to highlight several examples of assessment that are being done so that character and leader developers can see where their programs and processes could be further enhanced with intentional assessment.

Intentional assessment, however, will be impacted by a host of dynamics and those influences are consequential to any assessment program. In order to bring some clarity to this dynamic, there are several propositions to consider with respect to assessment. As you go through this issue, keep these in mind as a guide to see how the researchers/ program developers have accounted for them in their own assessment paradigms. They also serve as good reminders for us as we develop our own assessment strategies.

Douglas Lindsay, Ph.D., is the Editor in Chief of the *Journal of Character and Leadership Development (JCLD)*. Prior to assuming his current role, he was a Professor and the founding Director of the Masters of Professional Studies Program in the Psychology of Leadership at Pennsylvania State University. He also served in the United States Air Force where he retired after a 22-year career, serving in a multitude of roles, including research psychologist, occupational analyst, inspector general, deputy squadron commander, senior military professor, Full Professor, deputy department head and research center director. He has over well over 125 publications and presentations on the topics of leadership and leadership development. He received a Bachelor's Degree from the United States Air Force Academy, a Master's Degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio, and a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Pennsylvania State University.

Proposition 1: Assessment is difficult, but that doesn't absolve us from our responsibility. It is common to hear that assessment is hard, takes too long, is expensive, and isn't always conclusive. While that may be the case, it is our obligation to make sure that the programs, education, and training that we do have value. This is not just important to the organization (who is enabling the effort), but also to ensure that we aren't wasting our personnel's time. Providing something is not always better than doing nothing. So, just because we are sending personnel to training programs and workshops, that doesn't mean it is translating into increased performance and development once they return. Bottom line: If we are undergoing some sort of leader development effort, it is our duty to assess what the outcomes of that developmental efforts are to the organization and our personnel.

Proposition 2: Build in assessment from the beginning, or you will fight inertia later on. This is a key derailer to many assessment efforts. When assessment is programmed in from the beginning, it becomes an integral part of the effort. It is resourced appropriately and is a fundamental part of the program. Too often, if a program has been ongoing for quite some time and assessment is later inserted into the program, there can be resistance. For example, if a program has been ongoing for a number of years, and all of a sudden assessment is determined necessary, then there could be resistance from program personnel as to why all of a sudden it is important. This not only goes for programs that have no assessment and want to add some, it also applies to programs that may have been relying on simplistic (i.e., affect only such as "How did you enjoy the program?") or inappropriate assessment methods. In addition, people also get attached to programs, regardless of their actual value.

Proposition 3: Assessment is a process and not a one-time event. Often, questions will arise about a developmental effort and leadership or stakeholders want to see how the program is doing. It is very tempting to try to take a snapshot of a program and use that to infer how the program is doing and has been doing. While snapshots in time may give an idea of what is happening at that moment, it does not allow for the long term (longitudinal) assessment of the effort. A single point in time could be impacted by a host of contextual factors that may be having an immediate effect on the program, but may not speak to the longer term benefits of the program.

Proposition 4: Assessment = Accountability. In Proposition 1, it was mentioned that assessment is our responsibility. Added to that notion is the fact that assessment is important because it holds us accountable for our programs and practices. It helps the organization to determine if programs have value (i.e., having a direct impact on the organization through better performance, decreased turnover, more engagement, increased skills, etc.). Since developmental efforts take place over time and can be resource intensive, it is important to be able to assess if the program is

Without intentional assessment, the accountability of the developmental program is at risk.

delivering on its promises. This information can be used by leadership to determine if a course correction is needed or if a different program is warranted. Since there are a host of contextual factors that impact the organizations, what was needed 10 years ago may not be needed today based on the changing environment or the availability of personnel. Without intentional assessment, the accountability of the developmental program is at risk.

Proposition 5: Understand what you are trying to assess. There are many choices to make when you select an assessment method. It is critical to understand why

you make certain choices, as it will have consequences on the information you are able to obtain from the assessment. In theory, all developmental efforts are done to serve the organizational mission or vision. They are done to increase the chances of the organization being able to do what it says it will do. For example, if the organization is developed around teams as the functional part of the organization, there may be a need to provide training and development around the use of teams. Following that, there is a need to determine if the training that you selected is giving you the desired team-based results. Such an approach will drive the assessment strategy that you choose. As another example, it is common to see an organization shift their focus, but not have the necessary processes in place to support and reward the new focus. Over time, this will impact the organization's ability to accomplish its mission. If we view assessment as a core function of what we do, then when changes are made, it provides a baseline for either what is needed (gap analysis) or what is going well. This allows for evidence-based approaches to development. When we consider character and leadership development, this is critical.

Proposition 6: <u>Every assessment effort involves tradeoffs, you have to decide which ones you are willing to accept.</u> Following this idea, some questions to consider are:

1. Will you be hosting the assessment efforts internally or externally?
2. Do you have the staff to do the assessment work or is that a new competency that must be hired to?
3. How will the assessment fit into the overall developmental program of the organization?
4. What information is needed?
5. Will you develop your own assessment measures or will you look to industry standards for the assessments?
6. How many resources do you have to put toward assessment?

While not an exhaustive list of all of the questions that you must address, the answer to these (and other related questions) will help frame what will be practical in your approach to assessment? George Box, a renowned statistician once wrote "Since all models are wrong the scientist must be alert to what is importantly wrong. It is inappropriate to be concerned about mice when there are tigers abroad." (1976, p. 792). The advice for us is while we may not be able to develop a "perfect" approach, that doesn't mean that we can't attempt to answer some of the questions that we need to know about our developmental efforts.

Proposition 7: <u>Context will impact the assessment effort.</u> What is the context in which the assessment effort will occur? As mentioned earlier, it is important to understand the context in which the assessment will be enacted. If it is a new program (with a concurrent assessment effort), the culture of the organization can have a large impact on the long term viability of the program. If it is a new requirement within the existing organization, it is important to determine what key stakeholders and leverage points in the organization understand about the effort. At a minimum, the leadership of the organization needs to address and support the effort as they will help to set the tone for how the effort will be received. A well intentioned program, with no perceived value within the organization, can produce less than desired results and could result in negative feelings (e.g., cynicism, apathy, etc.) toward current and future training and developmental programs.

These propositions are not intended to be all inclusive. They are offered as starting guidelines to help shape your assessment efforts. It is likely that you have a few of your own that you have gleaned from your past experiences. Much like most endeavors, thoughtful contemplation at the outset can save a significant amount of time and resources at implementation if time is taken to understand what is needed, what is known, and how assessment can support that thinking.

In This Issue

As previously mentioned, assessment poses challenges for those attempting to measure character and leadership development. However, that should not dissuade our efforts. This issue of the JCLD with the focus on assessment, is a chance to illuminate the breadth of work that is going on with respect to assessment. However, a caveat must be made. While certain techniques and programs are highlighted in this issue, it is not our intent to validate one approach over another. As will be evident as you read through the different approaches contained herein, there is no single model, technique, or approach that will serve as a panacea for every assessment effort. There are a host of decisions that must be made in any attempt at assessment. That said, this issue is an effort to show how some people are tackling the assessment of character and leadership development in their organizations. If you have follow up questions about any of the articles, please feel free to reach out to the authors. A foundational intent of the JCLD is to help foster dialogue between all those interested in the development of character and leadership. Part of meeting that intent is building a network of people who can inform what we know and what we are doing.

To start out the issue, the first article is a conversation with two senior leadership experts, Dr Robert Kaiser and Dr. John Brothers. In the discussion, they discuss several challenges that assessors face and why many attempts at assessment do not provide the desired results. They offer a thoughtful perspective on how one can approach the idea of assessment and what you need to consider or what they refer to as active ingredients of successful assessment. This advice is gleaned from years of experience looking at leadership assessment across different domains. They wrap up the dialogue discussing how leadership developers should really be looking at Return on Learning (ROL) versus Return on Investment (ROI).

Following the conversation is a series of papers that describe assessment approaches from an organizational (or system) perspective. The first of these is a combined approach by scholars from the United States Military Academy (West Point) and Tufts University that examines a multi-year, multi-disciplinary, integrated assessment effort. The authors describe their developmental approach to assessing character virtue development for cadets as they matriculate through West Point. The authors insightfully describe their approach, associated challenges, and how you can understand character development in an educational setting.

The next article by Ryan Brown and Labena Varghese describes an approach to assessment that has been implemented in the Ann & John Doerr Institute for New Leaders at Rice University. After discussing

> *...there is no single model, technique, or approach that will serve as a panacea for every assessment effort.*

the general lack of student developmental assessment among universities claiming to develop leaders, they describe what they have been doing in order to use an evidence based approach to assess how they develop leaders across Rice University. They explain their approach and present preliminary evidence on the efficacy of their approach.

The next article focusing on the organizational level is by faculty from Auburn University and Air University. They describe a multiyear effort where they will validate and assess an Ethical Leadership Framework (ELF). The foundation of the ELF is the idea that all leadership is within an ethical context. Once validation, and necessary adjustments are made, it will serve as the foundation for evaluating curriculum across the entire Air University enterprise. They describe a methodical process whereby they will

integrate alignment into their processes so the ELF will inform all instruction and curriculum development.

Following the organizational level of analysis, the next article was a joint collaboration between the Deans of the Preparatory Schools at West Point, the Air Force Academy, and the Naval Academy with the support of a colleague from Princeton University. They describe the purpose of the Military Service Academy Preparatory Schools and how they each approach assessment. By explaining different assessment methods at the student, program, and organizational levels, they highlight their integrated approaches to evaluate the accomplishment of their respective missions. Through this description, they provide an in depth look into these important preparatory schools.

The final article at the organizational level is a discussion by an interdisciplinary team at the Air Force Academy that takes a macro view of development around a discussion of surviving versus thriving. Citing developmental research, they discuss how a traditional military approach to training focused on surviving could be supported by inclusion of aspects of thriving. They postulate that this combination (elements of surviving and thriving) which would be supported by rigorous assessment, not only develops leaders who "understand what it takes to survive challenging situations, to persevere through adversity and to have the grit necessary to achieve challenging long-term goals," it also develops in leaders the capacity to thrive and help instill that in their followers. Using assessment, they advocate that it is possible to understand the right balance between thriving and surviving.

The issue then moves on to several articles that take more specific approaches on assessment at the program, course, and empirical levels. This section starts off with Robert Reimer, Paul Taggart, and Ben Chapman who examine the effects of a practicum experience within a Leadership and Counselling Master's Program. They begin with a discussion of how using a combination of individual and contextual factors can be leveraged to help inform leadership development approaches. They follow this with the examination of how practicum (an experiential learning intervention) can be used to supplement traditional educational approaches. They finish with a qualitative explanation of how practicum was introduced into an educational program to supplement learning and leadership development.

As another example of assessment at the program level, Matthew Davidson and Vladimir Khmelkov from the Excellence with Integrity Institute discuss their approach to assessment through understanding organizational culture with the intent of creating assessment for development. They describe their approach and how it has been successfully implemented in several organizations, especially within the context of university sports teams to see the impact of culture and character on performance.

Next, we get a snapshot at the academic course level through a description of a novel approach implemented by Tony Andenoro, JoAnna Wasserman, and Jake Newsome. Through a partnership between the University of Florida and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, they have developed a holistic model of moral decision making. The approach uses instructors, facilitators from the Museum, historical artifacts from the Holocaust, and symposia to provide an integrated educational experience. In the article, they not only describe the program, they also discuss their approach to assessment and how they are looking at the validity of the program to impact leader decision making.

The final article is an empirical examination of moral maturity by Dana Born, William Hendrix, and Justin Hartley. The article is a traditional empirical look at the relationship between the constructs of moral reasoning

and moral excellence. With the prevalence of different constructs present in the literature, they are examining the relationship between these two constructs and how they relate to moral maturity.

As previously mentioned, the goal of this issue on assessment is not to cover every aspect of assessment as it relates to character and leadership development. Instead, the goal is to expose aspects of assessment at different levels in order to show the breadth of work that is being done in the field. It is our hope that through these articles, you will see elements that relate to questions you (or your organization) are asking about understanding how you are doing with respect to development. As we all know about development, it is a continual endeavor and we hope that this issue helps you on your journey to more fully understand character and leadership development through intentional assessment.

Looking Ahead

This issue wraps up the first year of the JCLD. We have been encouraged by the support and the exposure that the Journal has received. As stated in the initial issue, we want to facilitate the discussion and understanding surrounding the development of character and leadership across all domains. As we look toward the future, we will continue publishing issues that help out in that understanding. The upcoming issue in October will focus on interviews with thought leaders across different domains (military, business, academic, sports, non-profit, etc.). The previous interviews that we have published have done a great job of facilitating dialogue and understanding by having in depth discussions about individuals and their experiences with leadership and character. They haven't simply been "Do what I did" recaps of people's careers but real conversations about the role and importance of character and leadership in their lives. This deeper level discussion is one that is typically missed in a traditional academic journal but is vitally necessary when we are examining

development. If you have any feedback on how we are doing or how we can continue to examine leadership and character development, please feel free to reach out at jcld@usafa.edu.

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VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

Raising the Bar in Leadership Development

Robert B. Kaiser, Kaiser Leadership Solutions

John Brothers, University of North Carolina

Interviewed By: Douglas Lindsay

Lindsay: Could you please share your views on the current state of leadership and leader development?

Kaiser: The armed services provide a microcosm: The U.S. military is the best in the world. It may not, however, still be doing the best job of developing leaders. Good is good, but is it good enough? A growing number of people are calling attention to serious systemic issues with today's leadership culture and management of talent from the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Tom Kane, a former Air Force officer and author of Bleeding Talent; and the military writer, Thomas Ricks, to name just three.[1]

The same is true in industry: America has the largest economy in the world, and American management is widely regarded as the gold standard. But there are signs of trouble. Most companies believe they have a leadership gap that is getting wider. Succession and future-ready leaders are top concerns for most CEOs and HR/talent leaders. Part of it is labor economics: There just aren't enough good, seasoned leaders to go around. But there is also more to it.

Lindsay: What else is going on?

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[1] Shanker, T. (2013, April 13). Conduct at issue as military officers face a new reality. *New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/14/us/militarys-top-officers-face-review-of-their-character.html
Kane, T. (2012). *Bleeding Talent: How the U.S. military nismanages great leaders and why it's time for a revolution.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.
Ricks, T. E. (2012, Oct.). Whatever happened to accountability? *Harvard Business Review, 90*(10), 93-98, 100, 130.

Robert B. Kaiser, M.S., is the president of Kaiser Leadership Solutions and the editor-in-chief of Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research. He began his career at the Center for Creative Leadership in the early 1990s and then became a partner in the boutique executive-development firm, Kaplan DeVries Inc. He's assessed thousands of executives, coached hundreds of leaders and their teams, and designed and delivered scores of leadership programs for companies around the world. He's also a prolific researcher and writer, with six books and over 200 articles, book chapters, and professional presentations.

Kaiser: The last national poll by the Harvard Kennedy School reported that 70% of Americans believe we have a leadership crisis and that the country will decline unless we get better leaders. This isn't just a symptom of today's polarized politics, it's part of an alarming trend. The Harris Poll conducts an annual survey to measure how confident the American people are in the leaders of major institutions such as local and national government, the military, small businesses, big business, and Wall Street. Since the mid-1990s the proportion of people reporting at least some confidence has steadily dropped from around 90% to 60%. We've all seen the engagement figures, or rather *dis*engagement figures. People are disenchanted with their leaders.

A leadership crisis has been building for a couple decades, and it seems to be reaching a tipping point.

Brothers: At the same time the leadership industry has become big business. The last industry report by Bersin estimated annual spending on leadership development in the U.S. at about $24 billion.[2] This includes internal training programs, vendor-provided custom- and open-enrollment programs, executive education, executive coaching, online courses, and so on. Leadership and management represent the largest category in corporate learning and development budgets.

Leadership has been a steady growth industry—even through the global financial crisis of 2008 and its aftermath. Discretionary spending on people is usually the first to go in an economic downturn. But annual spend on leadership development has tripled the last 25 years.

Kaiser: And here's the rub: There's hardly any evidence that all of this money—not to mention time, effort, and energy—is improving leadership. Spending has tripled while confidence has dropped by about a third. Some might say we are spending more in response to a decline in leadership, but the macroeconomic data do not support that interpretation. Gordy Curphy, a former associate professor at the Air Force Academy, and I analyzed spending on leadership development and the Harris poll data on confidence in leadership since 1995. The pattern shows that confidence declines *after* an increase in spending on development, not before it.[3]

It is an open secret that leadership development isn't working very well. Most organizations do not believe their leadership programs are very effective.

Lindsay: We've been at leadership development for a long time. Why isn't it working better?

Brothers: For one thing, the world has changed. In the 20th century, command-and-control hierarchies

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2   Bersin, J. (2014). *Corporate Learning Factbook*. Oakland, CA: Bersin & Associates.

3   Kaiser, R. B., & Curphy, G. (2013). Leadership development: The failure of an industry and opportunities for consulting psychology. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 65,* 294-302.

John Brothers is the executive director of Design and Client Engagement at University of North Carolina Executive Development, where he works with a wide variety of clients to design and deliver impactful leadership and executive-development programs to meet the specific needs of organizations. John has built cross-functional Human Resources, talent, and organizational-development teams and strategies across various industries. Prior to joining UNC Executive Development, John was a Human Resources leader at Walmart eCommerce and Technology, PNC Financial Services, and Bank of America. He has extensive experience partnering with organizations to design enterprise-wide talent initiatives, build capability, and improve effectiveness.

worked for communication efficiency in the military and for economies of scale in industry. But the 21st century is a flatter, decentralized, and networked world where technologies have made instant, multidirectional communication possible at scale and have increased the velocity of change to levels we've never seen. It calls for a different approach to leadership, and different ways of learning it.

Lindsay: Do you really mean leadership is fundamentally different today?

Brothers: Good question. Let me clarify. Leadership is leadership: The same sorts of characteristics, behaviors, skills, and processes constitute leadership in most times and places. But their relative emphasis and importance may shift with context.

> *...even if they are designed within a modern paradigm, not all leadership training and development efforts are created, or executed, equal.*

For example, there is always a place for both empowerment and decisive, unilateral decision-making. But the hierarchical 20th-century leadership culture put more emphasis on strong, decisive authority, whereas modern leadership emphasizes a more collaborative, experimental, and agile approach. Even today, however, there is a time and place for unilateral decisions—for instance, in a crisis or the heat of battle.

Kaiser: I would add that today's fast-changing, disruptive operating environment puts an even higher premium on the ability of leaders to toggle through different approaches and apply the right one at the right time. This was the essence of the situational theories from the 1960s and 70s—those models that prescribed what leadership style was best for different scenarios.

Our team has been assessing, developing, and studying versatile leadership since the 1990s. There has been a correlation with effectiveness since the beginning, but that correlation has gotten stronger over the years. In recent samples, versatility accounts for about half of what it means to be considered an effective executive—it's evidently really, really important in a VUCA world.

Brothers: Context matters in another way, too. It shapes what competencies and skills look like in action. For instance, leaders who can capitalize on the latest technology always have an advantage. The first cavemen who made the move from throwing rocks to spears were more successful. Today, technology skills provide a great advantage in terms of leveraging the digital tools of the Internet age. So technological agility has always mattered, and today that means digital expertise.

Lindsay: What about teaching and developing leadership? Do you think we know how to do it well?

Kaiser: Yes, but even if they are designed within a modern paradigm, not all leadership training and development efforts are created, or executed, equal. This was shown in a couple of recent meta-analyses, in which hundreds of primary studies were reviewed and overall trends were analyzed.

The first thing they showed is that the impact of leadership-development interventions is rarely studied. The researchers had to go back to the early 1900s to scrape up 200 studies—that's less than two per year, even though there are thousands of programs delivered annually! The data showed two-thirds of these programs had a positive outcome of some sort.[4] In other words, a

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4   Avolio, B. J., Reichard, R. J., Hannah, S. T., Walumbwa, F. O., & Chan, A. (2009). A meta-analytic review of leadership impact research: Experimental and quasi-experimental studies. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20, 764 –784.*

third did not.[5] Because programs that are systematically evaluated and written up are probably better designed and implemented than the many, many more that are not, the failure rate is probably a lot higher than one in three.

On the other hand, another meta-analysis looked at the effectiveness of the different components of development interventions leadership training and development, isolating those associated with a positive impact.[6] It was a really well done and important piece of work that identified several active ingredients that provide an evidence-based approach to designing effective leadership development.

Lindsay: What are these active ingredients?

Kaiser: First, start with the end in mind: Do a systematic analysis of what participants need to learn and what stakeholder definitions of success are and build to that. The design should include a range of training methods, combining various ways to present information like lectures, readings, videos, and experiential learning; provide examples of what good looks like through demonstrations and role models; and, most importantly, provide opportunities to practice in role-plays, simulations, and projects. And be sure to provide feedback as participants practice so they can fine-tune.

Next, space the program out over time, so that the participants can learn the content in class, apply it back on the job, then in the next class reflect on how it went, and adjust as needed. The iterative cycle of action and reflection is key to making behavior change stick, and the classroom provides a great place to reflect. And

again, provide feedback to reinforce and course-correct the learning process.

The content matters too. Including a mix of hard skills—such as business processes and management techniques—and soft skills—like leadership, relationships, and self-management—improves the transfer of learned content back to the job. Interestingly, it's the soft skills that are most highly related to improved results, because they are needed to apply the hard skills effectively.

Faculty can be either internal to the organization or external—the research shows both are effective. And a mix may be ideal: senior leaders for credibility, sponsorship, and accountability; internal talent professionals for a support bridge back to work; and external trainers for expertise and objectivity. Try to avoid or minimize self-directed learning—it is much less effective. After all, humans are social learners, and oftentimes we don't know what we don't know until we try to explain it to others.

Finally, the research shows that designing leadership programs in collaboration with an outside expert improves impact—for instance, by keeping things fresh, up to date, and based on evidence.

The know-how is there for doing development right. But the field suffers from a knowing gap: Many development professionals just don't know the research. It's really hard as a practitioner to keep up with the science. And there is also a knowing-doing gap. Even those who know better sometimes cut corners, rely on "best practices" because everyone else is doing it, or defer to stakeholders who are beholden to the latest fad. Some people in HR and talent management feel powerless to advocate for better practices supported by research. It is a special skill to make the case with a command of the science and a savvy, practical way of explaining it.

5   Kaiser, R. B. (2017). *Versatility: You can't lead without it today*. Retrieved from https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/versatili-ty-you-cant-lead-without-today-rob-kaiser/
6   Lacerenza, et al. (2017). Leadership training design, delivery, and implementation: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*, 1686–1718.

Brothers: I'm relieved. The way we do custom programs at UNC is consistent with the research findings!

Lindsay: Could you please explain how you do that?

Brothers: We take a solution-focused approach to design: What is the organization's strategy and what are the capabilities needed to execute? Ok, now do a needs analysis: What are the capability gaps? Those gaps define the problems, and the curriculum is designed to provide solutions—the hard skills around management processes, techniques, and systems. But different leaders have different challenges with implementing the solutions. They may need to learn different soft skills to apply them—for some its influence, for others its communication, and for some it is self-management.

We use a blended approach for teaching the hard skills and soft skills, and we like to include senior leaders from the organization in the classroom. We also prefer to space sessions out so that participants can practice what they are learning back in their work context, such as in action-learning projects with other participants who can give each other feedback. Then when we meet again, we review how things are going and encourage group dialogue and learning, especially around the soft skills.

Lindsay: That's interesting, John. So, you start with the organization and work back to the individual leader. That's an interesting approach as a lot of thinking about leadership starts with the leader.

Brothers: Yes, it's a particularly Western, individualistic bias. And the leadership industry seems to cater to that bias. For instance, the pivotal role of self-awareness is practically a truism. But to what end? What problem are we trying to solve? How does this individual's self-awareness connect to the company's competitive position? After all, we are working with organizations and helping these entities to become more nimble and creative in order to remain relevant and get results.

Kaiser: Maybe it would help if we started with a clear statement of what we mean by "leadership."

Lindsay: It sounds like we may be headed for that old line about how there are as many definitions of leadership as there are people who try to define the term?

Kaiser: Well, there is that danger. But, seriously, most definitions have more in common than not. Most leadership thinkers define it as a social-influence process for motivating people to work together for a common goal. The key is to realize that leadership is

> *The key is to realize that leadership is an adapted mechanism for solving the problem of collective effort ...*

an adapted mechanism for solving the problem of collective effort: How do you get self-interested individuals to set aside their differences and personal agendas and work together for a larger purpose?

Lindsay: Rob, you've written about an evolutionary analysis of leadership—where it comes from and the role it played in the survival of our ancestors. Could you sum that up?

Kaiser: Sure. When you zoom way out and ask where leadership comes from and how it might have evolved, there are two competing explanations. The first one is dominance theory, which sees leadership as a by-product of dominance hierarchies that are part of our primate heritage. The second one is group-coordination theory, which suggests that the same instinctual social

dynamics that guide flocks of birds or schools of fishes were elaborated by primates and early humans to solve complex survival challenges that required everyone to work together.

Dominance theory is consistent with our self-interested nature and basically works on the principle of "Might makes right." But we are also social creatures who have always lived in groups and sometimes will do things for the "good of the group." Jonathan Haidt likes to say that humans are 90% selfish chimpanzee and 10% hivish bee.[7] Most of the recurring survival challenges on the Savannah of our ancestral past required a group effort: foraging for food, hunting big game, relocating to a more hospitable territory, warding off predators, defense against rival tribes.

We modeled these things with game theory and found that collective effort works best with a social structure in which one individual initiates a course of action and others either agree to follow or not.[8] We follow the leader when we think it makes sense to do so, when it's in our best interests to cooperate around a common goal. Sometimes people decide to not follow because they aren't convinced; true leadership is when people willingly choose to follow because they believe in the vision and purpose. And it sure beats a process where a bunch of alphas fight over how to proceed, with the winner making everyone do it his or her way. People naturally resent bullies and being told what to do. But more importantly for survival, internal competition destabilizes the group, making coordination harder and leaving the group ripe for the picking.

Brothers: That makes me think about how some organizations are evolving their leadership values and focusing more on things like vulnerability, empathy,

and authentic leadership. This is a move away from the heroic ideal to a much more relational approach that reinforces "we are all in it together."

Kaiser: Exactly. Darwin has that great quote about how a tribe of members who were always ready to help one another and to sacrifice for the common good would be victorious over most other tribes. We believe that leadership emerged as a mechanism for persuading self-interested individuals to cooperate. Well-led groups have better survival rates; it isn't the fittest individuals but the fittest tribes that survive. Do you know what they called the strongest individual in the weakest tribe? Desert. They ate him last!

But back to the point that humans are primarily self-interested: There is always the temptation for people in positions of power and status to exploit this for personal gain—at the expense of the greater good. So we have to be vigilant about who we choose to follow, who we put in positions of power. When selfish leaders are in charge, it puts everyone at risk.

Lindsay: Is this what you think is wrong with leadership today?

Kaiser: I do think we have strayed from this "greater good" mentality. The individualistic bias that John mentioned is everywhere. We have confused leadership as a process with leadership as a role: The process emphasizes the purpose, but the role emphasizes the person. And this leads to a focus in development on things like executive presence and networking. Sure, you can make a case that presence and networking can help the group. But first and foremost it helps the individual to get ahead. A lot of supposed leadership development is more about career development than about teaching how to persuade other people to work together, build a team, and achieve organizational goals.

7   Haidt, J. (2012). *The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion*. New York: Pantheon Books.
8   Van Vugt, M., Hogan, R., & Kaiser, R. B. (2008). Leadership, followership, and evolution: Some lessons from the past. *American Psychologist, 63*, 182-196.

Others are also identifying self-interest at the root of many problems with modern leadership. The concern with toxic leadership in the military recognizes this. Army Doctrine describes toxic leadership as involving "self-centered attitudes, motivations, and behaviors," as well as "an inflated sense of self-worth," and actions that "deceive, intimidate, coerce, or unfairly punish others" for selfish ends.[9]

Thomas Ricks' article in *Harvard Business Review* ("Whatever Happened to Accountability?") traces a softening of standards in the military to not wanting to stick your neck out and take a stand because it's risky to your career. We found the same thing in industry: Two out of three senior managers are seen as too soft on accountability, stepping back from the heat, and not wanting to be the "bad guy."[10]

Not to get too preachy, but when you think of what leadership is all about—why and how it emerged as an adaptation to aid group survival—you realize that it is a responsibility, not a right. Leaders have a moral imperative to serve their teams and organizations, to build and lift others to their best possible selves, and to do whatever it takes to achieve the mission, even if that means self-sacrifice. You can see a yearning to get back to this principle—for instance, in the evolution of leadership values in some organizations that John mentioned or the point of Simon Sinek's recent best-seller, *Leaders Eat Last*.[11]

Lindsay: So you think the problem with leadership development is that it is too focused on leaders as individuals and not enough on what leadership provides for the organization?

Kaiser: That's certainly a big part of it. And I think the sort of design thinking John described earlier, about how at UNC they start with the organization's strategy and capability needs and then target individual development around filling those gaps, is exactly the right way to do it.

Brothers: But there is another factor too. The research Rob mentioned earlier points to a dirty secret: We don't consistently and rigorously evaluate the impact of leadership-development efforts. There are two big missed opportunities. First, obviously, we miss the chance to see if a program or coaching engagement worked and how well it worked. But the other reason is even more important: If it didn't work, why not? How can we improve?

This is something that brought Rob and me together. We both really want to understand the impact of leadership development, and honestly look at what works and what doesn't so we can improve the practice.

Lindsay: How do you do that?

Brothers: First you have to think clearly about the purpose of the initiative, whether that's an internal program, an external program, executive coaching, or something else. What are you trying to achieve, based on a strategic needs analysis, solutions to fill those gaps, and tools for enabling participants to implement those solutions? This is where assessment comes in, to identify the particular learning and development needs of the individuals—this gets us into the soft skills and how to enable people to use the solutions. You have to get everyone singing from the same hymnal, and the lines are different for the altos, sopranos, and baritones.

Then you have to measure the concepts in this design: metrics at the organizational or unit or team level that represent performance processes and outcomes; measures concerning the systems and techniques

9   Army Doctrine Publication 6-22: Retrieved from: https://fas.org/irp/doddir/army/adp6_22.pdf
10   Kaiser, R. (2018). The accountability crisis. *Talent Quarterly, 5*(3), 58-63.
11   Sinek, S. (2014). *Leaders eat last*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin.

participants have learned through development; and assessment data on individual participants in terms of their ability to transfer the learning back on the job.

Kaiser: This last piece can seem mystical. To many people, leadership feels like such an ephemeral quality as to defy quantification and formal measurement; you just know it when you see it. It's true that the soft stuff can be the hardest stuff of all, and the question is how do you measure that stuff? Well, there is a science to leadership. It's not rocket science; it's behavioral science—it may not be exact but it works pretty well and is practical and useful.

Brothers: Look, all organizations are going through some sort of transformation right now. The question is whether their leaders can change their paradigms— their mind-set and behaviors—as quickly as the

> *...all organizations are going through some sort of transformation right now. The question is whether their leaders can change their paradigms—their mind-set and behaviors— as quickly as the operating model is changing.*

operating model is changing.

This can be greatly aided by the sort of self-awareness provided by assessment: It helps the individual leader understand what he or she has to do differently to apply the process or technique that the organization needs to execute its strategy.

Lindsay: Assessment is definitely a vital topic. However, there is a confusing array of tools out there. How do you sort your way through it all?

Brothers: We've been working on a simplified point

of view on that very question. Rob's been a helpful thought partner; Rob, why don't you break it down for Doug?

Kaiser: Sure. The first thing is to recognize that there are basically two different kinds of assessments for individuals: One concerns individual differences like personality, ability, and interests—your default settings, if you will—and the other concerns behaviors and decisions—how these tendencies get expressed in how you perform your leadership role. We like to say, "Who you are is how you lead."

Measures of *who you are* can be very helpful in development—for instance, how John describes their use in raising self-awareness about the soft skills needed to apply the hard skills. Suppose we are teaching a module on innovation. We can present a robust innovation process. But creative people who are flexible risk-takers but not particularly organized are going to have different challenges in implementing that process compared to very organized and conscientious people who are not as comfortable with risk. Everyone is different in some way, and understanding who you are through a personality or style assessment is helpful for tailoring the learning and development.

On the other hand, behavioral measures of what you do are helpful for diagnosing on the front end—who is good at innovation management, who may need to do better—as well as for measuring transfer after the program and back on the job—have innovation-management skills improved? Behavioral measures like these are usually better gathered with feedback from coworkers—self-ratings are notoriously plagued with

bias and error; coworker ratings are much more reliable and valid. We simply can't see ourselves as well as we can see other people. Plus, behavioral assessments from coworkers can provide useful feedback for fine-tuning and shaping the skills and behaviors in the program.

Lindsay: But even within these categories of *who you are* and *how you lead*, there are different tools available. How do you choose the right tool for the job?

Brothers: There are two considerations here. First, it is important to align what the personality test or behavior-rating instrument measures with program content. A lot of times people just use a tool they like and are familiar with but that may not always be relevant to what we are trying to teach.

The second thing is that assessments lie on a continuum. Some are fairly simple and provide feedback that is easy for everyone to accept. The Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI) is the classic one here, or something like the DISC which sorts you into one of four categories. These help everyone understand what makes them unique, their own superpower, if you will. At the other end of the spectrum are more complex tools that can identify your superpower—and also your Kryptonite. These tools dare to discriminate across several dimensions and provide more direct, constructive feedback—for instance, the Hogan personality suite, especially the Hogan Development Survey, which measures 11 common derailing tendencies that can get leaders into trouble. It can be tough to get a report that says you convey confidence but also tend to overreach and can come across as arrogant, or one that says you are passionate but can also be volatile, explosive, and unpredictable.

Kaiser: There is a trade-off here. On the one hand, where is the organization and where are the participants with assessment: Is the culture gentler and

are people new to assessment? If so, they probably need the simpler kind. Or are they more experienced, more battle-hardened, and ready to take the more direct kind?

On the other hand, the tougher, more complex tools are more statistically related to performance, which means they are providing feedback that is more relevant to results. Easier to take may not be as relevant to performance. Harder to swallow may make a bigger difference.

I am of two minds: Sometimes I think it is nearly criminal in this day and age to ask executives to take lightweight, parlor-game-type assessments that were never intended to differentiate high and low performers. On the other hand, I have seen these tools work by providing a common language for appreciating how each of us is different and what that means for how we work together. You do the MBTI in the morning, and that afternoon in the simulation they are giving each other feedback: "There goes your extraverted thinking again!"

So you can see the utility for some groups in even a simple framework for understanding oneself and how other people might be different. It depends on where you are personally and what you are ready for as an organization. You have to walk before you can run. Ultimately, though, you want to get to the point where you can talk about differences that really make a difference—for better or worse.

Lindsay: But now don't these assessments just take us back to the individual-bias problem?

Brothers: Almost! It's like I said before, "How does self-awareness connect to the organization's competitive position?" It can, but a lot of times the connective tissues is not made explicit and thinking

gets murky. The individual assessments are not the solution; they are an enabler of the solution. They connect the individual to the organizational process or technique, the solution designed to fill a strategic organizational need. From an evaluation standpoint, we want to connect what individuals learn in the program to changes in their behavior on the job and how that behavior change relates to the organizational processes and outcomes we are trying to improve.

Kaiser: This is where a lot of measurement goes wrong: By settling for measures of convenience. I can't tell you how many times I have seen an internal team present on the impact of their programs using measures such as attendance rates, what proportion of directors have been through the program, how many attendees remained with the organization versus turned over, or how many were promoted to a bigger job. These data are easier to obtain, but they don't really get at the basic question of whether we are increasing the organization's capability to lead its strategic imperatives.

As the research shows, program evaluation is rarely done, and even when it is, it frequently isn't very informative about how well leadership development is improving organizational performance.

Lindsay: So, is this a blueprint for determining return on investment (ROI)? It seems like a lot of people are concerned about ROI.

Kaiser: Not quite. I actually think ROI is the wrong issue, or at least not the next issue. We seem to have finance envy; it's probably part of the people side of the business wanting to have that proverbial seat at the table. But it's tricky business to get straight into the financial conversation with ROI. In principle it can be done, but, again, you have to walk before you can run—or, in this case, crawl before you can walk. There are some prior steps we need to address first. To that point, John has me excited by the concept of ROL.

Lindsay: John, what do you mean by ROL?

Brothers: Well, I certainly won't claim to have invented the ROL concept, but when I first heard the acronym for return on learning it captured my attention as I thought through all the challenges many learning organizations deal with when it comes to measuring ROI.

One of the major limitations of ROI methodology is that it relies on lagging indicators to measure impact— such as business-unit performance or financial outcomes. These sorts of measures inherently represent a significant time lag between the learning experience and the point of return for an organization. And too many other variables come into play and distort the link between learning and results. As a timely example, all the leadership training, skill enhancement, process building, and capability development in the world may not be enough to overcome the financial impact of tariffs in a trade war.

We need to step back and think through the logic chain for measuring impact, and first understand what impact really means to the organization. The Kirkpatrick framework for measuring impact has been around for over 50 years.[12] It presents four levels of progressively more organizationally-relevant types of effects that training and development can have:

Level 1: Affective—how do participants and stakeholders feel about the program, the content, and the organization?

Level 2: Learning—how much have participants increased their knowledge and expertise?

Level 3: Behavior—to what extent do we see the new learning transfer to on-the-job performance?

12   Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1959). Techniques for evaluating training programs. *Journal of the American Society of Training Directors*, *13*, 21-26.

Level 4: Results—how does the change in job performance relate to better results in terms of more effective processes and outcomes in the participant's team or business unit?

Unfortunately, the framework has been extended to define "results" in terms of ROI, using financial measures of performance relative to the cost of development. It is understandable to want to go there, but it's premature.

Kaiser: Totally. First, that dirty secret John called out: Not to beat a dead horse, but impact evaluation isn't even standard practice, and when it is done, it is pretty weak. We do some Level-1 measurement with "smile sheets," asking how much participants liked the program. Maybe we even do some Level-2 measurement with a pre/post knowledge test. But we don't do much Level-3 evaluation—measuring behavior change on the job—and we do even less Level-4 measurement at the organizational level.

My point is that we are not consistent or very proficient as a field at measuring Levels 3 and 4, let alone linking measures at both levels of analysis. We need to master that next. Once that becomes standard practice, then we can start looking at how you monetize the improved results and express that as a ratio of the total cost of development. And that will require a lot of thinking and design work to create a good methodology. As John says, these lagging indicators are affected by a bunch of other things. And as development professionals, we don't have the expertise that finance professionals have. We will have to team up on an interdisciplinary approach.

Brothers: Right. ROL is all about firming up our ability to draw linkages from changes in Level 2 to changes in Levels 3 and 4, or from learning in the classroom to the successful implementation of the solution and a quantifiable improvement in process

and results at the team, unit, or organizational level. It's walking back in the causal chain of events and making sure we have strong links in that chain. The further we stray from strong, step-by-step links, the further we go from causation to correlation and invite noise into the methodology.

Lindsay: So how do you propose we firm up those links, especially from Level 2 to Level 3, and from Level 3 to Level 4?

Kaiser: It gets us right back into the topic of assessment. Level 3 is all about measuring behavior change. There is a science to that, with different available methodologies.[13] One is to measure behavior before the program and then after it. Self-ratings are a horrible way to do that. But even using coworker ratings can be troublesome because of a sort of psychological "Heisenberg Principle," where the development intervention itself can change your frame of reference and make Time 1-Time 2 comparisons like apples and oranges. Another way to do it is with retrospective coworker ratings of which behaviors changed and how much. This is actually more consistent with how human memory works—like a reconstruction versus a videotape.

Brothers: But next we have to make that leap from the individual participant and his or her behavior, to the organization. The logical next step is in terms of improved processes; for instance, let's say we are studying the impact of the hypothetical training on a new innovation process. Level 3 concerns whether the participant is demonstrating the soft skills needed to apply the hard skills we taught in class, and Level 4 concerns a measurement of the team or business unit actually using the innovation process: gathering user stories from customers to identify pain points or unmet

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13   Golembiewski, R. T., Billingsley, K., & Yeager, S. (1976). Measuring change and persistence in human affairs: Types of change generated by OD designs. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 12*, 133-157.

needs, brainstorming solutions, stress-testing for feasibility, small-scale experimentation with the more promising solutions, scaling up the ones that work. Then, outcomes should be considered: new solutions brought to market, customer satisfaction with those solutions, increased productivity, what have you. Monetizing those outcomes with dollar figures is at the end of that line. And as Rob said, that's probably best done in a collaboration between talent and finance; it will take both kinds of expertise.

UNC has shifted our thinking to focus more on ROL. After all, we are talking about behavior change, and behavior change is human: We're not robots. So, let's start by identifying and measuring leading indicators of behavior change, and then relate those measures to broader organizational capabilities.

Lindsay: That's a pretty compelling argument, gentlemen. Thanks a lot for taking the time. We've covered a lot of ground—who would have thought we could connect macroeconomics to meta-analyses and cavemen to design a better program? Seriously, it's neat to see how the scientific research and practical applications can work together to improve leadership development.

Brothers: Thank you. It's been fun.

Kaiser: It has indeed. Thanks a lot, Doug.

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> *We're not robots. So, let's start by identifying and measuring leading indicators of behavior change, and then relate those measures to broader organizational capabilities.*

Let's follow the Kirkpatrick framework but use it as it was originally intended—to look for and measure behavior change and organizational impact. In doing so, we need to reframe the ROI conversation to an ROL conversation, so we can be more clear, precise, and rigorous in understanding the learning process and make sure that translates into how the organization does things. This is the most challenging part of the journey, and it is the next step to take on the road to improving the impact of leadership development.

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Toward a Developmental Approach to Measuring the Development of Character: Perspectives from Project Arête

Elise D. Murray, Tufts University

Brian M. Burkhard, Tufts University

Hillary S. Schaffer, Tufts University

Diane M. Ryan, Tufts University

Andrew G. Farina, United States Military Academy & Tufts University

Chaveso "Chevy" Cook, United States Military Academy & Tufts University

Jeremiah J. Powers, United States Military Academy & Tufts University

Michael D. Matthews, United States Military Academy

Richard M. Lerner, Tufts University

ABSTRACT

Contemporary models of character development emphasize that character is a malleable outcome of individual-context relations. Positive character, or character virtues, vary in relation to specific contextual circumstances requiring the enactment of specific behaviors that are morally appropriate and necessary for positive individual-context relations to occur. The exploration of the features of character virtue development that arise in specific contexts points to the role of educational institutions as key settings wherein character develops, including higher education institutions whose fundamental mission is to train leaders of character. This potential value for understanding how leaders of character are "produced" within such an institution was a key basis of *Project Arête*, a study of the pathways of character virtue development and leadership traversed by the cadets within the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point. We discuss the theoretical and methodological ideas we have used within Project Arête to shape our assessments of character development and leadership, and focus on issues involved in the design, measurement, and analysis of developmental changes in individuals, context, and individual-context relations.

Contemporary models of character development (e.g., Berkowitz, Bier, & McCauley, 2017; Lerner & Callina, 2014; Nucci, 2017) emphasize that positive character attributes (i.e., character virtues) develop through mutually-influential, *and mutually beneficial*, relations between a specific individual and his or her specific context. The specificity of these relations means that there is a strong idiographic component to character development, one that derives from the specific attributes of a person and the specific features of his or her proximal and distal contexts (Bornstein, 2017). Simply, character arises when individuals with varying biological, psychological, and behavioral attributes coact in settings with specific interpersonal, institutional, cultural, and physical ecological features (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Lerner, 2018c). Character is, then, a malleable, or plastic, relational attribute that can and should vary in the face of the different requirements for enacting behaviors that are morally appropriate and necessary for adaptive, positive individual-context relations within specific settings at specific times. In other words, across time and place, virtuous character is reflected in coherence of action — of "doing the right thing" — in order for positive individual-context relations to be maintained (Callina & Lerner, 2017).

Elise D. Murray is a senior doctoral research assistant at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University. She is a fourth-year doctoral student in the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study and Human Development and earned her Master's in the same department in 2017. She received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Notre Dame in Psychology and German Language and Literature in 2015. Elise's research focuses on the development of character virtues in the collegiate context. She also empirically and theoretically investigates the virtue of intellectual humility and how it might be measured and cultivated across the life-span. She was also a recent junior fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, with a focus on applying complex longitudinal methods to character data.

Given the growing interest in developmental science in these theoretical conceptions of the process of character development (Lerner, Vandell, & Tirrell, 2017), the past 20 years have seen a renaissance of studies of attributes of character virtues, of their interrelations within different developmental periods, and of the contributions of specific social and institutional contexts for promoting this development of character (e.g., Callina et al., 2017, 2018; Lerner, et al., 2017). This exploration of the features of character development that arise in specific contexts points to the role of educational institutions as key settings wherein character develops (e.g., Berkowitz, et al., 2017). The range of educational settings spans considered in the literature includes the kindergarten through Grade 12 span and, as well, extends into post-secondary settings, including both community college, vocational schools, and four-year college and university settings (Johnson, et al., 2014).

Moreover, interest in the features of character development that emerge within specific settings have led to a burgeoning of concern with the pathways of character development within some instances of higher-educational institutions. In particular, interest in character development has emerged within institutions that have as their fundamental purpose the training of students to become society leaders. Here, a key question is whether there are specific character virtues needed to contribute positively and coherently to specific social settings or sectors within which the student will live and develop (Callina, et al., 2017). Higher education institutions whose fundamental mission is to train leaders of character have, therefore, an important

Brian M. Burkhard is a researcher at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University where he completed his Ph.D. in Child Study and Human Development. He has conducted research with several national youth-serving organizations, and his research interests include character development, outdoor youth development programming, and program evaluation.

Hillary S. Schaefer, Ph.D., is a Research Assistant Professor at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University. She is also a Licensed Clinical Psychologist. She was most recently the Clinic Director of the Children's Learning Clinic at the University of Virginia, a research-clinic focused on the assessment and treatment of children with difficulties in academics, behavior, and/or attention. Her collaborations span a variety of applied contexts in the realm of positive youth development. Currently, Dr. Schaefer works on Project Arête, a study of character development among Cadets at West Point (PI: Richard M. Lerner). Her research interests include the intersection of social-emotional, physical, and cognitive development, in a PYD framework. She is interested in better understanding the pathways through which youth with diverse strengths and difficulties become young adults of character, and how strength-based approaches can be integrated across an array of contexts. Dr. Schaefer received her B.S. in Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and her Ph.D. at the University of Virginia.

Diane M. Ryan, Ph.D., is the Associate Dean for Programs and Administration in the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts University and holds a faculty appointment in the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Studies and Human Development. Prior to joining Tufts, Diane was an Academy Professor, Director of the Eisenhower Leader Development Program with Columbia University and Deputy Department Head in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY. During her 29-year career as a U.S. Army officer she served in a variety of command and staff assignments both stateside and abroad. Dr. Ryan holds a B.A. in Psychology from the College of the Holy Cross, an M.S. in International Relations from Troy University, an M.S.S. in Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College and a Ph.D. in Psychology from North Carolina State University.

societal role to play beyond their own mission. They may be exemplars of educating students to be leaders of character and, as such, could serve as educational models for higher education more generally.

This potential value for understanding how leaders of character are "produced" within such an institution was a key basis for what we have termed *Project Arête*, a study of the pathways of character development and leadership traversed by the cadets within the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point (Callina, et al., 2017; 2018). The USMA mission is "To educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army." *Project Arête*, launched in 2015, is a longitudinal, five-year study, involving several cohorts of cadets; we use both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the development of character virtues among USMA cadets (Callina, et al., 2017, 2018). *Arête* comes from the Greek word for excellence. It connotes the aggregate of qualities, such as valor and virtue, that comprises good character. USMA seeks to educate and train cadets to achieve excellence in leadership and character. The project personnel seek to understand how such excellence is achieved. The project is a collaborative effort between Tufts University and USMA.

Andrew G. Farina, LTC, is an active duty Infantry officer in the U.S. Army, with 18 years of service. He is currently a doctoral research assistant at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University and a first-year doctoral student in the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study and Human Development. He earned his Master's in Business Administration through the Kenan-Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina in 2015. He received his Bachelor of Science from the United States Military Academy (USMA) in 2001. Andrew's research focuses on the development of character in the military academy context. He is currently investigating intentional self-regulation and how it might be measured, observed, and optimized across the 47-month USMA experience.

Chaveso "Chevy" Cook is a first-year doctoral student in the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Studies and Human Development at Tufts University. He has spent his first year working as a research assistant for the Institute of Applied Research in Youth Development working on the West Point Character Development project known as Project Arête. He has earned two masters from the University of Texas-El Paso and Columbia University, respectively, and received his bachelors from the United States Military Academy. Chevy is a Major in the U.S. Army and will continue his research as an assistant professor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the United States Military Academy once he has completed his studies.

Jeremiah J. Powers is a Captain in the U.S. Army with a current assignment at the United States Military Academy as an instructor in the Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Department. He served his first four years of service in the United States Marine Corps before earning his commission in the Army. Jeremiah earned his Master's degree in Human Development from Tufts University in 2019 and Bachelor's degree in psychology from St. Lawrence University in 2004. His research interests focus on the development of leadership and more specifically on how different leadership styles relate to character attributes and positive outcomes.

This study aims to describe the developmental system of relations between cadets and the programs and people involved in the academic, military, physical, and character foci (or "pillars") of USMA (Callina, et al., 2017), pillars that – together – are aimed at developing across the 47-month USMA experience military leaders of character. As such, *Project Arête* addresses issues such as whether there is alignment and integration of goals, attitudes, and behaviors across USMA pillars; the role of trust and moral leadership in promoting character development among cadets; and whether bureaucratic functioning and cynicism threaten cadets' positive developmental pathways to officership (Callina, et al., 2017). Within the research we conduct about such issues, we seek to identify specific character development strategies and activities at USMA that are especially salient in promoting character and leadership attributes among cadets. In short, the aim of *Project Arête* is to provide a "way ahead" for West Point and the United States Army to assess, inform, and enhance character and leadership education to develop professional Army officers. Accordingly, the specific goals of the study are to:

1. Describe the pathways of character development for specific individuals or subgroups of cadets across the USMA educational program.

2. Identify the covariation between the development of cadet character and leadership attributes and specific experiences within the educational pillars of the institution: academic, physical, and military.

Michael D. Matthews, Ph.D., is currently Professor of Engineering Psychology at the United States Military Academy. He served as President of the American Psychological Association's Society for Military Psychology from 2007 to 2008 and is a Templeton Foundation Senior Positive Psychology Fellow. From 2014 to 2015, he served as a Fellow for the U.S. Army Chief of Staff's Strategic Studies Group. Collectively, his research interests center on soldier performance in combat and other dangerous contexts. He has authored over 250 scientific papers, is the co-editor of *Leadership in Dangerous Situations: A Handbook for Armed Forces, Emergency Services, and First Responders* (Naval Institute Press, 2011) the *Oxford Handbook of Military Psychology* (Oxford University Press, 2012), and (in collaboration with co-editors David E. Rohall and Morten G. Ender), *Inclusion in the American Military: A Force for Diversity*, published by Lexington Books (2017). He is a co-author of *The Millennial Generation and National Defense: Attitudes of Future Military and Civilian Leaders* (Palgrave Pivot, 2013), and the author of the highly acclaimed *Head Strong: How Psychology is Revolutionizing War* (Oxford University Press, 2014, with the second edition due for publication in 2019). His most recent book, *Human Performance Optimization: The Science and Ethics of Enhancing Human Capabilities* (Oxford University Press) was published in January 2019.

Richard M. Lerner, Ph.D., is the Bergstrom Chair in Applied Developmental Science and Director of the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University. He has received the American Psychological Association (APA) Division 7 Bronfenbrenner Award for Lifetime Contribution to Developmental Psychology in the Service of Science and Society, the APA Division 1 Hilgard Lifetime Achievement Award for distinguished career contributions to general psychology, the APA Gold Medal for Life Achievement in the Application of Psychology, the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development Award for Applications of Behavioral Development Theory and Research, and the Society for Research in Child Development Distinguished Contributions to Public Policy and Practice in Child Development Award. Lerner serves on the Board of Directors of the Military Child Education Coalition (and co-chairs their Scientific Advisory Board). In July 2017, Pope Francis appointed Lerner as a Corresponding Member of the Pontifical Academy for Life.

3. Understand how character development is infused within and across these pillars.

4. Specify the conditions under which specific cadets, who have specific sets and series of experiences, manifest specific pathways of achievement within and across pillars and, eventually, manifest different attributes of character and leadership.

We have reported the theoretical bases, methodology, and findings of *Project Arête* in prior publications (e.g., Burkhard, Callina, Murray, Powers, & Lerner, 2018; Callina, et al., 2017, 2018; Murray, 2017; Murray, Callina, & Lerner, 2016; Powers, 2019). This special issue of the *Journal of Character and Leadership Development* affords us the opportunity to present that theoretical rationale for the methods we have used to assess the development of character virtues and leadership among USMA cadets. We explain the components of a developmental approach to the assessment of development.

The Challenge of Developmental Assessment

To address the goals of *Project Arête*, several important methodological issues regarding the assessment of cadet character and of the USMA context must be addressed. These issues involve, primarily, taking a developmental approach to the measurement of both individuals' character development and of their context. Human development involves changes within a person across time and place (Lerner, 2018c). Therefore, all methods aimed at assessing any feature of development must be able to detect—to be sensitive to—change. Methods that assess a person or a group at one point in time cannot measure change—which can only be detected across time points. Point-in-time methods (e.g., cross-sectional designs) are therefore not developmental methods.

Because character virtue development involves assessing the changing features of the individual, of the context, and of the relation between individual and context (Lerner, 2018a, 2018b; Lerner & Callina, 2014), three methodological challenges must be met. First, measures of character, context, and relations must be able to detect change if, in fact, it exists. Second, research designs must use these measures in ways that allow true developmental change (as compared, for example, to regression-to-the-mean effects) to be detected with the change-sensitive measures. Third, data analysis methods must be able to identify change, as compared to only intraindividual constancy or interindividual stability. We discuss each of these challenges and explain how we address them within *Project Arête*.

The Design of Developmental Research

As we have noted, development involves changes within a unit of analysis. Such a unit can be an individual, a portion of the context, or an individual-context relation. Developmental scientists study both *intra-unit* change (e.g., change within a person, or intraindividual change) and *inter-unit differences in within-unit change* (e.g., differences between people in their intraindividual change, or interindividual differences in intraindividual change; Baltes, et al., 1977; Lerner, 2018c).

As such, all developmental research designs, whether aimed at generating basic, descriptive information about individual pathways across specific portions of experiences within a specific context (e.g., USMA), or aimed at evaluating the changing pathways individuals travel over the course of program participation, require longitudinal (repeated) measurement (Collins, 2005; Nesselroade & Baltes, 1979). However, it remains the case that many studies that are aimed at assessing facets of character development use cross-sectional data (e.g., Rose, 2016). Such data cannot be used to provide evidence of, or understanding about, within-person change.

The between-person differences that may be identified in cross-sectional research may *not* be due to between-person differences in within-person change (e.g., developmental change). These between-person differences may be due to variables that were not assessed (e.g., experiential differences among participants, for instance, in histories of participation in out-of-school-time programs). As well, between-person differences may be due to variables that have not been analyzed although they may exist in the data set (e.g., religious variation, family structure variation, area of residence, or gender or race). This problem—of not being able to account for the basis of between-people differences in cross-sectional data sets—becomes especially important to recognize when the cross-sectional sample includes groups of different ages or educational levels (e.g., first-, second-, third-, or fourth-year cadets at USMA). The temptation of treating age group differences as if they reflected age changes is often too powerful for researchers or practitioners to ignore.

However, the temptation should be ignored. If not ignored, then researchers and program leaders run the risk of believing they are changing the development of participants when, in fact, their evidence does not pertain to development, to within-individual change, in relation to program participation.

As well, research designs should include plans for assessment of *endogeneity* (sample selection effects) associated with different groups, for example, applicants to USMA who aspire to become cadets and participate in NCAA athletic programs versus cadets without an interest in NCAA sport participation. Pre-existing differences among these two groups of applicants may be responsible (or, perhaps, more responsible) for cadet behavior and development than their exposure to the character development experiences offered at West Point.

Designs should also include plans to examine whether the findings that exist for an overall group of participants (e.g., fourth-years cadets) also exist when specific groups of participants, say, NCAA athletes versus non-NCAA athletes, males versus females, etc., are assessed separately. The overall findings may mask key differences between subgroups. Indeed, Duncan, Engel, Claessens, and Dowsett (2014) recommend assessing if the overall findings for a sample of study participants are still present (what they term as remaining "robust") when assessed in regard to specific subgroups of the sample. The importance of robustness analyses, then, is to determine if overall, group findings—for instance, the average number of honor code violations for a class cohort across their four years at USMA—apply equally for all cadets (men vs. women, cadets from different racial groups, cadets with different profiles of athletic participation, or cadets with different family histories of military participation). Thus, such analyses afford evidence for the ability to generalize findings to a broad group or for the need to differentiate among subgroups.

Measuring Developmental Change

All measures used in the study of within-person (intraindividual) change must be able to detect changes, if they exist, across the specific time divisions used in a specific study (Lerner, 2018c), for example, weeks, months, or years. However, it is often the case that measures are used that are specifically developed to be insensitive to variation across time or place; such measure development has most notably been used to develop tools to assess purported personality traits (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1980; McCrae, et al., 2000). Indeed, many measures of character are designed to mirror the measurement properties of measures of personality traits (Lerner & Callina, 2014).

Taking a "trait approach" to the measurement of any attribute of development is both conceptually and empirically flawed. There may certainly be good reasons to create and use measures that are insensitive to variation across time and space. For example, devising a radiological measure of jawbone loss in people of

different ages and contextual (e.g., national) settings might be very important in the field of restorative dentistry. However, in the field of human development, wherein the fundamental questions are about changes in the processes of life, measures that are impervious to age- or context-associated variation are useless.

Therefore, in the construction of developmentally-appropriate measures, assessment must be made of whether change can be detected across theoretically meaningful divisions of time (e.g., weeks or months for infant motor development or cognitive development, respectively; or years, for the development among youth of identity, romantic relationships, or vocational interests). For example, if researchers had a hypothesis that the transition from one type of educational context to another (e.g., high school to USMA) may change the identity, or character of young people (e.g., Simmons & Blyth, 1987), then the researchers must use a measure that could detect changes across this period in order to test their hypothesis.

Most critically, change-sensitivity of measures of development must be identifiable at the individual level of analysis. As we have emphasized (see Baltes, et al., 1977; Lerner, 2018c), the study of development is the study of intraindividual change. Such within-the-person measures need to possess more than reliability or validity. They must also possess *measurement invariance (equivalence)* across times of measurement: Measures must have the same meaning at different times of life and, as well, measures must have several statistical properties that assure equivalence of measurement (e.g., see Card, 2017, for a discussion of these statistical properties). Moreover, if measures are used in studies of groups of people across national settings, they must also possess invariance across people and places (Card, 2017).

In sum, then, developmentally-useful measures must be invariant in regard to their statistical properties and

they must also be able to address change, especially change specific to a specific individual. This point raises the issue of *person-centered* versus *variable-centered* data analyses in developmental science.

The Analysis of Developmental Change

In developmental science, statistical procedures aimed at the analysis of within-person changes should be aimed, first, at discovering how variables covary within a person across time. The aim of developmental science is to understand each person's individually distinct (idiographic) pathway. Therefore, analyses that focus on changes within a person (person-centered analyses) should be the starting points in developmental research (Molenaar & Nesselroade, 2014, 2015; Rose, 2016). Analyses could then be aimed at determining if it is possible to group (aggregate) individuals in regard either to sub-samples of individuals (e.g., all NCAA athletes in the study, all first-year cadets in a specific entering class, or all female cadets in the study) *or* to the sample as a whole (Molenaar & Nesselroade, 2015).

However, at this writing, the predominant approach to creating evidence in support of the theoretical ideas about developmental processes, in general, and character virtue and leadership development, more specifically, is based on variable-centered assessments. That is, many developmental scientists continue to focus on how variables covary *across individuals* within points in time. Such analyses, even if computed at several successive times of measurement, reveal nothing about development. That is, as we have already emphasized, such analyses say nothing about within-person change (Molenaar & Nesselroade, 2014, 2015; Nesselroade & Molenaar, 2010; Rose, 2016). In short, variable-centered analyses, although reflecting a common, indeed a standard, approach to data analysis in the social and behavioral sciences (Molenaar, 2014), have no relevance to changes within an individual.

This standard approach to statistical analysis in the social and behavioral sciences is derived from specific mathematical assumptions (the *ergodic theorems*). These mathematical ideas allow specific statistical analyses (e.g., the computation of averages or standard deviations) that pertain to populations (e.g., to all first-year college students) to be used in computing characteristics of a sample from the population (e.g., a sample of, say, 1,200 individuals entering West Point as the Class of 2017; Molenaar, 2014). However, using statistics that are appropriate for populations with select samples from that population is only legitimate if a researcher can assume that every person in the sample is essentially the same (i.e., that they are homogeneous) and that the scores of each individual in the sample contribute to the sample average and standard deviation to the same extent across time (a situation termed *stationarity*).

For instance, continuing with the example of 1,200 individuals entering USMA as the Class of 2017, it may be the case that some youth in the sample are dissimilar because of variation in their cultural, geographic, and family background or because of variation in their interests (e.g., participation in NCAA athletics). Thus, a measure of a specific character virtue might not have equivalent measurement properties across subgroups formed by variation among these constructs. If so, then the computation of an overall sample average (or standard deviation for that matter) would not be appropriate. In addition, as cadets having these initial differences moved across the 47 months of their USMA education, their developmental pathways might vary in relation to these constructs and, as such, their "contribution" to the average score for the sample would likely change in sub-group specific ways. Therefore, the ergodic assumptions of homogeneity and stationarity would not hold for the sample in this example.

Simply, analysis of the characteristics of a sample through the use of the population statistics would not be appropriate if individuals were different at a specific point in their lives and if their differences followed diverse developmental courses (Molenaar, 2014; Molenaar & Nesselroade, 2014, 2015; Nesselroade & Molenaar, 2010). As documented in the reviews of Cantor, et al. (2018) and Osher, et al. (2018), such individuality is the case in the study of youth development in general, and educational development more specifically. Youth/student development is, then, *non-ergodic*. Therefore, researchers should not use statistical analyses (e.g., the computation of averages and standard deviations) that are reflections of an interest in populations if they are actually interested in individuals (Molenaar & Nesselroade, 2015).

As a consequence, to obtain valid information about developmental processes it is necessary to have the study of within-person change within single individuals as a primary focus of developmental analysis. Toward such analyses, Molenaar and Nesselroade (2015; Nesselroade & Molenaar, 2010) have developed statistical procedures such as the *Idiographic Filter*. The Idiographic Filter recognizes that, although each person may have a specific (individual) course of development, individuals may nevertheless be aggregated if their individual pathways are sufficiently similar at latent levels of analysis to allow groups to be formed. If such groups can be formed, then generalizations across people can be made. Through use of procedures such as the Idiographic Filter, developmental scientists may capture the unique features of within-person change and, as well, produce generalities about groups.

To indicate the research implications of this approach, it is important to understand the *"specificity principle"* (Bornstein, 2017). This principle involves researchers asking a multi-part "what" question when conducting programmatic research exploring the function, structure, and content of development of diverse youth. For instance, in seeking to understand how the diverse young people who enter USMA each year may have a specific series of individual ⇔

context relations associated with the development of character virtues and leadership, researchers might undertake programs of research framed by a multi-part question such as: "What features of character virtue development and leadership emerge; that are linked to what trajectory of individual ⇔ context relations; for cadets of what sets of individual psychological, behavioral, and demographic characteristics; having lived in what families, communities, geographic areas, and physical ecologies; at what points in their pre-USMA education within what historical periods (e.g., graduation class-cohorts)?"

Accordingly, through conducting programmatic research addressing such specificity-based questions, the particular sets of individual ⇔ context relations involved in the life of a specific cadet may be identified and, as well, the specific relations associated with his or her development of character and leadership may be discovered (e.g., see Rose, 2016). Therefore, one key outcome of such specificity principle-framed research can be the identification of the diverse ways in which individual ⇔ context relations may capitalize on the potential for plasticity in human life and result in cohorts of USMA cadets who make successful transitions to become leaders of character for the U.S. military and our nation (Spencer & Spencer, 2014; Spencer, Swanson, & Harpalani, 2015).

Conclusions

The approach to the assessment of character virtue and leadership development that we have summarized may be of great ecological validity to USMA leaders across the pillars of the institution. A developmental approach to the assessment of character and leadership development will provide USMA, and other institutions adopting this approach, with a distinctly important evidence base.

This evidence will provide a useful empirical rationale for individualizing the resources needed to enhance a cadet's developmental trajectory across the course of their education. In addition, the evidence base may be useful for designing and delivering, for specific groups of cadets, the individual-context relations that maximize the likelihood that they will succeed at West Point and as commissioned military officers.

Of course, whereas the developmental approach to assessment that we have described can provide the evidence base enabling institutional leaders to make decisions about how to best invest in the educational experience provided at West Point, there are challenges involved in instantiating this approach. We have learned that institutional leaders need to emphasize to the entire USMA community that research is essential

> *A developmental approach to the assessment of character and leadership development will provide USMA, and other institutions adopting this approach, with a distinctly important evidence base.*

for creating an evidence base necessary for evaluating and/or changing institutional policy. As such, leaders need to ask all members of the community to support and participate in data collection. To create such advocacy for research by leadership, researchers need to provide institutional leaders with collaborative input into plans for measurement and data analysis. Such access shares ownership of the research with leadership and provides them with direct input into the research vision.

The building of such a partnership enables another challenge to be successfully addressed. Leadership can

emphasize the importance of research and the need for participation in research; however, the institutional personnel who control student schedules must make accommodations to their plans to enable efficient data collection with sufficient numbers of students. Without such accommodations, data collection aspirations will not be successful.

Accordingly, to meet these challenges we sought to both integrate the research team with the leadership at USMA and with the personnel involved in maximizing opportunities for productive data collection. We created an institutional steering committee with representatives from across the several sectors of USMA. In addition, we embedded post-doctoral fellows at USMA who were responsive to collaborative requests for data collection and/or data analyses from leadership and from key personnel having control of cadet scheduling. These approaches enabled us to create a mutually-beneficial partnership.

With the approach to collaboration, we have been able to present USMA leadership, faculty, and staff with evidence enabling understanding of the specific combinations of individual and contextual variables that need to be integrated, at specific times in the lives of specific cadets, to enhance the probability of specific character and leadership developmental outcomes emerging across the USMA 47-month educational experience. The generation and dissemination of such evidence can be a beacon for directing higher education institutions seeking methods for and approaches to the character development of their students in the service of building evidence bases for enhancing character virtue development..

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ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Holding Higher Education to Account: Measuring What Matters in the Development of Students as Leaders

Ryan P. Brown, The Ann & John Doerr Institute for New Leaders, Rice University

Lebena Varghese, The Ann & John Doerr Institute for New Leaders, Rice University

ABSTRACT

A common claim among institutions of higher education is that "we make leaders." Although the vast majority of leaders will certainly pass through the hallowed halls of colleges and universities, whether and to what extent educational institutions have any actual impact on leader development is an open question with little supporting evidence. What would such evidence look like if we were to search for it? And how might we use an evidence-based approach to increase the effectiveness of leader development initiatives in higher education? This article describes a new initiative at Rice University, the Ann and John Doerr Institute for New Leaders, the purpose of which is to increase the leadership capacity of students across the entire university. This institute takes an evidence-based approach to leader development, uses only professional leader developers in its work, and self-skeptically determines success and failure through rigorous measurement of outcomes. We present preliminary evidence of progress in student leader development, along with a call for a more scientific approach to leader development throughout institutions of higher education.

Universities have long espoused the goal of developing the next generation of leaders as being central to their educational missions. Indeed, a common claim made by institutions of higher education, at least in the U.S., is that "we make leaders." Clearly defining what such a developmental process might entail, however, remains an ongoing challenge for universities, and measuring the extent to which they are succeeding in reaching this noble goal is both difficult and rare. Without a firm commitment to honest and rigorous measurement, no institution can hope to make consistent progress in developing students as leaders. Indeed, even if they managed to make progress, how would they know they had been successful? Evaluating successes and failures empirically is the only way to discern which efforts are yielding the desired results, and which efforts should be abandoned.

This article describes the approach of one leader development program to take measurement seriously and describes some of the preliminary findings that have derived from its work. We begin by describing what we see as some of the most prominent issues plaguing leader development initiatives within higher education. Subsequently, we detail our attempt at addressing these issues and the steps we have taken at the Doerr Institute for New Leaders to create a leader development program that is both impactful and sustainable. Finally, we present examples of the types of data we have gathered to evaluate program effectiveness, ending with an exhortation for those willing to take leader development seriously.

What Is the Problem?

The challenges of defining what success looks like and measuring the (potential) benefits of leader development initiatives are not limited to higher education. The world beyond the ivory tower fares only a little better when it comes to determining whether leader development programs are worth the hefty price paid by many corporations (Lacerenza, Reyes, Marlow, Joseph, & Salas, 2017). Claims about benefits are commonplace, but the quality of and evidence supporting many leader development initiatives vary widely across organizations (Harvard Business Publishing, 2016). Indeed, the landscape of social interventions in general, whether leadership-related or otherwise, is riddled with the refuse of good intentions. All too often, social interventions fail to produce any measureable benefits that stand the test of time and attempts at replication. With greater frequency than many people might expect, such interventions even do more harm than good, despite the grand intentions of those who implement them (Wilson, 2011).

Ryan P. Brown, Ph.D., is the Managing Director for Measurement at Rice University's Doerr Institute for New Leaders. He has authored or co-authored over 50 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on topics ranging from interpersonal forgiveness to the role of culture in mental health. In 2016, he published *Honor Bound: How a Cultural Ideal Has Shaped the American Psyche* (Oxford University Press). Before joining the Doerr Institute, he was the L. J. Semrod Presidential Professor of Psychology at the University of Oklahoma, where he also served as the associate chair of the Department of Psychology and as a co-founder of the Institute for the Study of Human Flourishing.

Lebena Varghese, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral research fellow at Rice University's Doerr Institute for New Leaders, where she helps examine the impact of the Institute's initiatives on students' growth and development as leaders. Prior to joining the Doerr Institute, she worked in the survey research team at ACT, examining ways to increase survey response rates. Her previous research examined the impact of workplace mentoring on career advancement and stress reduction.

When this occurs, we might do well to ask how it is that our good intentions failed to produce the changes we wished to see. What went wrong? Were there important moderators that we failed to consider? Was the central failure at the level of our ideas or our execution of those ideas? Without careful empirical analysis along the way, we cannot hope to answer these questions reliably. Whether in the realm of leader development or any other domain of social intervention, we should take an evidence-based, empirical approach if we want to learn from our failures and accurately identify our successes.

Of course, recognizing that we ought to take such an approach to evaluating our intervention efforts and actually implementing a rigorous measurement system are two very different things. In the realm of leader development, we might get derailed from measuring outcomes by a failure to define what leadership is, or to decide whether we want to be focused on leadership education (teaching people about leadership and theories of leadership) or leader development (helping people grow in their leadership capacities; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Strum, & Mckee, 2014). If we manage to overcome these obstacles, we still have to define what success would look like in order to begin the process of empirically evaluating whether and to what extent our efforts are producing the fruits that we intended.

A room filled with leadership experts might find it difficult to reach consensus on what these fruits should look like. And even if they do manage to reach a consensus, someone is likely to point out that measuring outcomes is risky. What if our efforts produce little evidence of meaningful, lasting change?

Would such a failure threaten our sources of funding? Once our funding is lost and our reputation damaged, could we realistically hope to secure new funds again in order to start over? Might it be better, in the end,

to try to convince people that we must be successful because (1) we are the leadership experts, after all, and (2) just look at how many students have passed through our programs! If no one pauses long enough to consider these two assertions carefully, they just might be enough to satisfy the casual critic and allow us to continue simply doing what we have always done.

As long as assertions of expertise satisfy the call for evidence-based practices and body counts are our central index of success, leader development at institutions of higher education will be little more than empty promises. We will not know if we are being successful, nor will we know which of our programs or initiatives is responsible for any successes we might

> *...measuring outcomes is risky. What if our efforts produce little evidence of meaningful, lasting change?*

achieve. Consequently, we might pour our resources into many programs that fail to produce any benefits, while failing to fund those that might truly advance our goals at levels that could make a real difference in developing students as leaders.

An Evidence-Based Solution

The Doerr Institute for New Leaders began in 2015 with a strategic gift from Ann and John Doerr to Rice University. This gift was given to elevate the leadership capacity of Rice students across the entire university, and by doing so, to inspire other universities around the country to develop students as leaders in a similar, evidence-based fashion. Since its inception, the Doerr Institute has operated according to four "First Principles": (1) leader development should be considered a core function of a college or university (consistent with the claims so often made by those in higher education); (2) leader development initiatives should use evidence-based approaches, rather than simply following the latest fad or long-beloved

method (3) leader development initiatives should employ professional leader developers, not just well-intentioned but untrained volunteers; and finally, (4) rigorous measurement of desired outcomes (not just body counts) should preside over any serious leader development enterprise.

Although each of these principles is equally important, in this article we focus on principal 4, the careful measurement of outcomes that informs the continuation or retirement of programs within the Institute. The optimal way to ensure that our programs are making an impact is to evaluate them empirically. Evaluation fosters program designers' decision-making processes (e.g., continue/discontinue a program, make a change in the program content or approach) and enables them to ensure that programs are delivering on objectives (Ely, Boyce, Nelson, Zaccaro, Hernez-Broom, & Whyman, 2010; Grinnel, Gabor, & Unrau, 2015). Evaluating a program is a complex process that involves multiple phases, such as working closely with stakeholders to articulate objectives; pilot-testing instruments (e.g., surveys, behavioral exercises, observation rubrics) that will be used for data collection; disseminating results to the key stakeholders at strategic times (e.g., mid-program, end-of-program); and closing the evaluation loop — integrating findings from current evaluation efforts to amend existing plans and program objectives (if necessary).

At the Doerr Institute, the measurement team follows the process described above to help the implementation team measure its outcomes. However, to measure outcomes we need to establish a set of criteria. We borrow from Kirkpatrick's (2009) taxonomy (reaction, learning, behavior, and results) to identify types of evaluation criteria. Measuring outcomes at the results level refers to linking the impact of leader development programs to organizational metrics, but because we expect our student "clients" to graduate in a relatively short time span, we are less interested in assessing

institutional outcomes at this level of the taxonomy than most businesses tend to be. The mission of our institute is to increase the leadership capacity of all students within our university across all colleges, disciplines, and school levels (i.e., undergraduate and graduate). Thus, we are ultimately interested in the degree of personal transformation experienced by students who participate in our programs, rather than changes to the university itself. Therefore, we focus on evaluating our programs against criteria that fall within the first three levels of the taxonomy. In addition to summative assessments, we also carry out formative assessments of our programs. Summative assessments provide evidence for the ultimate effectiveness of a training program. In contrast, formative assessments focus on internal processes and help to identify process-related features that could lead to improvements in the quality of training and the ultimate impact that we want to achieve (Ely et al., 2010).

Our implementation team has created initiatives that fall into three broad types — namely, *Activation* (one-on-one coaching), *Synthesis* (group coaching around a common theme), and *Catalyst* (more narrowly-focused skills-based training). The measurement team at the Doerr Institute does not play a role in content development for any of these programs. Nonetheless, the measurement team engages with the implementation team to identify the objectives of training initiatives and determine how best to measure these objectives in a scientific manner. This process is fundamental and is analogous to a scientist determining how to operationalize his or her hypotheses in an experiment. One could easily conclude that a program has little to no impact if the construct being measured is not actually the intended outcome. Similarly, a common pitfall of leader development initiatives is the creation of overly idealistic objectives (e.g., turning average, 18-year-old students into transformational leaders over lunch). It is important to be realistic about the impact potential of a two-hour workshop, as opposed to the

impact of an intensive, long-term, immersive training opportunity. In the former instance, the outcome is likely to be witnessed at the reaction and awareness level rather than at the behavioral level.

The measurement team also determines the design of the overall evaluation strategy. As leadership scholars have observed, cross-sectional designs that examine simple, bi-variate associations diminish the strength of the inferences we can draw from our evaluation efforts (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumba, & Chan, 2009; Feldman & Lankau, 2005). Therefore, at the very least, we adopt a pre/post comparison design to examine the impact of our programs, sometimes including longitudinal assessments that span a year or more in time. In the case of certain programs, we

initiatives, this program combines structured feedback and goal setting with individually tailored coaching and informal social accountability. The Synthesis program moves this one-on-one coaching into a peer group setting under a common theme, such as leading with confidence or overcoming perfectionism, and employs professional coaches as group facilitators. Finally, the Catalyst program narrows the scope of training even more to focus on specific leader competencies, such as how to give effective feedback, or how to launch a team. Each of these initiatives has its own, unique objectives. Consequently, outcome measures for each initiative are unique as well. Here, we will focus our discussion of program impacts on the Activation program, as we currently have more data associated with this program than with any other.

> *All students, regardless of major or background, are eligible to participate in the Institute's leader development initiatives.*

go a step further and adopt a quasi-experimental or experimental design with one or more comparison groups comprising students who are not exposed to our training program and who are matched on key demographic and motivational variables. Such evaluation designs enhance our confidence in the conclusions we make about the impact we are having on students and allow us to determine how long a program's effects last. A program with a small but long-lasting impact might be deemed more valuable than a program with a large but more temporary effect.

Preliminary Evidence of Developmental Impact

The Doerr Institute currently has three core programs designed to help students develop as leaders (all programs are free of charge and provide no academic credits). The Activation program provides students with an individual, professional leadership coach for a full semester. The oldest and largest of the Institute's

From the inception of the Doerr Institute, professional leadership coaching has been a cornerstone of the Institute's developmental portfolio. Any student at Rice who wants to develop his or her leadership abilities can receive professional, certified leadership coaching for a semester. These coaches are experienced professionals who work with executives in the business community and other leaders, and they receive ongoing, specialized training from the Doerr Institute on working with college students and on the specifics of the Rice University culture. Students do not have to compete to receive a coach, nor do they have to pay for this service. Thus, the Institute does not create any direct or indirect filters on the populations it serves. All students, regardless of major or background, are eligible to participate in the Institute's leader development initiatives.

Consequently, the Institute has managed to attract an almost perfect cross-section of the student body across every demographic or personality characteristic that we have measured (more on this later).

All coaching through the institute begins with an assessment of a student's emotional intelligence, using a validated tool called the EQi-2.0 (Stein & Book, 2011). There are many conceptual models and approaches to the measurement of emotional intelligence in the research literature, and the Doerr Institute does not take a hard line on which model is best. Rather, we use the EQi-2.0 (a so-called "mixed model" measure of emotional intelligence; Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005) because its predictive validity is supported by research (e.g., O'Boyle Jr., Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2011), is efficient to administer, provides easily understood feedback to students, and facilitates discussions of the types of trainable "soft skills" that help to distinguish great leaders from poor ones, beyond cognitive skills or basic personality. Students debrief this assessment with their coaches and then complete a standardized leader development plan, in which they engage in a process of self-reflection on what the concept of leadership means to them and on their own ideals and values in the leadership domain. Students reflect on and articulate what they believe the best version of themselves as a leader might look like, and then they create a focused plan for how to grow toward this ideal. The leader development plan follows a research-based format for effective goal setting, and following its co-creation between the student and coach, goal progress is defined and monitored throughout the remainder of the coaching engagement. Examples of some of the most common leadership goals set by students are self-confidence, interpersonal skills, self-regulation, self-awareness, effective communication, and empathic engagement.

To evaluate whether professional coaching is effective in enhancing students' capacity to lead, the Institute has created a multi-dimensional, multi-method evaluation process that includes (but is not limited to) the following types of data:

1. **Reaction-Level Data.** At the most basic level, the Institute gathers data from students on every interaction between them and their coach. Students report on the perceived value of each coaching session, articulate their goal-related action steps, and evaluate their goal progress throughout the semester. Although it is critical to examine such reaction data to identify process-related opportunities for improvement, we will not discuss these low-level outcomes further in this article.

2. **Pre-Post Developmental Change Data.** Students complete a multi-item *Authentic Leader Identity Scale* (see Appendix) before and after a semester-long coaching engagement, which typically spans 4 to 5, hour-long sessions. This pre-post assessment allows the Institute to determine whether any growth in leader identity has occurred over time across all students engaged in the coaching process. Authentic leader identity comprises self-categorization as a leader, self-confidence as a leader, value-behavior consistency, and self-awareness of leadership strengths and weaknesses. Research shows that developing a strong leader identity is a fundamental part of motivation and skill development as a leader (Day & Harrison, 2007; Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009). Additional pre-post measures are included each semester, including measures of well-being (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), sense of purpose (Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006), and self-concept clarity (Campbell, Trapnell, Henie, & Katz, 1996).

3. **Comparative Data**. Data from a campus-wide student survey, on which we have included the Authentic Leader Identity Scale, allow us to compare the leader identity scores of coached students to those of students who have never been coached and to examine the extent to which leader identity changes over the course of a student's college education.

4. **Independent Observational Data.** During one semester, students participating in the coaching program were solicited to recruit a friend, roommate, or teammate who knew them well enough to provide some observations about them. The Institute subsequently asked these acquaintances to evaluate how much growth they had observed in the student who had been coached across a range of variables that reflected common coaching goals, as well as two "foils" that were not expected to be student goals or to reflect secondary effects of leadership coaching (in other words, these foils provided discriminant validity as "non-dependent variables").

5. **Behavioral Data.** Finally, we have obtained behavioral impact data through a campus-wide, senior exit survey administered by the university. This survey asks graduating students to indicate which leadership roles they have held in the past year. The survey includes every such role available at the university, so seniors simply have to select the roles they have held. We have coded these leadership roles for the levels of leadership responsibility that they involve, using a coding system validated by a set of subject matter experts at the university. This coding system allows us to calculate an *emergent leadership experience* (or ELE) score for every senior. This ELE score gives us a behavioral index of formal leadership engagement through which we can evaluate one type of impact the Doerr Institute might have on students.

Pre-Post Developmental Change Data: Over multiple, large samples, we have found that students who worked with a leadership coach exhibit substantial changes in their leader identity scores over the course of a semester. We measure these students' leader identity scores at the beginning of the semester when they sign up to receive coaching. These scores are measured again in the middle of the semester on a campus-wide survey (we return to this survey's results shortly). These leader identity scores are measured a final time at the

Figure 1

Leader Identity Scores
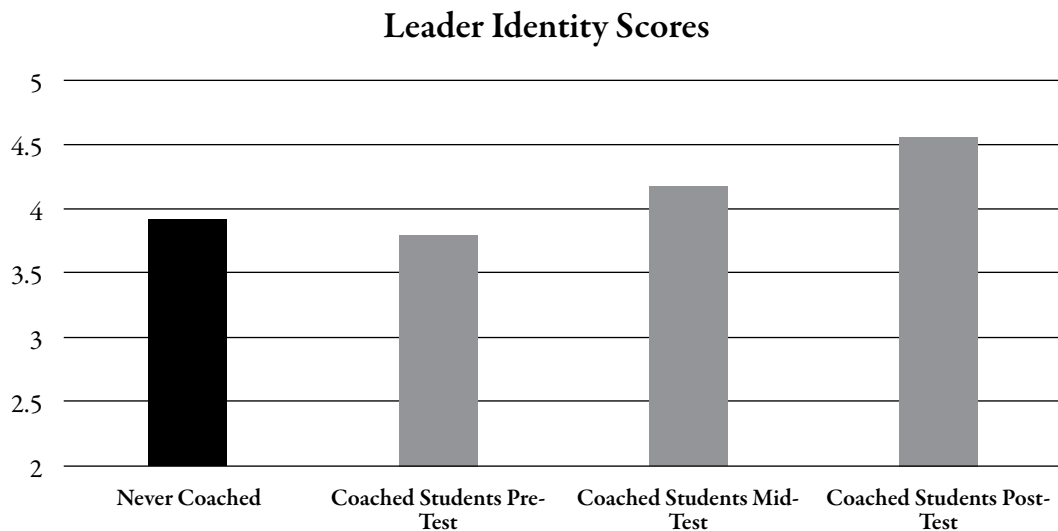
Note: Scores on the Authentic Leader Identity scale range from 1 to 5 and reflect the average response across 9 items.

end of the semester as part of the final evaluation of the coaching experience, among a set of other measures. Mean leader identity scores for coached students at these three time points (before, during, and after coaching) are shown in Figure 1, alongside their non-coached peers (left-most bar). The growth in leader identity among coached students from pre to post is statistically significant (t[183] = 20.04, $p <$ .001), substantial in effect size (Cohen's $d > 1.3$), and replicable over multiple semesters.

Comparative Data. These changes in leader identity parallel changes we have measured in psychological well-being, sense of purpose, and self-concept clarity. Specifically, satisfaction with life (Diener, et al., 1985)

increased significantly from pretest to posttest[1], as did sense of purpose[2] (Steger, et al., 2006) and self-concept clarity[3] (Campbell, et al., 1996). These changes in primary and secondary outcomes are consistent with evidence from experimental studies on the effects of coaching outside of higher education, although our effects are somewhat larger than the results of some prior studies using older study participants (Burt & Talati, 2017).

In contrast to these results among coached students,

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1   Pretest $M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.80$; Posttest $M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.76$; t(179) = 9.59, $p < .001$, $d = 0.72$.
2   Pretest $M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.93$; Posttest $M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.84$; t(176) = 8.14, $p < .001$, $d = 0.61$.
3   Pretest $M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.71$; Posttest $M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.75$; t(178) = 10.19, $p < .001$, $d = 0.76$.

Figure 2

"Natural" Trajectory of Leader Identity Over Time (Without Intervention)
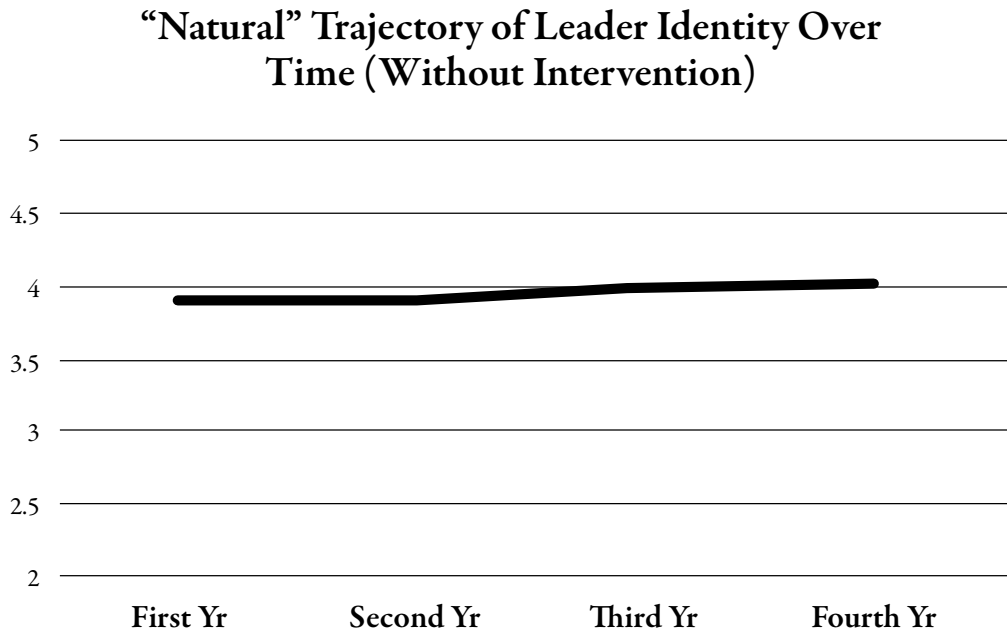
Note: Sample includes over 2200 students who have not participated in one-on-one leader development coaching through the Doerr Institute.

when we examined leader identity scores in a large sample of non-coached students, we found that leader identity does not change appreciably over time without intervention (see Figure 2). In a campus-wide sample of over 2,200 students who had *not* worked with a leadership coach, average leader identity scores of first-year students were barely distinguishable from those of sophomores, juniors, or seniors (although with these large sample sizes the overall ANOVA was statistically significant)[4]. What small differences emerged across year in school might even be attributable to selection bias in survey engagement or to selective institutional attrition. The implications of this rather flat line are worth pausing to ponder. Essentially, these data indicate that after four years of an elite college education, without purposeful intervention, students graduate with little more in terms of leader identity than they had as seniors in high school, expressing almost the same degree of self-confidence, self-awareness, and self-categorization as leaders that they had when they began their college education.

The problem of self-selection bias represents a threat to validity in our assessment work. Because participation in our programs is not mandatory for students, perhaps we simply take students who are already on a growth trajectory (for reasons that have nothing to do with us) and claim that their growth is the result of our intervention efforts. Although self-selection bias remains an ever-present concern for the measurement team, we have found that students who come to the Institute to work on their leadership abilities are an almost perfect representation of the overall student body in terms of basic demographics (e.g., gender, major, international vs. domestic origin,

first-generation status, ethnicity) and personality (measured by the Big Five), as well as their tendency to be working on personal development goals (whether leadership-related or otherwise) on their own. In

4   Freshman ($M = 3.91$, $n = 845$); Sophomores ($M = 3.91$, $n = 638$); Juniors ($M = 3.99$, n = 423); Seniors ($M = 4.02$, $n = 371$); $F(3, 2273) = 4.00$, $p < .01$

fact, the only two significant differences we have found between students who participate in leadership coaching and the general student population concern their leader identity scores and their desire to develop their leadership skills. Specifically, students who come to work with us have slightly lower leader identity scores compared to the broader student body, but they also have a slightly greater desire to develop as leaders (a motivation difference that is measured by a single item on a campus-wide survey). Importantly, we have also seen that this desire to develop as a leader was negatively related to increases in leader identity over a semester in a sample of over 100 students engaged in professional coaching. Thus, one of the only differences we have found between students who sign up to work with a leadership coach and the rest of the study body is actually predictive of less growth on our focal outcome measure. We are currently designing a randomized, wait-list-controlled study to examine the roles of motivation and formal intervention on changes in leader identity.

Independent Observational Data. Recently, we asked all of our professional coaches working with students to nominate the students who they believed grew the most over the course of the semester, as well as the students who grew the least (all other students received no nomination, so they are placed in the "average growth" category in Figure 3 below). The data below reflect changes in leader identity from before to after coaching from over 260 students. These data show that students who coaches believed grew the most also exhibited the largest changes in leader identity, followed by students in the average growth group, and then students who coaches believed grew the least. It is noteworthy that even students in the least-growth group still increased significantly in leader identity, although their growth was significantly less than that of students in the most-growth group. Note also that coaches did not have access to student self-report data, so their growth nominations were made independently of student self-reports.

Figure 3

Leader Identity Change (Pre to Post) as a Function of Professional Coaches' Growth Nominations
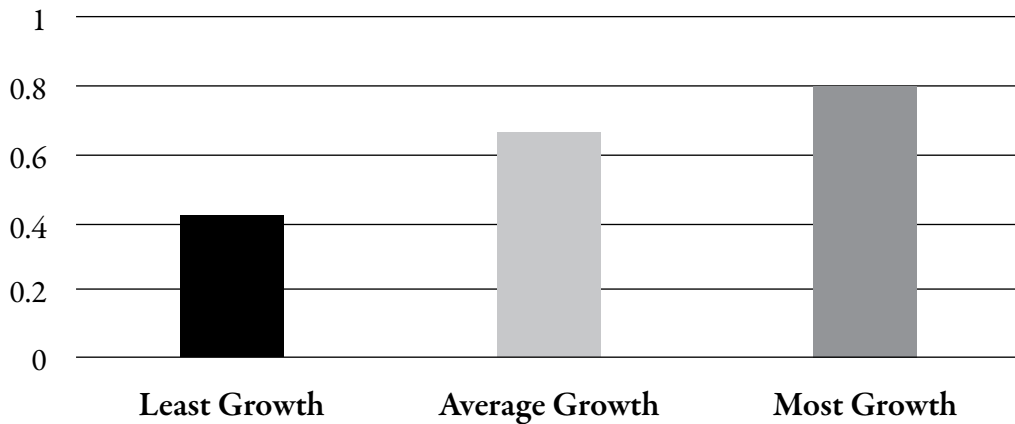
Note: Change scores (post-test leader identity minus pretest leader identity) are statistically significant (i.e., different from 0) for all three groups.

Similarly, in another study we surveyed roommates, teammates, and friends (hereafter, "acquaintances") of students who were being coached at the beginning and end of the semester. These acquaintances made a series of observations at the end of the semester about the levels and types of growth that they had observed in their coached friends. Twenty-five complete friend pairs (coached and non-coached students) were sampled.

Examination of the observational ratings provided by acquaintances at the end of the semester provides additional validating evidence for the pre-post changes in leader identity we have measured. Acquaintances rated observed growth in coached students along dimensions that prior data indicated would likely represent common coaching goals within the sample, as well as two "foils" (enthusiasm for university athletics,

and concern for the environment). Ratings range from 1 (*none at all*) to 7 (*a great deal*). Goal-related growth was, on average, significantly higher[5] than was growth on the foils[6],[7]. Except in the case of self-control and self-confidence, this was particularly true among students who actually identified the domain as being one of their goals (the left bars in Figure 4). It is noteworthy that all coached students were rated by their acquaintances as having grown in self-confidence, regardless of whether or not self-confidence was one of their goals.

Behavioral Data. Finally, we obtained behavioral data on the impact of leadership coaching via a campus-wide senior exit survey administered by Rice at the end of the spring semester for graduating

5   (*M* = 4.6)
6   (*M* = 3.0)
7    $t(24) = 4.98, p < .001$

students. This survey asks students to indicate which campus leadership roles they have held in the past year, and we coded these roles for the levels of leadership responsibility that they involve, using a coding system validated by a set of subject matter experts at the university. Using these codes, we can calculate an Emergent Leadership Experience (or ELE) score for every senior, which gives us a behavioral index of formal leadership engagement across the entire senior class.

To be clear, the Institute does not define leadership in a positional manner, nor does it equate "success" in any leader development program with the number of people who become presidents or CEOs. The Doerr Institute also does not encourage students to run for campus-wide offices or insist that they take on formal roles within student clubs or businesses. Nonetheless, if students are truly being developed as leaders, and if

the coaching-related psychological changes we have described here are more than just internal shifts in students' personal narratives, then we should expect to see some students evidencing a greater willingness to step into formal leadership roles after working with the Doerr Institute. If their peers agree that they are ready to lead, then their greater personal willingness ought to translate into greater success in stepping into leadership roles with higher levels of responsibility.

For comparison purposes, we created a matched sample of graduating seniors to compare the ELE scores of students who had worked with a professional leadership coach with those of students who had not. Coached students were matched at a 1:2 ratio with non-coached students on gender, ethnicity, and major. The GPAs at graduation of these groups were incidentally identical (3.60 for both groups). Emergent leadership

Figure 4

Growth Ratings by Goal Relevance

Legend: ■ Relevant to Own Goals ■ Not Relevant to Own Goals
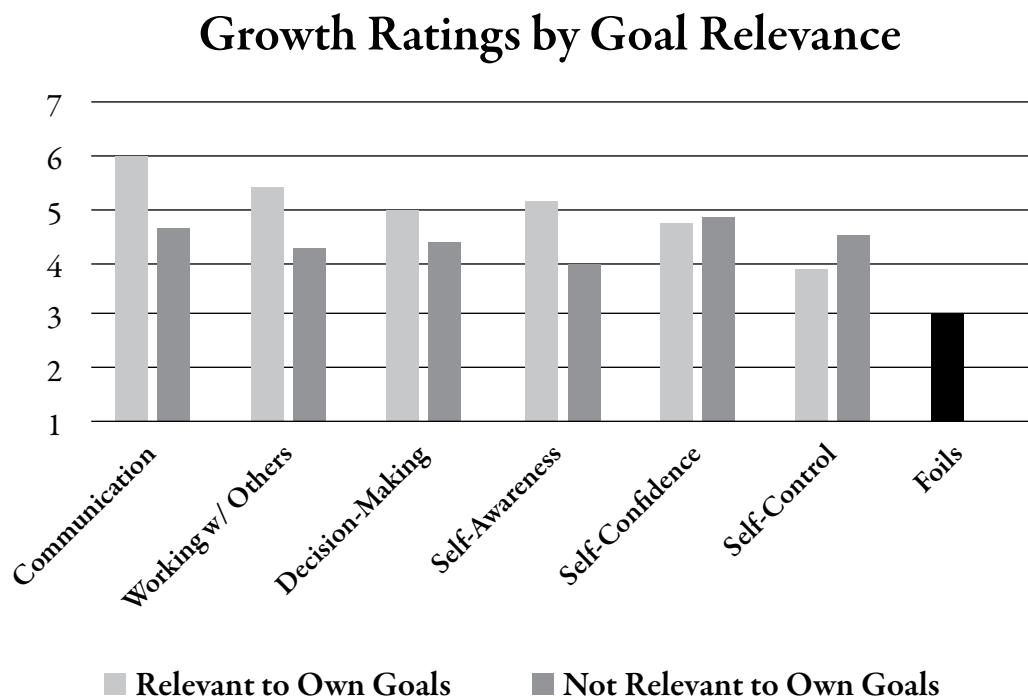
Figure 5

Emergent Leadership Experience (ELE) Scores as a Function of Leader Identity and Engagement with the Doerr Institute
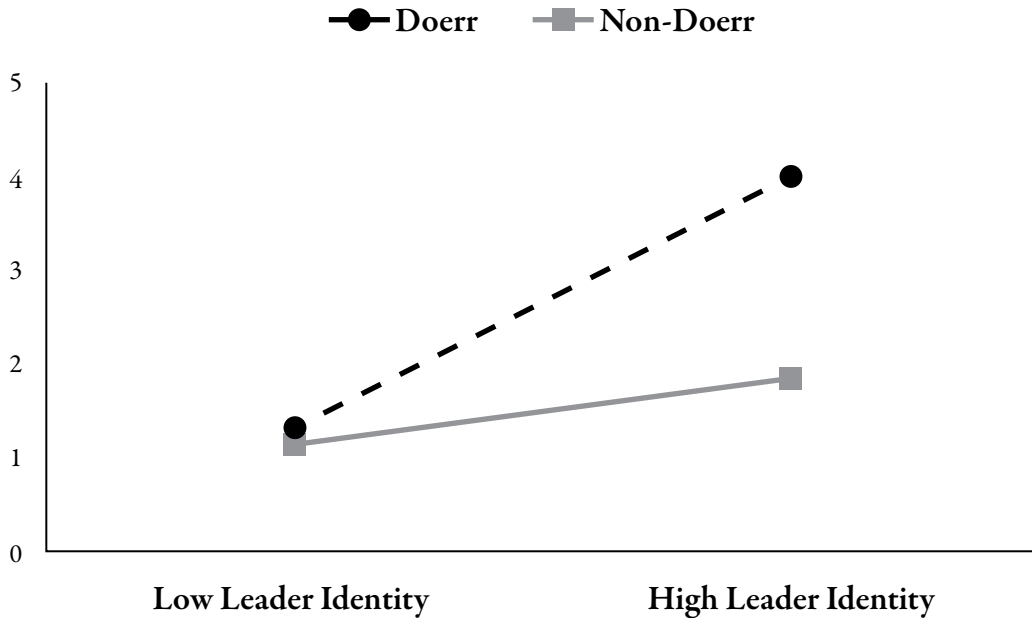
experience scores ranged from 0 to 17. An ANCOVA on ELE scores as a function of coaching status (coached vs. non-coached), controlling for gender, GPA, and international vs. domestic status, revealed a significant difference between students who were coached[8] and students who were not[9,10].

In data from a previous cohort, we had observed that less than half the graduating seniors (47%) had earned any ELE points — thus, all of the formal leading across the university is done by less than half the student body. Analysis of whether or not students earned any ELE points as seniors revealed that whereas 42% of non-coached students earned 1 or more ELE points, 61%

of coached students did so (not including any students who were coached as seniors) — a substantial increase in levels of leadership responsibility, despite the lower starting levels of leader identity among students who come to the Doerr Institute seeking development.

Beyond this simple association between ELE scores and engagement with the Doerr Institute, we have found that leader identity scores (measured in the fall of students' senior year) and their ELE scores (measured at the end of the spring) are significantly associated with one another, but only among students who had previously engaged with the Doerr Institute (we did not include data from students who engaged with us during their senior year, as there would be no way for the Doerr Institute to have an impact on the

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8   ($M = 2.45$, n = 174)
9   ($M = 1.49$, n = 384)
10   $F(1, 553) = 14.61$, $p < .001$

leadership roles held by those students as seniors). As Figure 5 below shows, students with stronger leader identity scores also held greater levels of leadership responsibility (as evidenced by their ELE scores)[11], but this association was weaker and not statistically significant among students who had not engaged with the Doerr Institute[12], (in other words, leader identity interacted with Doerr Institute engagement in the prediction of students' ELE scores[13]). Importantly, students with weak leader identities were very unlikely to have earned many ELE points, whether they worked with the Doerr Institute or not. Thus, defining oneself as a leader, having confidence to lead, and being self-aware of one's strengths and weaknesses as a leader (all of which are captured by leader identity) seems to be a prerequisite, though not sufficient on its own, to actually serving in high-level, formal leadership roles.

Conclusions, Future Directions, and an Exhortation

The Doerr Institute's mission is to enhance the leadership capacity of Rice students across the entire university. Central to this mission is the rigorous measurement of outcomes, which enables the Institute to avoid falling prey to many of the pitfalls that are endemic to such endeavors—including such problems as group think, the confirmation bias, and the Good Samaritan bias (assuming you are having the effects that you intend to have simply because you mean well).

As the preliminary evidence shows, the impact of just one of the Institute's programs, one-on-one leadership coaching, appears to be quite meaningful and crosses the domains of cognition, emotion, and behavior. Current and future projects will continue to explore and test the limits of these preliminary findings. One such ongoing study investigates some of the secondary benefits of one-on-one professional coaching described here. This study includes appropriate comparison groups that also take our measures of well-being and

authentic leader identity, and it also includes a measure of a potential mediator of the apparent coaching benefits (changes in self-concept clarity). One of the comparison groups completes the same leader development plan that "Doerr students" work on with the help of their professional coach, so the inclusion of this element of the study will allow us to determine whether simply a little guided self-reflection and goal setting might be sufficient to produce at least some of the benefits that we have documented within our coaching program. The secondary benefits of leadership coaching that we have found also suggest the possibility of a variety of other, tertiary benefits, including benefits to academic performance, retention, and perhaps even athletic performance (for student athletes) that we plan to examine in the coming years.

Although this has not been the focus of our measurement efforts, the university itself might also experience some important benefits as a consequence of the Doerr Institute's programs, especially in the area of student recruitment. Given the competition among elite, selective universities for the highest caliber students, schools that offer such intensive leader development programs ought to realize a competitive advantage over those that do not, once the existence and merits of such programs become known to prospective students (and their parents). Anecdotally, we are beginning to see some evidence that this is the case at Rice (e.g., a 20% increase in applications to Rice in the last year alone, with explicit references to the Doerr Institute in student application essays), but more rigorous investigation is warranted.

Beyond the practical, competitive advantages that might accrue to schools that decide to take leader development more seriously (treating it as a core function of the institution and thinking carefully and systematically about desired outcomes that are then rigorously measured), we believe there is a moral dimension to doing so that should not be overlooked. Yes, many (if not most) schools claim to be developing

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11   $\beta = 0.47$, $p < .001$
12   $\beta = 0.12$, $p = .095$
13   $\beta = 0.20$, $p < .01$

the next generation of leaders. And it is clear that colleges and universities house the next generation of leaders in campus dorm rooms, feed them in campus dining halls, and teach them in campus classrooms. But whether schools actually develop them as leaders is an entirely different question. If data from our own university are representative of higher education more generally, then this common claim about the development of students as leaders should be called into question. Without direct, empirical evidence to support their claims, universities should be held to account in the same way that we would hold a drug company accountable for claims about the effectiveness of its pharmaceutical products. Empirical claims should always be backed up by data. Without real outcome data, the claims made by universities about leader development are little more than empty promises (Kaiser & Curphy, 2013).

But the moral dimension of leader development concerns not just whether we are making fraudulent claims, but whether we are failing to do what we ought to be doing in higher education. The need for great leaders has never been greater than it is today. Nations have the capacity to destroy the world 10 times over, at the same time as international cooperation and alliance give way to creeping nationalism and protectionism. Even if humanity manages to avoid nuclear or biological self-destruction, climate change threatens to step in and destroy the planet more slowly, but just as surely. Solving such complex problems will require strong leadership from many quarters, not just within a single nation, and even if we were to solve all of the major problems facing humanity today, the next generation would be certain to face its own set of new problems tomorrow. Surely we can do better than we are doing now to prepare this next generation of leaders in our institutions of higher education, so they are truly ready to take the helm as leaders when their time comes. Raising our game to match the rising stakes of poor leadership will require a commitment to specifying and measuring objectives, but we already know how to do this. We simply have to commit to treating leader development like we treat other types of training and development and make leadership a priority.

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Appendix: The Authentic Leader Identity Scale

The Authentic Leader Identity scale is a brief integration of multiple facets of a person's leadership self-construal, including self-categorization as a leader, leadership self-efficacy, motivation to lead, authenticity, and self-awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses as a leader. In a sample of over 2,800 students, these 9 items exhibited a largely unidimensional structure in a principal axis factor analysis, with weaker secondary factors distinguishing items 1-4 from items 5-9. For examples of related measures of leader identity, see Chan and Drasgow (2001), Hiller (2005), and Day et al. (2009).

Response scale: 1 (*Disagree strongly*) to 5 (*Agree strongly*)

Items ($\alpha = .89$):

1. I see myself as a leader.

2. I feel confident to lead when opportunities arise.

3. I have a desire to pursue roles in which I can be a leader.

4. I have a clear understanding of my strengths as a leader.

5. I feel confident enough in my personal convictions that I would assert them even if it meant disagreeing with friends, teammates, or colleagues.

6. I am comfortable expressing an unpopular position when I feel it is appropriate.

7. I act in ways that are consistent with my values.

8. I understand the ways that my weaknesses as a leader can affect others.

9. I have a clear sense of my values and core beliefs.

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Evaluating and Assessing the Ethical Leadership Framework for Air Force Leader Development

Laura Parson, Auburn University

Jessica Weise, Auburn University

Kenneth R. Tatum Jr., Air University

Megan Allison, Air University

R. Joel Farrell II, Air University

ABSTRACT

In this paper we discuss the assessment plan for the validation and implementation of the Ethical Leadership Framework (ELF) for leader development in the Air Force. The ELF, informed by research on leader and ethical leadership development, views all leadership within an ethical context, and strategic leadership capacities (e.g., absorptive, strategic, decision-making) are conceptualized as capacities that are also inherently ethical capacities. The ELF will be used, over the next five years, to inform curriculum development at Air University (AU), the lead agent for Air Force education. Prior to beginning the curriculum development process, however, the first task is to validate the conceptual framework. Second, guided by the framework and associated competencies, we will conduct a baseline assessment to identify and describe the leadership knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSA) currently represented in Air University students (e.g., officer, enlisted, civilian cohorts and faculty). The results of the baseline assessment will inform the development of curriculum to reinforce existing strengths and seeks to provide additional education and training, and structure for areas of growth within the framework of the Ethical Leadership Framework.

Introduction

In this paper we discuss the assessment plan for the validation and implementation of the Ethical Leadership Framework (ELF) for leader development in the Air Force via Air University curriculum. Informed by the research and theoretical underpinnings of leadership development, the Ethical Leadership model is a framework informed by the ethical leadership literature to not only address the growing ethical dilemmas military personnel face (Asencio, et al., 2017; Mastroianni, 2011; Meine & Dunn, 2017; Wead, 2015) but also to situate ethical leader development within the context of all leader development in the Air Force. In the past, ethical leadership and ethical thinking frameworks have been treated as separate from overall leadership development (e.g., strategy, decision-making) and ethical decision-making has frequently been addressed as choosing between legal/illegal or right/wrong. In the ELF, all leadership is viewed within an ethical context, and strategic leadership capacities (e.g., absorptive, strategic, decision-making) are conceptualized as capacities that are also inherently ethical capacities. Through the ELF, all leadership development is conceptualized as ethical leadership development (for a full discussion of the conceptual framework and rationale for the ELF, see Parson, Weise, Tatum, Allison, & Farrell, Under Review).

The ELF was developed in support of Air University's 5-year Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) (a requirement of SACSCOC accreditation), *Leadership and Ethics across the Continuum of Learning*. As discussed in the full QEP, Air University has identified three institutional outcomes for the QEP. Air University will:

- Develop a leadership model and leader development framework for the continuum of learning.
- Develop faculty expertise in leadership development.
- Develop a forum for theorists, researchers and practitioners.

In addition, Air University has identified the following QEP Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) for the implementation of the ELF. Students will:

- Understand the domains of strategic-ethical leadership in the context of a developmental continuum across an individual's career.
- Apply leadership development theories and models as appropriate to their career level and roles.
- Demonstrate leadership skills appropriate to their career level and roles.

Laura Parson, Ph.D., has a doctorate in Teaching & Learning, Higher Education from the University of North Dakota. Her research questions seek to understand how pedagogy, classroom climate, institutional environment, curriculum, and faculty characteristics inform student experiences, and how the institution coordinates those factors through translocal practices. She is a qualitative methodologist, with a focus on ethnographic and discourse methods of inquiry. She has facilitated workshops on active learning and effective curriculum design at Auburn University, Snowforce, the University of Louisville School of Medicine, and the Delphi Center for Teaching and Learning.

Jessica Weise is a doctoral student in the Higher Education Administration program at Auburn University. She is a graduate research assistant working with Air University on Maxwell Air Force Base. She has a M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration and a minor in Sport Management from Auburn University and a B.S. in Sociology from Northern Arizona University. Her research interests focus on critical queer studies and examining inequitable power structures in higher education that affect campus climate and institutional processes, and LGBTQIA+ students' sense of belonging.

The development of the ELF directly addressed the first institutional outcome, supports the other two institutional outcomes, and enables the three SLOs. These SLOs guide assessment and curriculum development, and will be adapted as needed according to the first stage of QEP assessment where the ELF is validated through internal and external review.

The ELF will be used to inform leadership curriculum development at Air University, the lead agent for Air Force education. Prior to beginning the curriculum development process, however, the first task is to validate the conceptual framework and make revisions so that the ELF is representative of leadership from a practitioner standpoint and reinforces the ethics and values of the Air Force. As a part of that review, we will develop leadership competencies that describe leadership knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs; while the A in KSA often refers to abilities, in this framework, the A refers to attitudes) to define how the ELF looks in practice. Simultaneously, we will be working with representatives from across Air University programs to develop a curriculum map to describe the current state

and structure of leadership education at Air University. Second, guided by the framework and associated competencies, we will conduct a baseline assessment to identify and describe the leadership KSAs currently represented in Air University students (e.g., officer, enlisted, civilian cohorts) and faculty. The results of the baseline assessment will inform the development of curriculum to reinforce existing strengths and seek to provide additional education, training and structure for areas of growth within the framework of the ELF. We will discuss each of these steps in more detail, beginning with a brief overview of the ELF.

Ethical Leadership Framework (ELF)

Ethical leadership development occurs in two major continuums: sociocognitive and interpersonal. Sociocognitively, ethical leadership development occurs as an individual develops, solidifies, and acts on their internal beliefs about what is moral and right (Immel, 2016). Interpersonally, ethical leadership development occurs within the three Air Force domains: Individual, Team, and Organization. The ELF focuses on leadership development in each of the

Kenneth R. Tatum, Jr., Colonel, USAF (ret), serves as the Director of the Air University Leadership Institute, Maxwell AFB, AL. The mission of the Institute is to develop and deliver a continuum of leadership education across the Air Force. A command pilot with more than 3,900 hours, he flew the F-117A, B-1B and A/T-38A/B/C. He commanded the 9th Fighter Squadron, was the vice commander of the 7th Bomb Wing, vice commandant of the Air War College, and Commander of the Ira C. Eaker Center for Professional Development. He also served on the U.S. Central Command and Office of the Secretary of Defense staffs. Mr. Tatum is a 1989 distinguished graduate of the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Samford University, and is a graduate of the USAF Air Command and Staff College, the USAF School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, and the U.S. Army War College.

Megan Allison, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF (ret), serves as the Deputy Director of the Air University Leadership Institute, Maxwell AFB, Alabama. A command pilot with more than 3,000 hours, she served in various squadron, group and wing positions, flying the C-21A, C-17, MQ-1, MQ-9, and C-146. She commanded the 27th Special Operations Support Squadron at Cannon Air Force Base and served on the Strategic Command Staff. She is a 1998 graduate of the Reserve Officer Training corps program at the University of Virginia, holds two masters degrees (Masters of Business Administration and Masters of Science in National Security & Strategic Studies), and is a graduate of the USN's College of Naval Command & Staff.

domains in order to provide a construct that promotes a deliberate and methodical way to analyze, evaluate, develop, and assess existing and future leadership development programs (Figure 1). The framework seeks to model the relationship between "an individual's understandings of "self," their ability as a "team" leader to create an environment that fosters subordinates' individual development, and the capacity to foster culture/climate of the Air Force as an organization (Figure 2). This, then, represents the bi-directional relationship of influence between the capacities within Airmen and the teams they lead, and the Air Force as a broader organization" (Parson, Weise, Tatum, Allison, and Farrell, Under Review). All learning, but especially ethical leadership learning, begins in the Self domain (Ascencio et al., 2017). Guided by the ELF, Air Force programs and development efforts must ensure Airmen are deliberately developed in these capacities across a continuum of their learning, from introductory concepts during accession and early stages of their careers, to more advanced concepts and applications as they mature in their experiences and levels of responsibility.
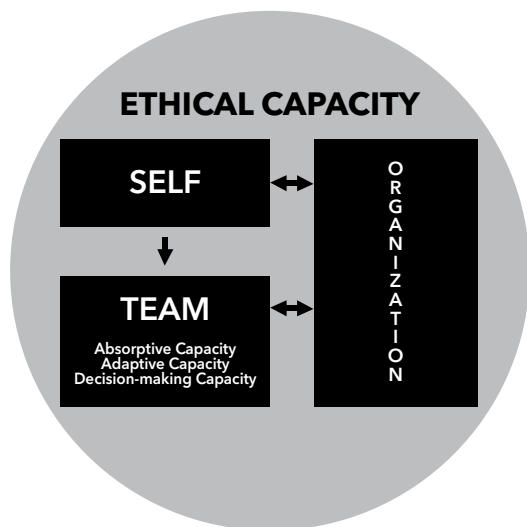
Figure 1: Ethical Leadership Framework

Figure 2: Ethical Leadership Framework in Air Force Organizational Context

R. Joel Farrell II, Ph.D., is the Chief of Institutional Analytics for Air University (AU). He oversees institutional analysis, research, planning, and enhancement. He serves as AU's analytics liaison to external stakeholders and serves on and chairs institutional, U.S. Air Force and Department of Defense councils, committees and working groups. Dr. Farrell has over 25 years of experience in higher education as a counselor, faculty, program director, and university administrator. He teaches and advises in the areas of health, leadership, and ethics. Prior to AU, he served as Associate Provost for Student Support and Academic Services at National Defense University (NDU) with oversight of institutional research, planning and assessment; enrollment management; and the tools/resources to support these. Dr. Farrell holds a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision with a specialization in Educational Psychology from Auburn University, a MEd in Counseling from Auburn, a MS in Religion from Amridge, and completed postdoctoral studies in Bioethics at Georgetown.

The Air Force's stated and espoused Core Values (Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in all We Do), along with accepted normative behaviors and embedded mechanisms, are a significant influence on the broad organizational culture and climate of the Air Force, which influences the development process of Airmen as individuals and leaders of teams (Schein, 2010). The intent of Air University is to educate and develop individual Airmen in each domain so that they can use their knowledge, skills, and attitudes in their unit for application. Guided by the ELF, leadership development at Air University proceeds horizontally and vertically; an Airman develops as a leader horizontally with increasing roles and responsibilities and develops in each domain vertically, deepening their skills as a part of the development process (Figure 3). To be successful, leadership development must be reflected in practice. The ELF guides curriculum development for Air University programs and the curriculum development cycle is guided by continual assessment

of the ethical leadership capabilities of Airmen. This results in a curriculum that is dynamic and responsive to the evolving nature of war, warfighting, and the continued development of Airmen. In that way, the ELF guides the development of a "set of capacities that are developed, nurtured, and eventually adopted as normative practices within the culture and climate of the Air Force as an overall organization" (Parson, Weise, Tatum, Allison, and Farrell, Under Review). The following section provides a brief overview of the three domains of the ELF conceptual framework: Individual, Team, and Organization.

Individual

According to Asencio et al. (2017), the foundation of ethical development is the identification of ethical beliefs and values, such as honesty, courage, responsibility, agreeableness, respect, duty, loyalty, conscientiousness, and empathy, that guides decision-making and moral reasoning (Asencio et al., 2017, Baarle et al., 2015;
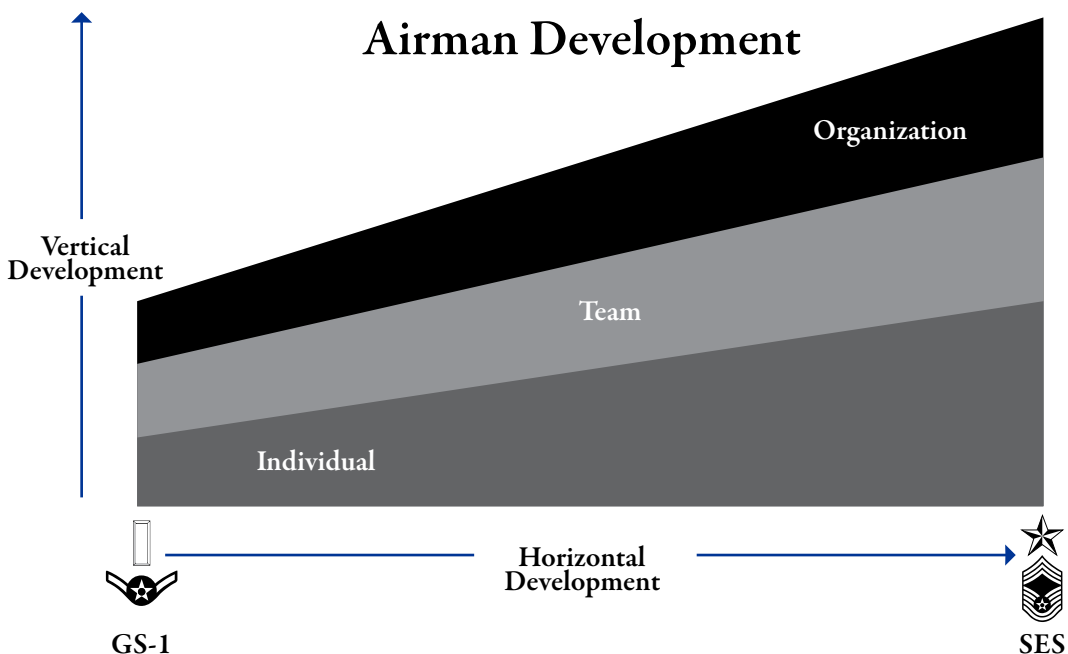
Figure 3: Airman Vertical & Horizontal Development

Ko et al., 2018; Shulzke, 2012; Toner, 2006). At the individual level, Air Force leadership development focuses on helping Airmen to identify and reflect on internal beliefs and to connect their ethical values to Air Force values (Ash, 2011). The goal of leadership development at the individual level is that each Airman understands how their values align with Air Force values and that they are able to see their beliefs as aligned with Air Force organizational ethical beliefs (Ash, 2001).

Team

At the Team level, ethical development is focused on the development of an ethical environment where leaders are able to foster a subordinate's individual ethical development and contribute to the development and reinforcement of the Air Force as an ethical organization. While leaders must continue their individual level ethical development, ethical leadership development at the Team level also involves developing leaders to create an ethical culture for subordinates, which involves moral management and developing subordinates in ethical decision-making (Asencio, Byrne, & Mujkic, 2017; Ko et al., 2018; Schulzke, 2012; Szfranski & Toner, 1994; Warner & Appenzeller, 2011). "Measurable learning outcomes in the Team domain are: (a) model ethical behavior; (b) develop ethical behavior in subordinates; (c) reward ethical behavior in subordinates (morality of aspiration); (d) punish unethical violations equitable (morality of obligation); and (e) foster an environment that supports ethical behavior (e.g., safe, secure, and stable within the constraints of the field)." Within the Team domain, the ELF focuses on three specific strategic capacities of particular interest to the Air Force strategic context: absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity, and decision-making capacity (Ko et al., 2018). These capacities are the foundational traits and skills necessary to create ethical leaders within the demanding Air Force mission and are integral to a developmental continuum across an Airman's career (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000). First, absorptive capacity is one's ability to learn through directed and self-directed learning and apply the knowledge to a specific context (Lane, Koka, &

Pathak, 2006). Absorptive capacity is dependent on the procedures of an organization which includes policy, practices, socialization, and how relationships are facilitated (Daghfous, 2004). Second, adaptive capacity is the individual's ability to change or adapt in moments of incongruence, which requires flexibility, a willingness to seek the input of others, and cognitive and behavioral development (Boal & Whitehead, 1992; Hooijberg, Hunt, & Dodge, 1997; Zacarro, 1996). Development in this capacity requires creativity and innovation to be able to seek out new solutions or options to conflict. Third, decision-making capacity is the ability to understand individual and organizational actors, individual and organizational relationships, and how to make decisions at the appropriate time while creating and maintaining relationships (Gardner, 1985, 1993; Sternberg, 1985; Zaccaro et al., 1991). This tenet of strategic leadership relies on the social intelligence of the individual.

Organization

At the organizational level, leadership development is focused on the facilitation of organizational conditions that provide opportunities for dissent, questions, and clear procedures to report ethical violations (Asencio et al., 2017; Lucas, 2009). An ethical organization creates an environment where ethical behavior is an institutional norm (Weigle & Allen, 2017). "Measurable outcomes in the Organization domain are: (a) reinforce organizational ethical values through modeling, open conversations, rewarding ethical behavior and enforcing punishment equally for violations; (b) create a shared vision; (c) implement checks and balances for personal leadership roles; and (d) provide opportunities for dissent (e.g., dissent channels)."

The holistic vision of the ELF models the professional development/training/education of Airmen across the spectrum of profession, rank, and status. The ELF establishes a broad and solid foundation of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for leadership in the Air Force and continues to develop and deepen

those skills and knowledge throughout an Airman's development continuum, from accessions to senior level development. Accession programs provide the initial education, training, and acculturation foundations for each Services' entry into the Profession of Arms. Primary levels of Professional Military Education (PME), and other equivalent development opportunities, prepare individuals for their career specialties and provide broad Service-oriented education largely centered on the tactical level of war. As the individual progresses across the continuum of a career, the intermediate levels of PME (and equivalent) begin to focus on applying leadership and strategy to joint warfighting and the operational level of war. Senior levels of PME (and equivalent) then focus on the strategic level of leadership and advisement, national security strategy, joint planning systems, and decision-making akin to a medical post-doctoral or residency experience.

Assessment Plan

Stage 1. The assessment process begins by validating the ELF and, if necessary, making revisions to the ELF so that it more accurately reflects the contextual needs of the Air Force. Following a stepwise competency-based curriculum development model (Parson, Weise, Tatum, Allison, and Farrell, Under Review), Stage 1 involved the development of the ELF. Through an in-depth review of the leadership and ethical leadership development empirical literature inside and outside of the military, the authors crafted the ELF as an empirically-based leadership framework.

Stage 2[1]. The purpose of Stage 2 is validation of the

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1   Programs include Squadron Officer School (SOS), Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), Air War College (AWC), School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS), eSchool of Graduate PME, Thomas M. Barnes Center for Enlisted Education programs/courses (Airman Leadership School, NCO Academy, AF Senior NCO Academy, USAF First Sergeant Academy, Chief Master Sergeant Leadership Course, Community College of the Air Force), Jeanne M. Holm Center for Officer Accessions and Citizen Development programs (OTS, AF ROTC), the Muir S. Fairchild Research Information Center, and the Ira C. Eaker Center for Professional Development (numerous military and civilian continuing education courses, Associate of Applied

ELF through the competency-based curriculum design process informed by feedback from key stakeholders representing all major officer, enlisted, and civilian-centered academic programs across Air University. In competency-based curriculum design (Parson, Childs, & Elzie, 2018) competencies are identified through discussions with key stakeholders who can speak to the required Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs) needed to be an effective leader in the Air Force. Using a modified Delphi Method (Hsu & Sandford, 2007), the input of these stakeholders will be sought to understand the current state of leadership development at Air University, the ethics and values of the Air Force both embodied in doctrine and practice, and the vision of the future that seeks to understand how and where ethical leadership development can improve. In addition to feedback from key stakeholders, the literature, Air Force doctrine, and policy/legal references will be revisited to identify leadership KSAs in each of the domains and capacities reflected in the ELF. KSAs will be transformed into competencies by making them active, behavioral statements – identifying how the KSA should look in practice. While a focus on attitudes, instead of abilities, is challenging because attitudes are difficult to measure, we view attitude development as an essential part of ethical leadership development. In both stakeholder focus groups and document review, one priority will be identifying if additional leadership capacities exist (in addition to adaptive, absorptive, and decision-making) that would change the ELF. As a part of the competency development process, key stakeholders will be asked to describe leadership development curriculum in their units, contributing to a curriculum map for leadership development that will be used later in the process to guide curriculum development. At the conclusion of Stage 2, the ELF will be revised to reflect what was learned in the competency development process.

Science Degree in Air Force Leadership and Management Studies).

Stage 3. While the literature has described ethical lapses by military leaders and staff, limited research exists that seeks to describe the current ethical state of the Air Force, as described by the ethical knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individual Airmen.

To reiterate, ethical leadership in this context includes, but is not limited to the concept of correctly choosing between known rights and wrongs. Ethical leadership includes a broader application of moral reasoning and frameworks in all daily decision-making processes, not just those typically reviewed in ethical decision-making dilemmas that often limit discussion to black/white ethical questions. In order to design curriculum that meets the needs of Airmen at each level of their Air University education, curriculum designers, faculty, and administrators need to understand the ethical knowledge, skills, and attitudes of Air University students. In order to measure ethical leadership development, a baseline assessment must occur to understand the ethical knowledge, skills, and attitudes of each Airman; this baseline will also inform the validation process of the ELF, establishing if and where gaps in the framework exist and making revisions to the framework so that it more accurately reflects holistic leadership development. A baseline assessment will inform leaders on where Airmen are in their early stages of ethical leadership development.

Measurement

Baseline assessment measures and scales have been modified or developed to align to institutional goals and student learning outcomes for ethical leadership development. Air University's focus on learning occurs at the individual, group, and institutional level. At the individual level, the implementation of the ELF seeks to develop the knowledge and expertise of faculty and students. The implementation of the framework into curriculum will provide both students and faculty the knowledge of ethics and leadership theories. At the team level, the implementation of the ELF will help guide leaders to practice moral management and influence subordinates to make ethical decisions. At the organizational level, the ELF seeks to develop the knowledge and expertise across Air University and the Air Force. Specifically, the ELF provides a framework to create University-level faculty development opportunities, supporting the second QEP institutional

> *...limited research exists that seeks to describe the current ethical state of the Air Force, as described by the ethical knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individual Airmen.*

outcome: Program-specific faculty development requirements will be coordinated through the University's various 'leadership program' representatives who serve on the standing QEP working group.

Approach. To measure the SLOs identified, we will use the modified *Moral Metacognition Scale (McMahon & Good, 2016), the Ethical Leadership Questionnaire (Yukl et al., 2013), and the Organizational Ethical Culture Measure* (Huhtala et al., 2018). Each measure is discussed in more detail below.

The Moral Metacognition Scale

In the individual domain (to measure SLOs 1, 2, & 3), participating Airmen will complete the Moral Metacognition Scale (McMahon & Good, 2016), designed to measure individual ethical competence and self-knowledge. The MMS measures competence in the Individual domain and can be given to all Airmen regardless of rank or responsibility. Participants will respond on a scale of 1 (*Very strongly disagree)* to 6 (*Very strongly agree)* to questions like "I ask myself what is important before engaging in the ethical decision-making process," "I find myself pausing regularly to

confirm that I am considering all aspects of an ethical dilemma," and "I spend time reflecting on my decision after I have made it."

The Ethical Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ)

To measure competence in the Team domain, the Ethical Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ) (Yukl, Mahsud, Hassan, & Prussia, 2013) will be given to each participant, with modifications based on rank and responsibility. To measure SLOs 1, 2, and 3 at the Team level, the Ethical Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ) (Yukl, Mahsud, Hassan, & Prussia, 2013) will be given to each participant, with modifications based on rank and responsibility. Version A of the ELQ will be given to those in junior leadership positions and Version B will be given to those in more senior leadership positions. Participants taking Version A will respond to questions using a scale from 1 (*Strongly disagree)* to 6 (*Strongly agree)* that begin with "My Boss," such as "My boss sets an example of ethical behavior in his/her decisions and actions." These questions will measure the perceptions of the ethical leadership of their leaders. Participants taking version B will respond to questions using the same scale answering questions that begin with "My subordinates think that I ..." such as "My subordinates think that I set an example of ethical behavior in my decisions and actions." This will allow those Airmen developing leadership skills to begin to identify the ethical leadership skills important to ethical leadership while still allowing for assessment data that reflects the team/group ethical development of Air Force leaders. The ELQ will also be used to measure perceptions of the competence of Air University faculty in strategic-ethical leadership.

The Organizational Ethical Culture Measure (OECM)

To understand the third domain of ethical leadership, the organizational domain, the Organizational Ethical Culture Measure (Huhtala et al., 2018) will have three versions. Version A will be delivered to the same groups as Version A of the ELQ and Version B to all but the most

senior AF leaders. Participants will respond on a scale 1 (*Strongly disagree)* to 6 (*Strongly agree)* to questions like "The Air Force makes it sufficiently clear to me how I should conduct myself appropriately toward others within the organization," "I am not asked to do things that conflict with my conscience in my immediate working environment," and "In my immediate working environment, ethical conduct is rewarded." A third version, Version C, will be delivered to senior leaders and Air University Faculty/Instructors. Measure questions shift, in versions B and C, to focus on a leader's behaviors (e.g., "I set a good example in terms of ethical behavior," "I do not ask Airmen/students to sacrifice their personal norms and values in order to be successful in the Air "Force."). To measure Institutional Goal 1, which provides understanding of the third domain of ethical leadership, the organizational domain (SLO 3), the Organizational Ethical Culture Measure will be delivered to representative Air Force officers, enlisted, and civilians. Each version will allow Airmen to assess the current state of strategic-ethical leadership development and, in each stage, to measure the success of the Ethical Leadership Framework.

To measure Institutional Goal 2, the development of Air University faculty in the area of strategic-ethical leadership, Version C of OECM will provide an assessment of faculty expertise in leadership development and competence. Finally, based on the results of the baseline assessments, a Faculty Teaching Effectiveness Rubric for evaluations of Air University faculty will be created that will assess strategic-ethical leadership knowledge and competence in delivering leadership competency to students. The development of a Teaching Effectiveness Rubric will be a formative tool that helps faculty to identify areas of weakness and develop strategies to develop strategic-ethical leaders and design strategic-ethical leadership curriculum and lessons.

The Judgment Index

Finally, according to Steve Byrum & Bill Wilson

(personal communications, 2017) *the Judgment Index* is an assessment tool that measures the intrinsic (self and others), extrinsic (social and practical solutions), and systemic (ideas, rules, regulations, and order) values of an individual. Administering the Judgment Index to Airmen aligns with the domains of Individual, Team, and Organization. Incorporating assessment in our ELF provides useful data to explore how ethical leadership behaviors, perceptions, and development have shifted. The Judgment Index is a tool that provides quantifiable insight into an individual's judgment and ethical decision-making capacities (Pomeroy, 2005). Aligned with the three domains of our ethical leadership conceptual framework, the Judgment Index measures 50 areas of judgment strength within three dimensions: (1) Intrinsic (self and others); (2) Extrinsic (social and practical situations); and (3) Systemic (abstraction, ideas, rules, regulations, and order) (Pomeroy, 2005). The Judgment Index provides a holistic assessment to measure an individual's judgment within the three domains of our conceptual framework.

The Judgment Index is designed "to enhance understanding of human beings both individually and in operational teams. It will show the leader how to improve and develop themselves on the personal side of 'who' they are. 'Who' we are vitally supports 'what' we 'do' (S. Byrum & B. Wilson, personal communication; Jan 17, 2019; Pomeroy, 2005). The Judgment Index enables "enhanced conversations about leadership judgment, development of better judgment in subordinates, creating intentional high-judgment teams, issues of character that extend beyond competence, and the kinds of value orientations that inform ethical behavior and decision-making. Use of this information can have three significant applications: (1) building stronger individuals; (2) building stronger teams; and, (3) contributing in specific ways to enhancing organizations in general." (B. Wilson, personal communication; Jan 17, 2019; Pomeroy, 2005)

Because the Judgement Index has already been used to collect data from a select population of Air Force Airmen and the categories of intrinsic (self and others), extrinsic (social and practical solutions), and systemic (ideas, rules, regulations, and order) align with the domains of Individual, Team, and Organization, the use of the Judgement Index will provide familiar scale to validate findings and provide a holistic assessment of strategic-ethical leadership. The Judgement Index will be used both as a baseline and in post-testing.

Procedures. Although the measures to be delivered in the baseline assessment have already been developed, they will be reviewed prior to data collection to ensure that they reflect any adjustments made during the ELF validation process in Stages 2 and 3. Prior to delivering the measures to all Air University students, pilot testing of the instrument will be done to check the validity of the instruments internally and externally. After it is validated, the survey will be delivered via survey software. Data from the survey will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-tests in order to identify where and how ethical leadership education is needed in Air University curriculum.

Stage 4. After reviewing data from the baseline assessments, competencies identified in Stage 2 as well as the curriculum map will inform the development of curriculum to guide ethical leadership development within the framework of the ELF. The implementation of the curriculum will be explored at the local level (course specific) through regular program evaluation activities (outside the purview of this manuscript).

Stage 5. Finally, we will conduct the full assessment again at the end of the fifth year using the same instrument to all Air University students to measure the overall ethical state of the Air Force again. Although we will not be assessing the same group of students as the baseline assessment, because this assessment is focused on exploring the institution as one that develops ethical

and strategic leaders, the purpose of this assessment will be to see if and how the organization has shifted. Individual-level assessment will occur at the course level and will also be measured, although individual level assessment is not the focus of this manuscript. Through this plan, we will adhere to the mission of Air University to "develop leaders, enrich minds, advance airpower, build relationships, and inspire service" (Air University, 2015, p. 6) through theoretically supported curriculum. The use of the baseline assessment will be formative as well as summative; the results of the baseline assessments will direct the curriculum and faculty development. In addition, each measure will be used within courses and lessons integrated into the curriculum as formative measures of success that faculty and students can use to direct their own development.

Project Design, Implementation and Management

With the vision of being the Intellectual and Leadership Center of the Air Force, leadership development is a University-wide endeavor across all centers, schools and programs. The QEP's linkage to the University's vision, mission, and strategic planning documents support and necessitate University-wide participation in creating a more deliberate, cohesive, and coherent approach to leadership development.

Air University has designed the QEP to support a deliberate and phased approach to integration, implementation, and execution across the enterprise. The overarching goal of the ELF is to inform the development of curriculum that leads to an improvement of ethical leadership across the Air Force. As described in the formal QEP document, Air University has identified the following timeline with the specific goals of each stage of the ELF for the QEP's integration, implementation and execution:

Year 1: Baseline Assessment and Benchmark Current State.
- Develop/select assessment(s), conduct baseline

assessment(s), and evaluate results of baseline assessment—Judgment Index, Leadership/Ethics Survey, etc.
- Conduct a baseline assessment of selected degree and non-degree program students
- Benchmark existing curriculum use of leader development models and activities
- Benchmark existing faculty engagement and development in leader development models and activities

Year 2: Design of Learning Engagement and Faculty Development.
- Design learning engagement for students. Pilot with a defined cohort of students
- Design faculty development. Pilot with a defined cohort of faculty
- Assessment of students and faculty for piloted engagement and baseline instruments

Year 3: Formal Design and Implementation of Curriculum, Learning Engagement and Learning Activities.
- Design and deliver curriculum, learning engagement and learning activities
- Design and deliver faculty development
- Assessment and evaluation

Years 4 & 5: Continuous Review and Improvement.
- Continuous assessment, analysis, evaluation, and review of curriculum, learning engagement and learning activities
- Continuous assessment, analysis, evaluation, and review of faculty development
- Assessment and evaluation

In the first year of the QEP implementation, the Director of the Air University Leadership Institute, in the capacity as the Director of the QEP, will establish a standing QEP working group. The working group will consist of representatives from the major centers, schools and programs; these representatives will be those

who represent the various leadership programs and/or equities within these programs. This will allow those directly involved with the development and execution of leadership programs, as well as the development of their respective faculty, to be directly involved in both the beginning stages and maturation of the various elements within the ELF, as well as the broader effort. This will help ensure efforts are maximized for effectiveness within each individual program, given the diverse nature of each program's student demographics (Airmen within various stages of their career and level of responsibilities) and desired learning and program outcomes. The Air University Commander will also establish a QEP Advisory Board consisting of members of Air University military and academic leadership to provide advice to the QEP Director and feedback to Air University senior leadership. The QEP will consist of elements to support the learning of students, development of faculty, and the development of subject matter expertise. The QEP will shape the content and design of curriculum, learning engagements and learning activities across Air University. The QEP will also shape faculty development and learning engagement across Air University. Air University's QEP will also shape and be shaped by the scholarship on professionalism, leadership and ethics.

Implementation of the ELF will occur with Air University faculty and curriculum developers to enhance, expand, or add courses, curriculum elements, and instructional practices in ethical leadership and ethical leader development. The Air University Leadership Institute will provide the venue for the engagement of subject matter expertise in professionalism, ethics, leadership, and leader development internally and externally for development of courses, curriculum, and instructional practices. The Air University Leadership Institute will also utilize the Leadership Forum (LEDx) and the development of a Case Studies repository to inform the development and enhancement of courses and curriculum. The Air University Leadership Institute will develop a mechanism to disseminate the lessons learned from the engagement with subject matter experts and the development of courses, curriculum, and instructional practices.

Air University's implementation of the ELF reflects a commitment to conduct sufficient baseline and benchmark activities for effective enhancement of learning engagement and faculty development. The design supports the deliberate analysis of existing curricula, case studies, and other instructional elements for incorporation of the ELF. The design also incorporates the establishment of an annual forum (LEDx) for theorists, researchers and practitioners in professionalism, leadership, leader development, and ethics. The forum plays a key role in the QEP's scholarly engagement of experts from academia and Government. The forum will solicit formal manuscripts for peer review and publication in the annual proceedings. Air University will disseminate progress in QEP efforts and seek peer feedback through the forum.

Challenges. First, we anticipate challenges in the revision and implementation of the revised curriculum. As with any change to curriculum, but especially changes to entrenched leadership frameworks or concepts, there may be resistance from faculty to those changes as well as an adjustment period for faculty to revisit and redesign curriculum within the ELF. We hope that by conducting this rigorous validation process with the participation of the working group, that we can both anticipate potential concerns and adjust the ELF so that it has clear applications for curriculum and case study development. Second, in addition to traditional challenges with changing and implementing new curricula, it will also be challenging to measure if and how curriculum changes impact the Air Force as an organization. While our five-year assessment will provide another data point that informs how curriculum might need to shift according to the experiences and perceptions of Airmen, it cannot be seen as a direct measure of the success of curriculum changes. Instead, we see this assessment as critical to

directing the new curriculum developed and ensuring that leadership curriculum continues to adjust to reflect new challenges, the changing nature of war, and the continued development of Air Force Leaders. The steps discussed in this paper are simply the beginning of that ongoing and iterative process. Finally, related to the goal of this becoming an ongoing process, we acknowledge that maintaining continual assessment and program evaluation might be difficult to sustain. This is why our plan, although it begins with the QEP process, will be continually assessed and revisited through program evaluation and institution-wide assessment.

Success. The Air University's QEP is a deliberate effort to enhance and reinvigorate the development of Air Force leaders in the profession of arms. We have developed the ELF as a conceptual framework that purposefully integrates the areas of ethical and strategic leadership. As part of this deliberate effort, the University intends to use the QEP and ELF to build bridges that span the educational opportunities within and across the officer, enlisted and civilian development continuums. It is also intended to help fill the development gaps that occur between education, training and application. Perhaps best articulated by a member of the QEP working group (discussed previously), the QEP and ELF will be a successful effort if, "the essence of Leadership and Ethics are brought to the forefront of all we do and are wholly-assimilated into the psyche of Airmen." (G. Kamena, personal communications, February 2, 2019)

Conclusion

As shown by the literature, the military currently faces several ethical dilemmas due to the increased complexity of warfare (Wead, 2015); advancements in technology and the use of unmanned weapons (Asencio et al., 2017; Meine & Dunn, 2017); blurred lines between civilian and combatant (Mastroianni, 2011); lack of delineated separate combat zones, concerns about sexual violence and increased public awareness of military operations (Arbeit, 2018; Meine & Dunn, 2017; Schulzke,

2012). The creation and implementation of the ELF seeks to address these issues by developing the ethical decision-making competencies of leaders in the Air Force. Drawing increased efforts and resources to the ethical development of military leaders is a step toward fostering a culture and organization that values ethics. This encourages those within the organization to act ethically and encourages continual development of ethical leaders. This goes well beyond the practice of moral management and choosing between known normative standards of right and wrong. To measure effective leader outcomes, we have provided assessment techniques/strategies designed to fit the needs of military organizations. Though created within the context of the Air Force, the ELF has practical implications for other military branches and organizations to develop the ethical decision-making skills of leaders.

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A Different Kind of Gap Year: Program Development and Assessment at the United States Service Academy Preparatory Schools

Melanie Wong Dodge, United States Military Academy
 Preparatory School

James M. Dobbs, United States Air Force Academy Preparatory School

Carl Crockett, United States Naval Academy Preparatory School

Taylor Paige Winfield, Princeton University

ABSTRACT

Higher education faces a myriad of challenges today. From decreasing college readiness to the drive among leaders to increase diversity and address inequities in graduation rates, colleges face impediments to recruit, retain, and graduate high-potential student bodies. In this milieu, the service academies have long provided an alternate route for select candidates to gain admission to and graduate from their institutions. This article briefly explains the purpose of the service academy preparatory schools and how each academy's preparatory school uses assessment to evaluate, and inform improvements in, their academic programs which are nested within overarching leader and character development programs. The approach is that tri-level assessment outcomes evolve from intentional, theory-driven, systemic, integrated thinking and planning. Each preparatory school highlights a different level of assessment: student level (micro) at the United States Air Force Academy Preparatory School; program level (meso) at the Naval Academy Preparatory School; and organizational level (macro) at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School. The authors also suggest future assessment possibilities and generalizability to other contexts for those working to close the readiness gap and addressing some of the most pressing issues facing higher education today.

The United States service academy preparatory schools serve to prepare high quality candidates for admission to, and graduation from, the service academies. The summer basic training and ten-month rigorous academic, military, physical, and character programs of the preparatory schools provide, in essence, a very different kind of gap year. This paper introduces the context in which the preparatory schools operate, provides an overview of their academic program offerings, and details their multi-level assessment protocols. The schools take a tri-level approach to assessment, focusing on the student level (micro), the program level (meso), and the organizational levels (macro). The paper will showcase each level of assessment through a description of the process at one of the three preparatory schools.

Context

Higher education faces a multitude of interrelated challenges today. From decreasing college readiness of high school seniors to the drive among administrators and policymakers to increase diversity and address inequities in graduation rates, and from the rise in tuition costs and student indebtedness to the admissions scandals, colleges are faced with unprecedented impediments to recruit, retain, and graduate a diverse, high potential student body. Indeed, an American College Testing (ACT) (2018) report on the performance of high school graduates revealed that "thirty-five percent of 2018 graduates met none of the ACT College Readiness benchmarks, up from 31% in 2014 and 33% last year." According to the ACT, readiness levels in math and English declined since 2014 and average composite scores for all racial/ethnic groups, except for those of Asian descent, have similarly decreased (2018). The National Center for Education Statistics report (NCES; 2018) showed that in fall 2010, only 60% of undergraduates (first-time and full-time undergraduates) seeking bachelor degrees at four-year institutions had graduated after six years. When controlling for gender, the graduation rate for women was 63% and 57% for men (NCES, 2018); when controlling for racial and ethnic groups, the graduation rates ranged from a high of 74% for Asian students to a low of 40% for African American/Black students (NCES, 2019). With the average cost of college continuing to rise[1], taking more than four years to complete a four-year degree (or worse, not graduating at all), and with the potential of un- or under-employment, can be economically crushing to students, their families, and even the nation in the event of student loan default. Moreover, a recent investigation revealed that wealthy individuals

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1   Today, the average tuition and fees for a private college is $35, 676, with many charging $50,000 and above (Powell, 2018).

Melanie Wong Dodge, M.B.A., is the Dean of Academics at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School in West Point, NY. She is an Ed.D. candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University in adult learning and leadership. She has a Master of Business Administration in International Management from the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Her dissertation is on leading and enacting change in higher education and her research interests include adult learning and development, diversity and inclusion, and complexity leadership. She has taught courses in advertising, marketing, strategic management, human resources, psychology, student development, and organizational behavior.

James M. Dobbs, Ph.D., Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force, is the Dean of Academics at the United States Air Force Academy Preparatory School in Colorado Springs, CO. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of San Diego in leadership studies and a Master in Arts degree in counseling and human services from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. His research and writing addresses leadership development and self-awareness, cynicism, and systems thinking. He teaches courses in leadership, ethics, and organizational theory and behavior.

were bribing their children's way into elite colleges. Sadly, Jack Stripling (2019) posited that the admissions-bribery scandal confirmed "the game is rigged" to an already disillusioned populace.

Within this milieu, America's service academies, the United States Military Academy (USMA), United States Naval Academy (USNA), and United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) face similar and distinct challenges. While indebtedness is not necessarily a student concern, as all students at the academies receive full scholarships to cover tuition and room and board, earn small stipends, and have guaranteed future employment, the academies compete with peer institutions to identify and recruit high potential, diverse candidates. One way the Department of Defense is recruiting and preparing students that represent the Nation is through an investment each year of tens of millions for taxpayer dollars to operate three preparatory schools. The schools are the United States Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS), the United States Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPs), and United States Air Force Academy Preparatory School (USAFAPS). These preparatory schools provide an alternate route for select students to earn admission to the service academies[2].

Each year, the service academies' admission committees select approximately 250 applicants who show high potential but are not yet qualified for direct admission and offer them a place at their respective preparatory school.[3] All preparatory schools have similar guidelines for admission. Candidates can not apply directly to the preparatory schools. Rather, all applicants must first apply to the parent service academy, and the admissions board will determine, based on internal algorithms and the needs of the respective services and academies, who to send to the preparatory school. The preparatory schools' student bodies are comprised of four major categories: prior-enlisted service members (referred to as priors), under-represented groups, females, and recruited athletes between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two. Some candidates fall into multiple categories.

Depending on the academic year, between 20 to 30% of incoming candidates are priors reporting from Active Duty, Reserves, or National Guard units. Their time in service ranges from recent completion of basic training to five years of active duty, and career specialties span

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2   NAPS also sends graduates to the United States Coast Guard Academy.

3   Preparatory students are called cadet candidates at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS) and the United States Air Force Academy Preparatory School (USAFAPS), and midshipman candidates at the Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS). In this paper, they will be referred to as candidates or students.

Carl Crockett, Ph.D., Lt Col, USAF (ret), is the Academic Dean of the United States Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, RI. He holds a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the Air Force Institute of Technology and a Master of Science in Mathematics from Utah State University. He taught at the United States Air Force Academy for 10 years and earned the academic rank of Professor. He is interested in the role of non-academic life factors that influence academic performance.

Taylor Paige Winfield is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at Princeton University in Princeton, NJ. She holds a Master of Arts degree in sociology from Princeton University and Bachelors of Arts from Stanford University in sociology, with a minor in anthropology. Her research investigates the (re)socialization of civilians into soldiers. She pays particular attention to how experiences vary along ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, and religious lines. She has spent the past two years conducting an ethnography at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School—participating in all aspects of cadet candidate life—and has conducted over 100 interviews. Her research is supported by the National Science Foundation and the Wenner-Gren Foundation.

from combat arms to support. Priors are recommended for admission by their military supervisors in the field and are selected based upon both officership potential and their ability to benefit from a service academy education. Priors are instrumental in assisting their classmates learn the basics of military life, e.g., teaching them how to properly wear the uniforms, conform to proper room standards, and adopt military customs and courtesies. They also make up the majority of the first term candidate chain of command, helping the unit transition to peer leadership. There is a large range of academic performance amongst the priors.

Under-represented candidates are essential for broadening the range of perspectives and background experiences of candidates. Thus, they play a vital role in enhancing the diversity of the academies and the future officer corps. Currently, all three preparatory schools are majority minority institutions. In the 2018-2019 academic year, 56% of the incoming USMAPS population was non-white, and 41% identified as black. At USAFAPS, 53%, and at NAPs, 61%, were of minority status. Although there are several under-represented candidates from extremely low- or high-income families, most are middle class. Under-represented candidates are drawn from applicants that show high academic and/or military leadership potential. For instance, some received high grades in high school but did receive direct admission due to low entrance exam scores (e.g., ACT or SAT), or because the academies do not consider their previous school to have provided a sufficient academic foundation. There are also candidates who do not pass the candidate fitness assessment or meet height and weight standards. The prevalence of obesity in America[4] presents a significant additional challenge to a military institution tasked with identifying and recruiting high potential future military leaders.

Approximately 20 to 30% of preparatory candidates are female. The demographics of the female candidates

mirror those of the larger service academies. The female cohort is made up of prior enlisted service members, under-represented candidates, and recruited athletes. They serve in all levels of candidate leadership positions and are scattered along academic rankings.

Finally, athletic candidates are recruited to the academies to play several sports, including football, basketball, wrestling, lacrosse, and track, and make up approximately 40% of the preparatory school populations. Most recruited athletes are male, but there are a number of female recruits each year. Recruited athlete demographics range between sports, yet each team reflects a diversity of socioeconomic experiences. Although there are some athletes who choose to come to the preparatory schools because it will allow them to compete in their sport at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1 level at their respective academies, some have always wanted to serve in the military and to have the opportunity play at academies gives them a possibility at the officer track. Recruited athletes inspire peers to develop physical and mental toughness and a winning spirit.

Preparatory School Programs

These high potential target populations have much to offer the academies and future officer corps. The preparatory schools offer holistic programs tailored to meet the needs of these candidates so they may succeed in the rigorous programs at their respective academies. USMAPS's mission is to motivate, prepare, and evaluate selected candidates in an academic, military, moral, and physical environment to perform successfully at USMA. NAPS aims to enhance midshipman candidates' moral, mental, and physical foundations to prepare them for success at the USNA. USAFAPS works to prepare, motivate, and evaluate for admission to and success at the USAFA. Unlike peer institutions that may offer short-term, summer pre-orientation programs or first-year seminars, the three preparatory schools offer a form of basic training in the summer to begin a ten-month, integrated academic, military, physical, and character

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4   The obesity rate in youth 12 to 19 years in the U.S. is 20.6% overall (Hales, Carroll, Fryar, & Ogden, 2017).

development program. The military programs consist of both classroom and experiential learning through assigned leadership roles, classes, and field training. The physical programs include both physical education courses and competitive or intramural athletic programs. Character development is embedded in all three programs but also includes singular honor and respect programs.

At each preparatory school, the primary emphasis is on academic preparation to reduce academic risk for high potential candidates as evidenced by the amount of time allocated to developing the candidates' intellectual capacity in a given duty day (i.e., about seven to nine hours). Nonetheless, as Theodore Roosevelt said, "to educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society." Therefore, character development is embedded into each academic program, as is leader

> *Character development is embedded in all three programs but also includes singular honor and respect programs.*

development. Where applicable, elements of character and leader development in the academic programs are highlighted. In any event, in all academic programs, candidates are taught how larger questions of honor and integrity translate into the classroom. Students learn how to properly cite not only works referenced but also help received from other students on their assignments. Students who fail to properly cite may be found in violation of the honor code and enrolled in an honor program. For instance, at USMAPS, the Honor Mentorship Program pairs a candidate with mentor, who is an academic, physical, or military instructor, and they meet one-on-one several times to discuss honorable behavior and the potential consequences of dishonorable actions in a military context. Moreover, if a candidate sees another student cheating or lying, they are required to directly confront the person about the improper behavior, and if necessary, report the incident.

Candidates often struggle with the concept of non-toleration; however, the academic and military staff emphasize that confronting even minor honor violations now will ensure that their peers do not make similar mistakes at the Academy, or even more importantly, when lives are on the line. Learning to address minor as well as egregious concerns help develop habits of mind consistent with becoming a leader of character. Finally, candidates are also encouraged to practice leadership in the classroom, by actively participating in discussions and helping struggling peers out of class.

The academic years at USMAPS and USAFAPS are designed on a quarter system while NAPS is on a trimester system. Classes last seventy-five minutes, and students take three (USMAPS and USAFAPS) or four (NAPS) courses a day. Instructors or peer tutors are available to support the students during morning, afternoon, evening, and weekend study periods. Each day after lunch all three schools offer additional instruction time, during which all faculty are available to meet with students. Within the candidate battalion, there are also academic officers who tutor their peers. A common sentiment is that if one candidate is struggling academically, the whole unit is responsible for making sure they succeed. Developing a sense of shared responsibility further develops candidates' leadership practice that prep school graduates will carry on to their respective academies.

All three preparatory schools provide courses in English, mathematics, and science. Course types and number of faculty available to teach the courses at the preparatory schools are reflective of larger trends within their respective service academies. The courses are coordinated with the service academies' academic programs and objectives, i.e., to become confident problem-solvers and communicate effectively, to ensure that students have the tools and background knowledge necessary to excel upon admission and become competent leaders. Within the first few weeks

on campus, students are given initial diagnostic tests. The academic departments use these tests, along with high school transcripts, to place cadet candidates into courses. An opportunity to learn to handle a demanding course load is part of the program, and placement in the various levels is managed to ensure all students are challenged. For instance, learning to balance competing demands is essential to college readiness at the academies so candidates are exposed to increasing workloads across all four pillars (academic, military, physical, and character). Moreover, for a few candidates at USMAPS and USAFAPS who test high, special arrangements are made for them to take advanced courses at USMA and USAFA, an advantage of being co-located with a parent academy.

The Mathematics Departments at the preparatory schools provide students with a strong foundation in pre-calculus, and, for advanced students, in calculus. USMAPS has nine math faculty, NAPS has 11, and USAFAPS has 12. The schools offer three tracks in mathematics. For example, NAPS's offers: Foundation (review and coverage of a complete pre-calculus curriculum), Intermediate (review of precalculus followed by content normally associated with first semester differential calculus), and Advanced (quick review of pre-calculus, traditional first semester of calculus and a substantial introduction to typical second semester calculus). Student performance is monitored closely in all courses, and adjustments to placement in math start halfway through the first quarter. Candidates may move down if needed, but only if they put in effort and are still unsuccessful. USAFA and USMAPS provide additional tutoring from volunteers while NAPS has a professor that serves as a tutor for students.

The curriculum at USAFAPS uncouples the topics of college algebra and trigonometry, with these being taught simultaneously in separate courses. Students are enrolled in one level-appropriate algebra course, which includes three quarters of college algebra, and one quarter of basic algebra skills for students needing the additional remediation. They are also enrolled in a level-appropriate trigonometry course, which includes two quarters of trigonometry, one or two quarters depending on skills track of introduction to differential calculus, and one quarter of introduction to statics, a branch of mechanics.

The English programs at the preparatory schools emphasize the writing process and disciplined composition. USMAPS and USAFAPS have eight English faculty and NAPS has nine (one focuses on tutoring). In USMAPS English, there is an additional focus on close reading of sophisticated texts, grammar, and oral communication. USAFAPS enrolls the bottom 30% of scorers on their diagnostic exam in a one quarter, co-requisite course in reading and study skills, which emphasizes comprehension, vocabulary, and reading rate. At the end of this course students retake a version of the initial diagnostic exam, to assess and demonstrate their progress.

The English curricula cultivate character and leadership development through the facilitation of difficult conversations on the human condition. Teachers encourage candidates to respectfully share their opinions on reading material and sometimes this translates into conversations about current events or hot topics. Given the diverse backgrounds of candidates, these conversations often become heated and are an opportunity for cross-cultural dialogue. Ideally, these conversations will help candidates empathize with alternative perspectives (advancing students' developmental level), and thus, relate better to classmates of dissimilar backgrounds. Classrooms are a laboratory for creating a moral-ethical environment that faculty and staff hope the candidates will create in their future units.

The science curricula at the preparatory schools vary in terms of subject and quantity. USMAPS has four science faculty, USAFAPS has seven, and NAPS has nineteen (three focus on tutoring). Science is a

relatively new addition at USMAPS, based on earlier assessed needs of increased academic load, and is divided into three courses: biology (one quarter), chemistry (two quarters), and physics (one quarter). The emphasis in the science curriculum is on learning to think scientifically and working in self-managed teams using a teaching strategy called Process Oriented

Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) (Moog, 2014). POGIL is consistent with the Next Generation Science Standards' three dimensions of science learning (NGSS Lead States, 2013) and key outcomes of the West Point Leader Development System (Judd et al., 2018). At USAFAPS, the Science Department uses chemistry as the primary vehicle in developing scientific literacy, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. Physics is offered to approximately one-fourth of the class, enrolling high-performing students who have demonstrated exceptional performance across the curriculum relative to their class, especially in algebra. NAPS provides in-depth chemistry and physics training at three levels, Foundation (pre-AP level), Intermediate (includes AP-level and above), and Advanced (college-level).

USMAPS and USAFAPS offer an additional fourth course. USMAPS provides a year-long student development course, which teaches basic study skills, time management, information literacy, and social and psychological perspectives on learning and adult development. The four teachers of the course additionally serve as academic counselors for the candidates. To address the wide range of academic and non-academic (social and personal) background characteristics and experiences of its candidates, USAFAPS implemented a First Year Experience course as a primary strategy to increase academic performance, student retention, and ownership, with the ultimate goal to create a pathway of success as they transition to USAFA. NAPS does not have an additional course, but there are two full-time study skills specialists who provide workshops on study skills topics and individual

study skills. Intentional development of basic skills such as reading, time management, self-discipline, attention span, and study strategies, receive attention across the academic curriculum.

Each preparatory school has a program designed to ensure struggling students are receiving the extra help they need. At USAFAPS, students with a term and/or cumulative GPA below 2.5, or a C- or less in any academic course, are placed on the Academic Probation Program. Students with deficient grades will be assigned a number of Quality Academic Sessions (QAS) based on the following formula: (# of Cs) x 2 + (# of Ds) x 3 + (# of Fs) x 4 + (if GPA < 2.5 then add 4) = total # of QASs. Through collaboration with USAFAPS, USMAPS developed a similar program, called the Academic Improvement Program (AIP), for students with C- or below at midterm or final, or GPA of 2.0 or below at the first quarter, 2.25 at the second quarter, and 2.5 at the third quarter. At NAPS, students are on Academic Probation if their GPA drops below 2.2 or they earn an F at any mid-term or marking period. Students are assigned mandatory extra instruction (EI) of 60 minutes per week for a D or 90 minutes per week for an F. The EI is tracked and used as a metric.

Academic Assessment in U.S. Service Academy Preparatory Schools

In continuous efforts to increase institutional effectiveness, the three schools hold annual Joint Prep School Conferences. At a recent conference (March, 2019), the schools reviewed their mission statements to ensure ongoing clarity of purpose, discussed common to opportunities and threats, and shared best practices. One outcome of this recent convening is this article: situating the three prep schools within a shared understanding of their raison d'etre, summarizing the assessment strategies informing the three academic programs, and extracting lessons and practices across the preparatory schools that have value for the field of higher education.

An integrative evaluation framework for the preparatory schools at the Department of Defense level does not exist (Stewart, 2003); thus, the schools have developed their own evaluation programs using both quantitative evidence along with participatory, qualitative methods to inform external and internal stakeholders. Each preparatory school uses an integrated approach to evaluate their programs. Integrated evaluations serve two objectives: first, to provide credible evaluative evidence, and second, to be useful to stakeholders' requirements (Chen, 2014). The following sections depict how each school uses assessment to evaluate, and inform improvements in, their academic programs. To show the three levels in which assessment occurs, each section will highlight a different level of assessment: student level at USAFAPS (micro), program level at NAPS (meso), and organizational level at USMAPS (macro). USAFAPS's approach to individual assessment is intentional about helping students become more active and responsible holistic learners.

> *USAFAPS's approach to individual assessment is intentional about helping students become more active and responsible holistic learners.*

United States Air Force Academy Preparatory School: Student Assessment

Using Downing's (2018) "Eight Core Principles" from the *On Course* curriculum (accepting personal responsibility, self-motivation, self-management, interdependence, self-awareness, lifelong learning, emotional intelligence, and belief in self), USAFAPS's focus is on modifying personal habits; such as heightening sense of self-responsibility, management, and improving interpersonal skills, including increasing students' awareness of others' emotions and perspectives. To foster student development of these skills, the academic curriculum employs several different active and collaborative teaching strategies, such as interactive small groups and dynamic student-led demonstrations. These assignments are offered alongside more traditional course work, such as reading and writing assignments, graded exams, and formal class projects, which are intended to improve students' academic skills. Additionally, by guiding students to adopt these principles and tools, USAFAPS strives to empower them to not only become more effective partners in their own education at the preparatory school, but also in their journey to become leaders of character in life.

To track student progress, individual assessment begins with diagnostic testing in math, science, and English at the beginning of each academic year. These assessments provide a baseline evaluation of students' incoming abilities. The assessments are re-administered at the end of year to provide a measure of skill growth in the respective areas and level of preparedness for the Academy. What follows details how individual assessment takes place in each course.

In mathematics courses, approximately 75% of a course grade is based on individual, closed-book assessments such as quizzes or graded reviews (GRs). The remaining 25% comes from assignments such as homework exercises or projects where outside assistance (e.g., working with classmates, online resources, etc.) is authorized. For homework assignments, all college algebra and trigonometry courses employ a mix of written exercises from the textbook along with online work. This blend permits instructors to see and evaluate student work and provide feedback, while also providing students a 24/7 resource with unlimited tutorial and instructional assistance. Quizzes cover topics from two or three sections of a textbook chapter, while GRs are generally equivalent to a chapter test. GRs test both skill

and concept understanding; concepts are tested through multiple choice, true-false or short answer questions, while skills and applications are evaluated by way of more traditional work-out problems. Comprehensive final exams each quarter cover all the topics of that course for the quarter. In addition to correct solutions, grading rubrics emphasize process, correct application of algebra and mathematical properties, logical work and presentation of that work, rounding, units, and notation.

Approximately 70% of a student's grade in the science department is based on formal assessments that measure their individual performance abilities. These assessments consist of GRs given approximately every three weeks, as well as a series of short quizzes given at the beginning of each chemistry lesson. GRs cover one unit of study and are deliberately timed to test only concepts that closely relate to one "big idea" in the curriculum (e.g., atomic structure, chemical nomenclature, harmonic motion, etc.). GRs consist of between 15 to 20 multiple choice questions that comprise half of the score, while the other half consists of between four and six workout-type problems. Students are not permitted to re-take GRs or make any corrections once submitted. The short, daily quizzes consist of three to four questions that require students to demonstrate a skill learned in the previous lesson, as well as their base knowledge related to the next lesson's primary learning objectives. These quizzes require students to prepare in advance for each lesson, by reading the assigned material and engaging with new vocabulary terms and mathematical formulas. The remaining 30% of a student's grade is based on formative assessments that allow regular feedback, collaboration, and revision. These assignments include laboratory reports, in-class worksheets, and online problem sets. Laboratory reports and in-class worksheets allow only one submission, but students are permitted to collaborate with classmates, provided they thoroughly document all help received. Online problem sets allow unlimited submissions and collaboration, and students are encouraged to complete them multiple times to achieve the maximum score. This encourages repeated practice facilitating concept mastery.

Each quarter in English, students complete two to three major writing assignments, accounting for roughly 40% of their final course grades. Each course also features a few "process-based" assignments leading up to each essay's completion. These assignments range in form and complexity—from worksheets and "practice" thesis statements to full and ostensibly "final" drafts—and are typically graded for completion and effort. More importantly, however, they offer instructors an occasion for assessment, as instructors are able to intervene within a student's writing process and offer them formative feedback as they write, rather than withholding feedback until the essay's completion, and thus conflating forward looking feedback with the work's formal evaluation. In making this distinction between "forward-looking" and "evaluative" feedback instructors follow the latest research in writing instruction, most notably the emphasis therein to provide both formative and summative means of assessment.

The English Department assesses student writing in five key areas: rhetorical situation (writing with a sense of task, audience and purpose), content (depth and originality of insight), organization (on the essay, paragraph, and sentence level), style, and mechanics. Each major assignment features a specific rubric defining each area for the particular task at hand and characterizing different performance levels for the same. Students receive these rubrics at the beginning of the course, and instructors use them to evaluate final essays for a grade. At the beginning of each course students are also assigned a baseline diagnostic essay, which mirrors in miniature the final major writing assignment of the quarter. This assignment is graded only for completion, as the faculty have not yet taught the students about expectations for essays. Apart from the grade, instructors score these essays in each area on the assignment rubric,

assigning number values: 5=*Exceptional;* 4=*Above Average;* 3=*Average;* 2=*Needs Work;* 1=*Insufficient*. Instructors then score the student's final assignment similarly, and the faculty uses these results both to assess student improvement and to review and refine USAFAPS's instructional approach.

Detailed and consistent assessment in each course allows USAFAPS to track student progress over the year, evaluate progress between years, and determine how performance at USAFAPS is correlated with performance at USAFA. USMAPS and NAPS perform similar styles of assessments at the individual level: from pre- and post-testing, to learning the value of formative assessment prior to summative assessment, and to correlating performance at the preparatory schools to the academies.

United States Naval Academy Preparatory School: Program Assessment

NAPS's academic mission is twofold: first, to provide an intense, school-year program to develop thoughtful and diligent students; and second, to increase students' college readiness by adding one year's content knowledge in math, chemistry, English, physics, and enhanced learning and study skills. In order to track overall success of the academic program, NAPS collects longitudinal data on student performance at the preparatory school and corresponding performance at USNA. The dean monitors year-to-year stability of the performance: (1) tracking values of incoming SAT scores (rough indicator of average student academic strength); (2) pre- and post-tests in math, chemistry, and physics; (3) percentage of students qualified to enter calculus at the beginning and at the end of the year; (4) section sizes in each discipline; (5) percentage of students earning an appointment to their respective Academy; (6) NAPS GPA compared to subsequent first year GPA at USNA; (7) average USNA grades in calculus, chemistry, English, and physics compared to non-NAPS students; and (8) the graduation rate at USNA four years after NAPS completion. These data

are reported annually to the Academy Effectiveness Board. Due to these data, NAPS has increased the number of instructors to reduce section sizes, reduced attention to SAT/ACT preparation and testing during the school year, and refined their predictions of success rates for their graduating classes. Data have shown that grades earned in the NAPS program correlate strongly with first year grades at USNA.

To support continuous improvement of the academic department, NAPS monitors the number of students using out-of-class tutoring and the length of sessions by subject, success at USNA by GPA window at NAPS, student feedback on performance of instructors, and the delay time from awareness-of-need to formal-assistance-provided for emotional concerns. In recent years, NAPS has become more sensitive to the academic impact of non-academic factors including social skills, emotional stability, moral foundation, cultural sensitivity, and overall maturity. NAPS is taking a serious look at larger national trends of increasing suicide rates, increasing quantities and severity of social and emotional challenges, the reality of stress related to economic diversity, disillusion from corruption in many businesses, colleges, and some aspects of government[5], and the widely varying needs at their homes that NAPS students "carry as baggage." While varied non-academic needs of the evolving student population are not easily addressed or assessed, faculty have become much more aware of the variety and comprehensive nature of requirements to prepare students for college, and the divergent points from which students may begin their journeys at the preparatory school. As a result, NAPS is now working to develop programs and assessments to track the emotional support and development of its candidates. In the meantime, counseling is available outside any reporting chain.

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5   According to a 2018 survey, 80% of Americans have confidence that the military will act in the public interest, a number far exceeding that of other significant institutions, including business leaders, (45%), elected officials (25%), and the media (40%) (Johnson, 2018).

Evaluations of low academic performers is very thorough at NAPS. Information collected from evaluations not only guides immediate feedback sessions with the students and provides key stakeholders time to intervene on their behalf, but it also can inform the faculty and staff of strategies to work with low-performers in the future and report progress to the Academy. Individual subject areas track performance on exams (including statistics on individual questions) and conduct thorough reviews of any exam with particularly low performance. At each marking period and mid-term, complete grade histories are combined with individual comments from each applicable academic instructor, athletic coach, and military supervisor. Faculty tutors comment on those for whom they have meaningful input. Students also provide a written self-evaluation. Each marking period, faculty also provide—for each of their students—an estimate of the student's overall academic work ethic using scores from one to nine. Information about student performance is shared with key stakeholders, such as instructors, coaches, and admissions, throughout the year so they can reach out to students who are struggling and help avoid surprises at the end of the year when it is too late to intervene. Students who NAPS considers to be at-risk have personal meetings with a team consisting of the Dean, four supervisors of academic departments, their coach (if applicable), and their military leader. Before the Academy makes decisions on offering appointments to the students, NAPS briefs the above information to the Admissions Board.

Program level assessment ensures that the academic department at NAPS continues to improve and meet the evolving needs of candidates. The process allows for integrated evaluations, in which findings inform decision making about program development and evolution. Likewise, assessments at USMAPS resulted in the formation of a science department and reduced attention to standardized tests. USMAPS and USAFAPS also hold academic interventions for at risk-students and periodic sensing sessions to foster open communication between the candidates, faculty, and staff.

United States Military Academy Preparatory School: Organizational Assessment

USMAPS's institutional effectiveness depends on continuous development of its organizational capacity for theory-driven and integrated evaluation. Theory-driven evaluation is different from the traditional, method-driven approach in that program theory answers more than the question of whether a program works, but significantly, how and why (Chen, 2015). For instance, if an early-stage program is not initially successful, there could be a myriad of reasons why and good programs could be cut prematurely. By explicitly hypothesizing the inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes in a logic model, faculty may better assess where improvement is needed, i.e., in addressing input variables like incoming risk levels of the students, or in program components such as curriculum changes or faculty development. Indeed, understanding the context of the program(s) makes it easier to interpret and utilize the results of an evaluation.

A primary step of assessment is articulating top level objectives. Once the institutional objectives of USMAPS were defined, the goals and sub-goals of the USMAPS academic program were developed. The overarching academic goal is to inspire, educate, and develop a diverse group of candidates for the academic challenges of USMA. To meet this goal, faculty and staff seek to: (1) inspire candidates to embrace the values of academia, especially academic integrity; (2) develop in candidates the intellectual capacities necessary for academic and professional success; and (3) teach the candidates the disciplinary skills and knowledge necessary for college-readiness. These objectives illustrate how the academic program nests cohesively with USMAPS broader leader and character development program.

Further nested within these three sub-goals, and aligned with their parent departments at USMA, are the academic outcomes of each discipline. These include each discipline's primary way of knowing and key practices, core conceptual ideas, and essential leader skills such as problem-solving, communication, use of technology, and habits of mind. In USMAPS' Center for Enhanced Performance, which teaches the student development course, the developmental outcomes for candidates include: (1) assume ownership for their learning and development through strong student engagement; (2) develop an identity that promotes constructive growth and builds resilience to overcome adversity; (3) improve their information literacy skills and apply them to access, evaluate, integrate, and ethically use information to guide action; (4) set and monitor realistic and challenging goals to meet and exceed academic, military, and physical standards; and (5) understand and apply learning and developmental theories to become effective and ethical soldier-scholars and leaders of character. Together, all the academic outcomes combine to advance candidates intellectually and developmentally as competent leaders of character.

> *Together, all the academic outcomes combine to advance candidates intellectually and developmentally as competent leaders of character.*

Primarily, the academic program is informed by theories and concepts in adult learning and development. Learning and development are interdependent processes. To expedite the learning process for cadet candidates, faculty foster not only informational learning, or what to know, but also transformative learning, or how to know (Kegan, 2000). The latter is evident in USMAPS science pedagogy aforementioned. Moreover, USMAPS stays abreast of evidence-based concepts that promote deeper learning (i.e., fostering student engagement, a growth mindset, and self-regulation skills). These are explicitly taught in the student development course. Robert Kegan's Constructive Developmental Theory informs USMAPS's approach to adult development (Kegan, 1995). As with most post-secondary institutions, candidates present at a transitional stage of development (Lewis, Forsythe, Sweeney, Bartone, & Bullis, 2005). Thus, the practices and curriculum are designed to help candidates appreciate the results of achieving a more independent stage of life while illuminating its limits. Faculty and staff then assist candidates to take on more responsibility for self and others as well as broader perspectives to progress them toward the next stage of development necessary to succeed at USMA.

USMAPS' evaluation program operates on continuing, collaborate cycles of inquiry throughout the year. The primary cycle begins the week after graduation, wherein the whole school takes a week for reflection and professional development together. In recent years, topics have included learning about and reflecting on USMA's new strategic plan, Kegan's Constructive Developmental theory, West Point's Leader Development Program, and theory-driven program evaluation. Next, the academic department conducts program evaluation to inform any curricular design needs. The design phase then is followed by the development phase in conjunction with individual professional development opportunities. In mid-August, the delivery phase begins anew. Other cycles of inquiry take place throughout the year such as gathering data from USMA on USMAPS graduates and analyzing grades; eliciting feedback from students each quarter; and planning, executing, and appraising faculty development and performance.

A specific example of this process of inquiry took place in May 2018, when USMAPS conducted a school-wide professional development workshop, in part, to articulate the program theory[6] for the cohesive program (academic, military, physical, and character). The workshop began by identifying the faculty and staffs' goals and the context, then constructing a hypothesized causal chain. First, the faculty clarified the institutional mission then identified inputs (the students; human, financial, technological and physical resources; processes and structures; and USMAPS's strategic relationships). Then the faculty broke down the desired outcomes into three categories: long term, intermediate, and short term. Long term outcomes included items such as USMAPS graduates: (1) successfully complete their first year; (2) lead the direct admits and civilian prep cadets through acculturation to USMA; (3) lead and live honorably; (4) demonstrate excellence in the academic, military, and physical pillars; (5) graduate from USMA; and (6) commission as a second lieutenant. To achieve these goals, the faculty worked backwards to identify intermediate outcomes such as candidates: (1) value academics; (2) become better critical thinkers and creative problem solvers; (3) successfully complete the 10-month experience; and (4) earn admission to USMA. Lastly, the faculty identified pre-requisites for the intermediate outcomes in the form of short-term outcomes such as candidates: (1) be coachable; (2) create and sustain constructive relationships; (3) improve help-seeking behaviors; (4) become more organized, and (5) use their planners to manage their time, to name a few.

Once the hypothesized "if, then, so what" causal statements were constructed, faculty took time to make their tacit assumptions about behavior change explicit. They shared their assumptions about how, why, and to what extent key factors (i.e., the context, students, pedagogy, faculty, program operation, and resources)

influence achievement of the desired outcomes. Some assumptions included

- Students have high potential but are not yet college-ready and lacking in some life skills;
- Diverse perspectives are valued;
- Relationships are important for learning and development;
- The faculty will be engaged in and out of the classroom;
- If faculty holds candidates accountable in and out of class, they will succeed to the next level;
- The institution will have the resources required need to accomplish the mission;

Capturing these assumptions helps faculty to test them and re-construct as necessary. The next step was to delineate core activities at the overarching academic level as well as within each department (English, mathematics, etc.). Once these activities were catalogued, existing micro and meso metrics were reviewed and new metrics were identified to measure the efficacy of each activity vis-à-vis the expected outcomes at the various levels of analysis.

Using a theory-driven, integrative approach to evaluation and assessment helps USMAPS, NAPS, and USAFAPS analyze findings more effectively and in real time. Utilizing a collaborative inquiry process, the faculty leverage sense-making and organizational learning to align their efforts into developmentally-challenging, evidence-based, and coherent programs. Although the previous descriptions focused on academic assessment, faculty and staff employ similar approaches to assess character and leadership development over the ten-month preparatory school experiences. With this framework, academic and developmental strategies have the potential to complement one another and provide leaders of character for the next generation of military officers.

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6   Program theory consists of two components: theory of change and theory of action (Funnell & Rogers, 2011).

Conclusion

The preparatory schools' academic programs employ holistic approaches to curriculum design, development, delivery, and assessment. Assessment is approached through systematic thinking about the key challenges facing the students and institution, iterative planning, and application of theories on adult learning and development. The assessments are tri-level, focusing at the student level (micro), the program level (meso), and the organizational level (macro). At the student level, the assessment program focuses on developing the candidates' knowledge, skill, and abilities along with the intrapersonal competencies of self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation. At the program level, the focus is on curricula development and assessment, ensuring that academic programs are: (1) developmentally appropriate; (2) sufficiently challenging to prepare students for the service academies' curricula; (3) frequently and accurately assessed at micro and meso levels of analysis; and (4) adequately supported. Program level assessment also includes plans and resources for faculty development as well as meaningful extracurricular programming to enrich the learning. At the organizational level, the focus is on making sure the organizational structure; academic schedule; financial, human, physical, and technological resources; policies and procedures; and planning processes are effective for current operations and emerging growth opportunities. One emergent growth opportunity identified in the process of writing this paper is for the three preparatory schools to collaborate on further assessing and advancing their student development programs. Through constant and cyclical assessment, the preparatory schools can better meet the needs of the students, the service academies, and the nation, which desires an officer corps that is intellectually and morally sound and representative of the people it serves.

The preparatory schools provide one avenue to approach the contemporary challenges in higher education. By providing ten-months of intensive academic and adult development experience, the preparatory schools can send high potential students to the service academies, whom would have otherwise not been qualified for admission. Through these efforts, hundreds of students each year from diverse socioeconomic, educational, and ethnic backgrounds enter these elite institutions and go on to successfully lead in the nation's military. Preparatory school graduates not only comprise leadership in the service academies and the military, but also later become leaders in the civilian world, particularly in politics and business. USMAPS, USAFAPS, and NAPS provide a model for other preparatory programs and universities that may be considering starting their own preparatory schools. The preparatory schools offer a different sort of "gap year," that has the potential to reduce larger societal gaps in educational outcomes.

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ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Thriving at the U.S. Air Force Academy

Kevin Davis, United States Air Force Academy

Daphne DePorres, United States Air Force Academy

Sonia Esquivel, United States Air Force Academy

Claudia Ferrante, United States Air Force Academy

Scott Heyler, United States Air Force Academy

David Levy, United States Air Force Academy

Gary Packard, United States Air Force Academy

Eric Tucker, United States Air Force Academy

Elizabeth Blair, United States Air Force Academy

The stated mission of the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) is "to educate, train, and inspire men and women to become leaders of character, motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our nation." To accomplish this mission, Air Force leaders must create a system that produces experiences that will lead to this goal. More specifically, since the Air Force Academy is a military college, leaders must create events in three areas— military, academic, and athletic—that move students (cadets) toward the overall goal. While many such events are currently employed to engage cadets, distinct objectives and metrics for these events are sometimes unclear.

Academic assessment at the Academy has a long track record, with outcomes that are clearly stated, and regular course and program reviews. Recently, the leadership at the Academy established an office of Assessment and Research to extend assessment into the military aspects of the Academy's mission. Over the next few years this office will build a robust set of objectives and metrics for military training events. Similarly, the Athletic Department provides reports annually on its activities. Academic departments are also engaged, as the metrics of each academic program are periodically reviewed in order to continuously improve the effectiveness of program outcomes.

Against this backdrop of the current state of assessment at the Academy, and in the spirit of continuous improvement, we suggest there is a need for a meta-level of assessment, which will help assess specific training events

as well as the meta-outcome of the overall program: the development of leaders of character. In particular, we will examine the strengths of two higher level objectives: surviving and thriving. Through the lenses of surviving and thriving, and assessment of the status of each, Academy leadership can develop insights to better accomplish the mission.

We start by defining *surviving and thriving*, then demonstrate how thriving is fundamentally driven by the three elements of self-determination theory. This is followed by a set of propositions inviting assessment and continuous improvement. Next, we present a series of scenarios that illustrate the differences between surviving and thriving contexts. Finally, we provide a roadmap for assessing the level of thriving at the Academy, for both individual cadets and the overall program.

Surviving and Thriving Defined

Survival as an Objective.

We define survival as the goal of continued professional existence where the situation is dangerous or extremely stressful. In the survival state, a person is subverted from the pursuit of their full potential to cope with the situation at hand, and are unable to fulfill the innate psychological self-determination needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Instead, the focus is on "getting by," "making it through," "not getting into too much trouble," "feeling overwhelmed," and sometimes, "going through the motions." Surviving can also include the development of persistence and grit, the willingness to pursue a difficult goal for long periods of time (Duckworth & Eskreis-Winkler, 2015).

While some of the descriptors of surviving may sound negative, USAFA's emphasis on surviving is

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Kevin J. Davis, Ph.D., is a professor of management at the United States Air Force Academy. He earned his MBA and DBA from Harvard University. Dr. Davis has published in a variety of journals including the Journal of Investments, Financial Services Review, Information and Management, Human Factors, and the Journal of Leadership Studies. He previously served as an Air Force pilot, completing 28 years of service.

Daphne DePorres, Ph.D., is a Professor of Management in the Doctoral Programs of Management and Computer Science at Colorado Technical University. For the academic years of 2017-18 and 2018-2019 she is a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the United States Air Force Academy. She has extensive experience as an OD educator and practitioner, including positions as program director of the Master's Degree in Organization Development and associate professor in the business school at the University of Monterrey in Monterrey Mexico. Dr. DePorres has an MS Organization Development from Pepperdine University and a doctorate in education from Pepperdine University's Organization Change program. Dr. DePorres also served as Vice President of Research, Development and Organizational Effectiveness at Los Angeles Universal Preschool, an organization dedicated to ensuring pre-school education for all qualified. Her research interests include developing innovative qualitative research methods and exploring the opportunities represented by linking action research and leadership education.

Sonia Esquivel, Ph.D., is an Academic Advisor and Professor of Spanish at the United States Air Force Academy. Dr. Esquivel has been actively involved in the diversity and inclusion at USAFA and she is an active member of the Making Excellence Inclusive Committee. Since 2013, she has escorted cadets on cultural and language Immersion summer trips to Chile, Mexico, and Spain. Dr. Esquivel received her doctorate in Counseling and Student Development from Kansas State University. Her current research involves sense of belonging and diversity & inclusion. Her research has been included in the training for academic advisors and at new faculty orientation.

essential. During intense programs such as Basic Cadet Training, Cadet Survival Training and Recognition (a training event culminating in first-year cadets being 'recognized' as members of the Cadet Wing), cadets learn to cope with seemingly impossible demands where key skills such as decisiveness, rapid prioritization, and teamwork are developed and enhanced.

Situations and exercises using survival as a goal can also create powerful camaraderie and a strong sense of relatedness (Achor, 2015). For organizations that face real survival situations, such as the military or law enforcement, it is natural to want to ensure that members are used to handling stress. Unfortunately, this can lead to an overreliance on survival types of training activities, which reduces opportunities

for overall leadership development and growth, as explained below. When in survival mode, participants must make trade-offs that get in the way of achieving realizing autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which, as we will discuss, are critical for the effective warfighter and leader.

While survival exercises can produce very positive outcomes in terms of relatedness and a feeling of accomplishment, under the wrong circumstances, or when survival becomes a continual goal, the result is often cynicism, apathy, and disengagement. For example, studies have shown that unhealthy amounts of time dedicated to playing video games are often a result of avoidant response to frustrated thriving needs (Wu, Lei & Ku, 2013). Further, under conditions

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Claudia Ferrante, Ph.D., is a Professor of Management at the United States Air Force Academy. She graduated from Bucknell University in 1988 with a B.S. in Biology and earned her MBA and Master of Health Administration from the University of Pittsburgh, in 1990. After working as a management consultant for an international accounting firm, the Assistant Director of Finance at a hospital, and as a financial analyst for a health maintenance organization, Dr. Ferrante received her doctorate in Organizational Behavior from Carnegie Mellon University. Her current research interests include applying organizational behavior and human resource management to service-learning, experiential learning and corporate social responsibility.

Scott Heyler, Ph.D., Colonel, U.S. Air Force, is the Head of the Department of Management at the United States Air Force Academy. He graduated from USAFA in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in management. He has served in the Air Force for over 25 years and is a career personnel officer. Col Heyler has held leadership positions at the squadron, group, wing, major command and air staff levels and in the joint environment. He served as the Air Officer Commanding for Cadet Squadron 29 at USAFA from 2007-2009. He received his Ph.D. in Management from Auburn University in 2014. He has served across the United States and overseas in Germany and Afghanistan. His research interests are in the areas of ethical decision making and organizational leadership. He has published articles in *The Leadership Quarterly* and *The Journal of Managerial Issues*. He teaches courses in the areas of organizational leadership, power and influence and business ethics.

David Levy, Ph.D., is a Professor of Management at the United States Air Force Academy. He graduated from USAFA in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in psychology and served ten years on active-duty. After leaving the military, he worked as a senior marketing manager for America Online and as an organizational change consultant for Grant-Thornton and KPMG. Dr. Levy received his doctorate in organizational behavior from Cornell University applying principles from cognitive psychology to organizational theory. His current research involves developing cognitive maps of effective leadership. Dr. Levy is a co-author of four books, *The 52nd Floor: Thinking Deeply About Leadership, Attitudes Aren't Free: Thinking Deeply About Diversity in the US Armed Forces, Echoes of Mind: Thinking Deeply About Humanship, Evolution of Government Policy Towards Homosexuality in the US Military*, and most recently, *The Line: A Very Short, Short Story*.

where survival is the continual goal, participants can develop a harmful type of relatedness that is contrary to organizational, and proper individual goals. This can manifest as a loyalty to one another that overwhelms loyalty to the organization. Rules infractions, even integrity lapses, can be overlooked. In academics, a continual focus on survival can lead to cramming for exams instead of engaging with the material. Students who are deprived of thriving needs often want no academic feedback at all, other than survival information such as knowing the mean (average on a particular assignment) and how their score will translate into a grade.

In summary, under many training situations, survival is an essential and worthy goal. However, for many contexts and situations, a prolonged survival focus produces negative results, reducing cadet growth toward becoming a leader of character.

Thriving as an Objective.

Thriving is experienced as a sense of growth, learning, and momentum, and is accompanied by a sense of being energized. Individuals who are thriving are not "merely surviving" (Saakvitne, Tennen, & Affleck, 1998; as cited in Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garnett, 2012, p. 251) "or getting by" (Benson & Scales, 2009; as cited in Porath, et al., 2012, p. 251). Thriving is composed of two dimensions: vitality and learning (Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, & Grant, 2005). These dimensions represent the affective (vitality) and cognitive (learning) elements required for the

Gary A. Packard Jr., Ph.D., Colonel, U.S. Air Force, is Vice Dean for Curriculum and Strategy and a Permanent Professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy, CO. He has also served the Academy as the Vice Dean of the Faculty and as the Permanent Professor and Head of the Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Department. He commanded the 32nd Flying Training Squadron at Vance AFB, OK, served as lead U.S Air Force writer on the Secretary of Defense's study of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and deployed as the Director of Staff, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, Southwest Asia. Col Packard has a BS in Behavioral Sciences from the Air Force Academy, an MAS in Aeronautical Science from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, an MA in Counseling from Michigan State University and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a command pilot with 3,900 flying hours.

Eric Tucker, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Management at the United States Air Force Academy. He received his Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering and Management Systems from the University of Central Florida in 2010. He received a B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering from the United States Air Force Academy (1994), M.S. in Engineering and Technology Management from Oklahoma State University (2002) and a M.A. in National Defense and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College (2007). Eric is a retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel and has been on the faculty of the United States Air Force Academy for eight years and was on the faculty of the University of Denver for two years. His current research involves the improvement of organizational performance and management systems using analytics.

Elizabeth A. Blair, Captain, U.S. Air Force, is an instructor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership, United States Air Force Academy, Colorado. She is responsible for the instruction and development of over 100 cadets annually and aids in preparing them to be officers of character. Additionally, Capt Blair serves as the undergraduate research director leading the senior capstone seminar for more than 120 faculty and cadets in the department. Captain Blair is a 2010 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in behavioral sciences and leadership. She has held a variety of assignments as a behavioral sciences officer in the Human Performance Wing. Prior to this assignment, she was a graduate student at the University of Maryland, where she earned a Masters of Arts degree in sociology.

psychological experience of personal growth (Porath, et al., 2012). When a person has vitality, they are enthusiastic about their tasks, and look forward to each day (Miller & Stiver, 1997; Nix, Ryan, Manly & Deci, 1999; both as cited by Porath, et al., 2012). Individuals who are thriving feel more vital, which results in more enthusiasm and a deeper reservoir of positive energy (Spreitzer & Porath, 2014). Multiple experiments have demonstrated that vitality results in performance improvement, while also accelerating recovery from personal fatigue (Muravan, Gagné & Rosman, 2008, as cited by Spreitzer & Porath, 2014). The learning dimension of thriving involves a commitment to continuous learning as well as the application of knowledge which is congruent with current Air Force guidance which notes that airmen must develop the skills to personally "assess and adjust, or calibrate their environment" to "maintain the cognitive skill, physical endurance, emotional stamina" needed to maximize mission accomplishment (AFI 90-506). It follows that those who are thriving build new capabilities (Carver, 1998, as cited by Porath, et al., 2012) by applying what they have learned. Additionally, vitality and learning combine in a manner that increases thriving and reduces burnout (Spreitzer & Porath, 2014).

In contrast to surviving, thriving focuses on the development of internal motivation, which could help cadets to invest in and actualize their potential, as well as internalize institutional core values. In summary, put in the context of USAFA, individuals who are thriving are intentionally engaged, which results in personal growth and an additional sense of vitality (Robitschek,1998, as cited by Spreitzer & Porath, 2014), while reaching desired states as defined by the mission of USAFA. Hence, creating activities, situations, or events where the intentional goal is thriving will likely result in the development of cadets who look for challenges and are motivated to maximize their competence–cadets who can be expected to perform better every day.

Studies exploring the context of thriving find that individuals who score higher on the thriving scales/metrics we discuss later, are more motivated and perform better than those who are not thriving. Consider these examples: Black and Deci (2000) show that, in terms of overall learning, university instructors get superior results when they create a thriving context; a study at a medical school demonstrated that students are much more likely to internalize desired institutional values when taught within a thriving context (Williams & Deci, 1996); and hospital patients were significantly more likely to change their behaviors and embrace a healthier lifestyle when health care providers used methods that emphasized thriving (Williams, Deci, & Ryan, 1998).

Thriving has also been strongly linked to leadership effectiveness and leadership development. In a study of executives across different firms, thriving leaders were rated substantially better, and found to be better role models, than those whose thriving score was lower (Porath, et al, 2012). In addition, research has shown that leaders who support increased autonomy in the workplace enhance employee well-being and workplace effectiveness (Slemp, Kern, Patrick & Ryan, 2018).

Since thriving as a goal is critical under circumstances that demand personal growth or internalization of values, such as the Air Force Core Values, when designing programs and training events at USAFA we recommend that leaders intentionally create and assess training that provides opportunities for cadets to thrive. Thriving doesn't occur just because the boss is pushing for it (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Instead, research has demonstrated that thriving is situationally dependent—the roles, responsibilities reporting relationships, and task constraints all determine whether a situation produces thriving, or instead, depletes vitality (Spreitzer & Porath, 2014).

Linking Thriving to Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT), a theory well supported by empirical work, postulates that cognitive and emotional health are a function of the satisfaction of three needs (Flannery, 2017), which act to support the ability of a person to exercise their intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). These needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—are, in turn, critically dependent on the context provided by an organization's leaders (Ryan & Deci, 2017). As described in this section, the three components of self-determination theory provide the *nutriments* required for thriving (Spreitzer & Porath, 2014). For example, studies have shown that students that were provided with the three nutriments of self-determination theory possessed more vitality (Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000, as cited by Spreitzer & Porath, 2014).

The Components of Self-Determination Theory

As mentioned above, SDT is scaffolded by autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The first of these, autonomy, is evident when a person commits to his or her actions and takes responsibility for them (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Motivation that is autonomous reflects actions that flow from the person's values, goals and interests (Graves & Luciano, 2013). Autonomous action is pursued by individuals who have enthusiasm for the matter at hand accompanied by a sense of choice (Gagné & Deci, 2005), a combination that is necessary for peak performance (Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005). Autonomy has been associated with self-actualization and self-esteem and leads to supporting the autonomy of others (Lewis & Neighbors, 2005). Studies have also repeatedly found that "motivation and perseverance are necessary for attainment of eminent performance" (Ericcson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993; p366).

The need for competence is driven by the desire to impact one's surroundings and to own one's actions through the development of skills, mastery of challenges, achievement of goals and adaptation to evolving environments (Graves & Luciano, 2013). Competence is achieved via a commitment to learning, which is the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills to build capacity (Edmonson, 1999 as cited in Spreitzer & Porath, 2014).

Satisfaction of the relatedness need is indicated by close and secure personal relationships (Flannery, 2017). As a result of the experience of relatedness, individuals feel connected to others, believe they are an important and well-regarded member of social groups, and see themselves as able to contribute to both individual relationships and to the groups where they are members (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

When autonomy, competence, and relatedness are optimized, individuals are better able to successfully interpret threatening situations that are out of alignment with their values (Di Domenico, Liu, Ayaz, & Fournier, 2016). As a result, such individuals are better able to handle the challenges that accompany rigorous education and training processes. Individuals operating with high levels of self-determination are simply better prepared psychologically to face and manage challenging situations, and they are much less likely to ignore or avoid problems, which can lead to troublesome behaviors that get in the way of effective functioning (Li & Yang, 2016).

Self-determined individuals have a desire to grow and develop, to expand their potential, and to be an active part of the social structures in which they reside (Graves & Luciano, 2013). When self-determination is driven to higher levels (i.e., when autonomy, competence, and relatedness are in full force) psychological resilience, which is a person's capacity to face difficult situations, is increased, and that person is able to thrive. As a result, self-determined individuals are better able to recover from intense formational processes (Booth &

Neill, 2017), such as those employed by USAFA, while maximizing and integrating the knowledge gained from those processes.

Thriving, Self-Determination, and Academy Mission Accomplishment

We observe that most cadets thrive in at least one area of their life at the Academy. While a cadet may be struggling academically, they may be thriving as a cadet squadron commander. Perhaps another cadet thrives in his or her academic major but struggles militarily. Some cadets thrive on the athletic fields, others in cadet clubs. The challenge for USAFA permanent party (i.e., our military, academic, athletic and character development faculty and staff) is to make thriving and/or surviving intentional objectives for particular training and educational events which might then widen the window of thriving opportunities for cadets and further contribute to the accomplishment of the Academy's mission.

The research cited above strongly suggests that activities that focus on thriving are critical to cadet

> *...the Academy must provide contexts and situations where cadets work to reconcile experiences, facts, or events that contradict their current self-concept, which results in personal growth...*

development, particularly when compared to activities that focus on survival alone. As discussed, this is especially important for leadership development, where we have long known about the importance of giving participants time reflect on their personal leadership challenges (Conger, 2004) while exploring, incorporating and understanding of the rationale behind their Academy experiences. A critical element of cadet development is expressed by The Air Force Academy's Officer Development System

which specifically explicates a desire for officers who "have internalized a foundational identity, in which they understand why...service...is a noble pursuit." (USAFAPAM 36-3527, 2013, p. 11). Further, there is little doubt that the USAFA mission requires cadets to internalize the Air Force Core Values (Integrity First, Service Before Self, Excellence in All We Do). This requires training focused on thriving, not just survival or "getting by."

The Academy's Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD) has defined development as "the crystallization and consolidation of new insights, knowledge, observable skills and responsibilities" (CCLD, 2011, p. 12) The Center acknowledges, in agreement with theories of thriving, that training and education don't, by themselves, lead to deeper insights (CCLD, 2011). CCLD refers to Bandura's (1997) work, which underlines the need for individuals to believe in their ability to perform, while operating in an encouraging environment. Finally, again in agreement with self-determination theory and thriving, CCLD notes that when people undergo real development it is not because something is "done to them" (CCLD, 2011, p. 17). Instead, the CCLD calls for the creation of events and an overall system wherein cadets "own" their personal development—which is a fundamental aspect of thriving.

Integrative processes are essential to the accomplishment of the USAFA mission. CCLD (CCLD, 2011) refers to this as intentionally "threading together" a cadet's experiences. Further, they call for "experiences and relationships that are sustained over time and meaningful to the individual" (CCLD, 2011, p. 18). This means the Academy must provide

Figure 1
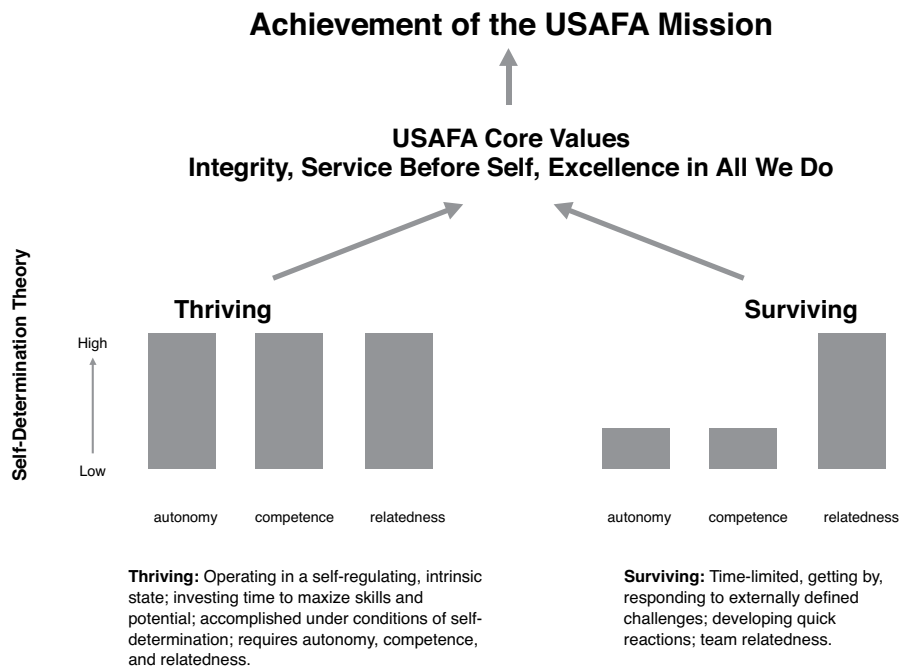
Achievement of the USAFA Mission

USAFA Core Values
Integrity, Service Before Self, Excellence in All We Do

Thriving: Operating in a self-regulating, intrinsic state; investing time to maxize skills and potential; accomplished under conditions of self-determination; requires autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Surviving: Time-limited, getting by, responding to externally defined challenges; developing quick reactions; team relatedness.

contexts and situations where cadets work to reconcile experiences, facts, or events that contradict their current self-concept, which results in personal growth (Weinstein, Przybylski, & Ryan, 2013).

DiDomenico, et al., (2016) posit that when values, practices, and behaviors are in congruence with the various dimensions of a person's identity, that person begins to perceive that they are operating in a self-regulated state. This is critical because growth and internalization are maximized when a trainee perceives that they are acting in a self-regulated state (derived from the SDT focus on autonomy). This requires the intentional creation of a thriving context. Rogers (1961) reminds us, however, that these processes do not result in a permanent self-concept but are part of an ongoing process of discerning and consolidating the self. Further, thriving must be emphasized in each Academy functional area (i.e., military training, academics, athletics, and character development). Shin and Grant (2019) warn that if the ability to thrive is

not equal in all areas, it can result in poor performance in the areas that have neglected to provide a thriving context.

As supported by the discussion above we submit four propositions:

Proposition 1: The mission of USAFA will be more comprehensively met if the organization provides a clear context and objectives for training and educational events that correlate with the nine institutional outcomes of USAFA (critical thinking; clear communication; application of engineering methods; scientific reasoning and the principles of science; the human condition; cultures & societies; leadership, teamwork, and organizational management; ethics and respect for human dignity; national security of the American Republic; warrior ethos as airmen and citizens).

Proposition 2: Cadets will be more productive in their efforts to become leaders of character if the contexts and objectives, emphasizing either surviving or thriving, are intentionally applied in each development situation.

Proposition 3: Driven by autonomous motivation, cadets who are thriving will better internalize the values of the Air Force and, as a result, will be more committed to live by those values.

Proposition 4: USAFA permanent party largely controls the extent to which each training or development event or context is experienced by the cadets as a thriving or surviving situation.

The above model briefly illustrates our previous discussion of thriving and surviving as they relate to the achievement of the USAFA Mission (Figure 1). At the end of this paper we will discuss methods to assess both individual events and the overall cadet experience to determine the extent to which Academy cadets are thriving.

Scenarios: Thriving or Surviving

To further explore self-determination theory as it relates to surviving and thriving at USAFA, we present six scenarios depicting surviving and thriving situations which were provided by cadets and graduates, followed by a discussion of the relationship between the scenario and SDT.

Scenario 1: Surviving and Academics

On your way to teach in Fairchild Hall at USAFA, you see a familiar cadet. As the distance closes, you recognize Cadet Jones. "Hi Cadet Jones! How are you doing?" You and Cadet Jones shake hands and move to the side of the bustling hallway.

"Hi Ma'am. It's good to see you!"

Cadet Jones was one of your students and it has been months since you last saw her. As you recall, she applied herself after stumbling in the first half of your course and ended up with a decent grade. She's an upperclassman now, and you expect her to tell you all is well.

Cadet Jones says, "I'm okay. Surviving." She looks off into the distance. "I had two tests today. I think I passed them. Prog [mid-term grading period] is right around the corner though. Lots to do. Oh, and I leave for a game this weekend. You know how it is."

"Yeah," you say. As a USAFA graduate you remember how overwhelmed and stressed you were almost all of the time.

Cadet Jones continues, "I gotta run. My study group is meeting in the library in 10. I'm hoping the extra effort will help me get off of academic probation. Maybe, I'll even learn something."

Academic probation? Cadet Jones? "Hang in there. Only two years until graduation and you made it through the toughest two years."

"Yes ma'am. That's what I keep telling myself."

Wow, my response was weak, you think. Hang in there. Live through it. Just survive.

Commentary for Scenario 1: For anyone who has observed cadets at USAFA, this scenario familiar. While the majority of cadets don't experience academic probation, at multiple points in their cadet journey cadets experience the overwhelming reality of seemingly unending commitments that push them toward an emphasis on survival: academic pursuits, squadron duties, athletic team practices and games, extracurricular activities, military training, and the many other obligations. This scenario isn't just familiar, it's normal; de rigeur as part of the four-year USAFA

experience in the quest to produce not only combat ready warriors but leaders of character who will be at the helm of the U.S. Air Force and civilian organizations, as they have been since the first class graduated in 1959. This type of environment is driven by the assumption that not everyone can survive, but those that do will be better because of it and will be prepared to fulfill the unique mission of the USAFA.

If you check in with USAFA graduates from across the years, you'll find that the fundamental assumptions about training haven't changed much since the first cadet, Bradley C. Hosmer, received his diploma. Some of the basic assumptions have been challenged over time, as evidenced by dramatic changes in retention and graduation rates, and discussions about the need for multiple pathways. However, the fundamental philosophy and the assumptions we make, whether conscious or unconscious, of what an Air Force Academy is or should be, remain largely unchanged and are reflected in the summation of the cadet experience in this scenario: survive.

As briefly discussed above, Permanent Party understand that defending the country and fighting wars is the military's primary role. In response, we want to insure our cadets can survive under pressure—so we push them to their limits to get them ready. For many Permanent Party members of USAFA we've talked to about training cadets, this is as it should be. USAFA has a long history of success that tells us we are doing something right. When Cadet Jones and her peers toss their hats on graduation day, they will know they are survivors. They made it through the countless obstacles and challenges built into the cadet experience. They will be proud that they made it through a program that few others would or could; forged in fire, emerging as warriors.

However, as important as the outcomes are from exposing cadets to survival situations, we propose that we can produce more developed leaders of character

by finding ways to encourage a thriving outcome as well. Let's hit the reset button on the scenario above and look at a different interaction; one seen through a thriving lens.

Scenario 2: Thriving and Academics

On your way to class in Fairchild Hall at USAFA, you see a familiar cadet; someone you hadn't seen in months. As the distance closes, you recognize Cadet Jones. "Hi Cadet Jones! How are you doing?" You and Cadet Jones shake hands and move to the side of the bustling hallway.

"Hi Ma'am. It's good to see you!"

Cadet Jones was one of your students. As you recall, she applied herself after stumbling in the first half of the course and ended up with a decent grade. You expect her to tell you all is well. She's an upperclassman now.

Cadet Jones says, "I'm tired, but am doing really, really well. We just finished a design project for my capstone course, and it turned out great. Honestly, I had my doubts about getting it done, but our team gelled about midway through and we came up with a design our instructor told us has never been done before and has the potential to impact our field." She looks off into the distance. "Funny thing though, at the beginning of the semester I dreaded the class. Frankly, I thought this would be the one class I might fail. And here I am, I'm loving it and working harder than I ever thought I would... or could."

As a USAFA grad you smile at the similar experiences you went through as a cadet. Challenging assignments; direct, yet constructive feedback; room to make and correct mistakes.

Cadet Jones continues, "I gotta run. My study group is meeting in the library in 10. I usually prefer studying on my own, but this particular group pushes me to do more than I would normally do alone, and I appreciate that."

The best part of teaching is watching cadets like Cadet Jones thrive. "I'm so excited for you! The Air Force is incredibly lucky to have you and I can't wait to see what you accomplish after graduation."

"Thanks, ma'am. It was great running into you."

Commentary for Scenario 2: The second scenario was quite different from the first even though they both depict experiences at USAFA. In the first scenario, the cadet was simply trying to get by, to survive. But consider–isn't simply surviving a rather odd goal or criteria for success? Imagine a farmer stating that they want their crops to survive rather than thrive. A farmer does their best to provide the optimal balance of nutrients that support abundant harvests. In contexts where the possibility for substantial additional growth exists, a survival goal sets the bar much too low. In the second scenario, these nutrients appear to be present and the cadet thrived. We must prepare cadets for actual survival under fire, which the Academy does quite admirably through intense programs such as Basic Cadet Training and Cadet Survival Training. However, if we make survival a day-to-day goal throughout a cadet's time at USAFA, we neglect growth and miss opportunities in many areas that require investment and reflection.

Scenario Three: Surviving in the Cadet Wing

Let's take a look at another scenario, again using the lens of SDT, to identify how the cadet in the scenario perceives her levels of autonomy, competence, and relatedness to others.

"This has to stop," the Air Officer Commanding (AOC) told his cadet squadron commander. "I'm sick and tired of low knowledge test scores, bad uniforms, and poor attitudes. Lead your squadron, or I'll do it for you."

The cadet squadron commander sighed and said, "Yes, Sir. I'll take care of it. It won't happen again." Run the squadron? He's already running the squadron. I haven't been able to make a single decision on my own since the sophomores did poorly on their knowledge test at the beginning of the semester. Did he even think about why they did poorly? No! They're probably upset and sending a message to you about micromanaging them as much as you're micromanaging me. I'm stuck in the middle yet again. Forty-four days. Yes, I'm counting down. Forty-four days until the next sucker gets to be squadron commander and 'not be in charge'."

"Don't squander this leadership opportunity," the AOC continued. "I expect to see a huge improvement in your squadron's performance."

"Yes, sir. I won't let you down."

Commentary for Scenario 3: The scenario above might seem a bit contrived, but it conveys what some cadets have shared with us semester after semester. As previously stated, Self Determination Theory tells us that adequate levels of autonomy, competence, and relatedness must be perceived for a person to experience subjective well-being and to thrive. With that in mind, it is fairly easy to imagine what the cadet in the scenario perceived regarding autonomy, competence and relatedness. Let's take autonomy first. Recall that autonomy involves a sense of volition and choice. Clearly, this was lacking in the scenario. The cadet expressed frustration about not being able to make decisions and being micromanaged. Imagine how proud that cadet must have been about her selection as squadron commander and how much she must have looked forward to the opportunity to practice her leadership skills.

When it comes to SDT, competence is about more than simply having a skill. Competence is about successfully applying skills when faced with significant

challenges. Critically, it is also about the growth of the competency through practice. In the scenario, the cadet isn't given the opportunity to develop or use her competency. Instead, she is relegated to implementing the directives given by her AOC.

The third component of SDT, psychological relatedness, has to do with relationships that support a sense of belonging and connection to others. The AOC could have used the opportunity to mentor the cadet, share wisdom, and develop mutual respect that would bolster the sense of relatedness, but it does not look like this was happening in this case.

Interestingly, the AOC may not be thriving either. The AOC job, embodying both evaluation and mentorship is extremely difficult and, depending on the metrics used to judge their performance, AOCs may find themselves focusing on day-to-day survival. If so, the approach taken by the AOC, applying pressure and creating a survival context, is understandable. Unfortunately, because growth was possible in this scenario, making this a survival situation stunts that growth, and could easily result in cadets choosing loyalty to one another over the mission.

Scenario 4: Thriving in the Cadet Wing

"Hey, Ma'am. Do you have a minute?" Cadet Jonas, the cadet squadron commander said as he knocked on the AOC's office door.

She put aside the papers she'd been reviewing. Bout time for a break. "Come on in, have a seat. What can I do for you?" the AOC responded.

Cadet Jonas took a seat and asked, "Well, I'm concerned about the poor performance of the sophomores on their last knowledge test and was wondering if I could bounce a few ideas off of you?"

Yes! She'd been hoping that the cadets would stop by more often and ask for her guidance. "Of course. I don't have all the answers, but I'm happy to share my

experience with you." The AOC leaned back in her seat. I better set up some clear ground rules though. "Ultimately, after I share my thoughts, the best course of action is your decision. And if you make a mistake, we'll learn from it." She was concerned her words might be taken as an empty promise, or worse, a veiled threat, but she firmly believed that USAFA is a leadership laboratory where cadets can make mistakes and learn from them in an environment where no one gets hurt.

They went on to brainstorm ideas. Time passed without either of them being aware of it. When they were done, Jonas said, "I think I've got some great strategies that will work. Thanks, Ma'am. I appreciate your time. "I can't believe how much I'm learning."

The AOC closed with two suggestions. "Cadet Jonas, next time consider bringing along one or more of your staff to participate in our meeting. Decisions can be substantially improved when discussed with others, especially those who will be asked to implement or live with the final decision. Also, whenever time allows, be sure to ask for feedback from your staff before making a final decision. That will ensure everyone has a voice and knows their positions are valued."

They both chuckled as the AOC walked Cadet Jonas to the door.

Commentary for Scenario 4: This scenario tells a very different story than the previous scenario. While the situation may be similar, the AOC is consciously or unconsciously using the power of SDT to promote thriving. Let's start with autonomy. In this scenario, the AOC makes it very clear that the cadet squadron commander has the autonomy to make decisions. Cadet Jonas is also invited to develop additional competence, with the AOC providing mentorship in a non-threatening, non-survival environment. Jonas seems genuinely excited about the opportunity.

In the scenario, the cadet squadron commander values and appreciates his interactions with his AOC. The AOC demonstrates respect for the cadet, and in response the cadet is excited to share his ideas with his AOC. There is significant potential for a meaningful relationship between the two that meets the innate psychological need of relatedness as described by SDT. Further, the AOC has reminded the cadet of the importance of extending autonomy, competence, and relatedness to his staff.

Notice that the differences in the two scenarios are actions, policies and relationships that either foster a sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness or reduces these elements. Promotion of a positive environment can take more time for an AOC, but has huge positive impacts in perceptions, behaviors, and ultimately outcomes.

Scenario 5: Surviving in Multiple Systems at USAFA

The previous examples focused on academics and the Cadet Wing as specific and distinct mission elements. Unfortunately, although it has utility, these scenarios are overly simplistic when viewed from the cadet perspective. Cadets experience pressures from the various mission elements at the same time and find themselves in a balancing act where prioritization and time management is an ongoing part of cadet life. To properly address this complexity through a SDT lens, a systems approach is necessary. Here are two scenarios that illustrate how this might look from a systems perspective.

"Hi Kevin, how are you doing? How are things going on the Hill?", asks Kevin's coach.

"Coach, things are not going so well. Every time I get back to the squadron I am reprimanded for missing the training sessions. When I do attend the training sessions, I receive flack about not participating in the physical activities. I am told I am a slacker because I won't do physical training with my classmates even though my cadet chain of command knows I am not allowed to participate under NCAA guidelines. It's hard to balance my cadet responsibilities and my responsibilities to the team."

The coach said, "Well Kevin, your cadet training staff is not helping us win any games. I recommend that you stay at practice until academic call to quarters [a time set aside each evening to allow student to study where there are no other events planned] starts; it's only six months until recognition. Besides, you're not good at any of that cadet stuff anyway. Tell you what, I will have the Head Coach call your AOC and tell her to leave you alone. We have games to win."

Kevin doesn't quite agree with the coach. I am pretty good at my knowledge, but I wish there was a way I could balance all my commitments. I feel like a disappointment. I wish my coach understood. I wish my squadron understood. I am not going to quit now, but if this balancing act doesn't get any better, I need to find a way to maintain my sanity.

Commentary for Scenario 5: From a SDT viewpoint, the above scenario is painful to recount. Reading between the lines we can make some assumptions. For example, while Kevin was probably recruited for being a great athlete, he also demonstrated academic and leadership excellence during his high school years. Unfortunately, early in his cadet career, Kevin is already experiencing mutually exclusive mission element demands. As a result, his autonomy is under attack, and he is made to feel incompetent. As discussed above, though he wants to excel everywhere, Kevin may soon become defensive with some of the mission elements, reducing his participation, motivation, and growth.

One can imagine from the above scenario that this

cadet has pockets of strong relatedness with others, likely stemming from relationships with his teammates. It is also easy to imagine that his experience in his squadron makes him feel isolated, misunderstood, and alone. However, while Kevin's relatedness needs may be satisfied, the outcome for the Academy is suboptimal since the establishment of cliques can be contrary to the overall mission.

Kevin also has little chance to develop competency related to his non-athletic duties, given conflicts within the system. This inability to balance demands placed on him by different mission elements directly attacks his sense of competence. One can imagine his tremendous sense of pride as he performs on the athletic field, a sense of pride that is crushed when he is counseled for missing training events. This cadet could be confident in athletics, academics and military activities, yet the combination of all three have left him with an overall sense of being incompetent regarding the unified USAFA experience. This is not a great position to be in as a young person desiring to grow and excel.

Scenario 6: Thriving in Multiple Systems at USAFA

"Hi Kevin, how are you doing, how are things going on the Hill?" asks Kevin's position coach.

"Coach, things are going great. When I get back to the squadron, my three-degree coach checks in with me to see how the day went, including practices. She makes sure I understand all the requirements I missed and helps me develop a plan to support my role in the squadron even though I spend a lot of time down here."

The coach nods, happy to hear evidence that the parts of the system are working together to support Kevin.

Kevin continued, "My classmates are supportive as well. It's like I'm a part of two great teams. I'm working my butt off, but life is great." He adjusts his loaded backpack.

The coach knew that what Kevin experienced was, in part, a result of the great conversation that the Head Coach had with the AOCs to clarify the support cadet athletes need and what they contribute to USAFA.

"Additionally, I have felt appreciated more," Kevin said, "Now that my squadron knows what my day looks like, they now focus more on what I bring to the table and understand why I am unable to attend some squadron activities. With the support I am receiving from the military side and the athletic side, I feel like I can be successful at USAFA."

"Kevin, I am glad to hear all that. I am glad we were able to share all the good things you accomplish in your sport and dispel some of the myths. Thank you for sharing your concerns about balancing your Academy commitments. Like you, I am thankful for all the increased support. It's much easier for us to coach, and for you to play, when we are on the same team."

Commentary for Scenario 6: This scenario embodies the satisfaction of the innate psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in spades. Even though the cadet still deals with huge time management concerns, he can develop plans that help him meet both military and athletic requirements. Once his chain of command better understood his challenges and contributions, they were able to provide him additional autonomy.

Competence includes both actual skill and perception of that skill. In this case, the cadet feels as though he is making, and being recognized for, valuable contributions in both military and athletic pursuits. As a result, we can expect his autonomous motivation, his desire to make a difference, increase.

When the cadet says he feels as if he is a part of two great teams, he is voicing his sense of relatedness with two sets of people; his squadron classmates and

his teammates. Compare this to the isolation he was experiencing in the prior scenario.

A Call for Action and Assessment

The leaders in any system are that system's architects and the behaviors observed in any system are a direct result of the architecture (processes, incentives, assumptions, etc.) within that system. Hence, leadership determines the degree to which any event will emphasize surviving and/or thriving. To do so intentionally requires the specification of each event's objectives in advance, as discussed in the introduction, along with specific metrics to measure outcomes.

Fortunately, as architects of the USAFA experience, USAFA leadership is ideally situated to create an environment where cadets can either thrive or be challenged to survive. To accomplish this, rigorous assessment of individual programs must be conducted in order to establish a baseline understanding regarding the elements required for cadets to thrive. We propose using The Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale (Chen et al., 2015) as an assessment tool. The scale has been validated in four countries and is designed to measure the extent to which the nutriments of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are present regarding a particular program or experience. Using the scale, cadets would be asked to reflect upon different aspects of their USAFA experience. For example, a cadet might take the survey to ascertain her experience as a flight commander in her squadron, again as a member of the volleyball team, and again as a major in the management department.

In the service of creating leaders of character, results should provide a measure of thriving as it relates to USAFA's mission, providing evidence that a cadet has maximized his or her potential as indicated by survey results, showing a robust level of perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness. If the results are lower than desired, leaders (and all Permanent Party), as architects of the system, can take action and make changes that can be expected to lead to increases in autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The results of those changes could then be measured by a later administration of the scale, after action has been taken to assess whether the changes impact cadets' ability to thrive. Isn't that what we all truly want for them and what they likely want for themselves?

It is critical at a military institution like the Air Force Academy that we develop a system that balances opportunities to thrive with those that teach students to survive. Officers in the Air Force need to understand what it means to thrive and how to help others to achieve that state. Additionally, these officers must understand what it takes to survive challenging situations, to persevere through adversity and to have the grit necessary to achieve challenging long-term goals. In this paper, we seek to find the correct balance of thriving and surviving. Too much of one or the other is detrimental to officer development. If we are deliberate in our development of programs and in their assessment, we can achieve a highly effective system that produces officers of character motivated to lead the United States Air Force.

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Leadership Development: Observations on Practicum as a Team-Based Approach

Robert D. Reimer, United States Air Force Academy

Paul Taggart, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Ben Chapman, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Introduction

Over the last decade there has been an increased emphasis on learning through work-related experiences (Bell, Tannenbaum, Ford, Noe, & Kraiger, 2017). However, simply assuming that leadership development will occur naturally in work-related contexts is an inferior approach to achieving organizational leadership needs. Too many organizations take leadership development for granted, assuming that leaders will develop as they encounter new roles and assume progressive responsibilities. In contrast, evidence suggests that effective experiential approaches require a high degree of intentionality to shape developmental contexts (Bell et al., 2017; DeRue & Wellman, 2009). In developmental contexts, leader self-efficacy is increased by providing supervisor support (e.g., feedback) and creating interventions like structured reflections to enhance learning. Leaders who are learning extemporaneously on the job without such support may contribute to substantial problems at work. As an example, roughly 70% of employees report that their leaders are the worst part of work (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005). While there are potentially many explanations for this phenomenon, the role of leader development should not be overlooked. Organizations that want to reliably benefit from developmental efforts must be willing to commit to systematically planned and executed efforts—efforts that are in addition to day-to-day operational requirements for most organizations.

Organizations seeking to meet operational requirements often turn to external consultants to meet leadership development needs. Given the prevalence of this approach, many academic institutions overlook the valuable built-in alternatives to inform, plan, implement, and assess developmental efforts. Faculty and staff who have the knowledge and skills to systematically evaluate institutional practice can help shape strategy. Elements of leadership development strategy include efforts like informing staffing efforts, crafting developmental experiences and programs, and aiding

in the identification and differentiation of effective and high potential leaders. To this end, this article offers a description of a developmental strategy as executed through practicum—an academically structured project in the context of a working organization to facilitate leadership development for twenty-one mid-level officers at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA).

A Generalized Strategy for Leadership Development

Strategy is simply a high-level plan to achieve goals in the face of uncertainty. Organizations and academic scholars alike have interest in implementing effective strategies to meet organizational leadership needs. Given the abundance of leadership theories to choose from, it is easy to appreciate why many organizations rely almost exclusively upon experience as a proxy for leadership development. Some organizations may embrace certain leadership theories and concepts (e.g., transformational or servant leadership), but may not fully understand how to effectively use experience as a reliable means to produce the desired qualities in leaders. Properly understood, however, experience is not simply practical exposure to work-related events, but an interplay of individual and contextual factors that become the work-based outcomes of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and motivation that generate performance (Tesluk & Jacobs, 1998). Thus, for the purposes of this article, this interplay of individual and contextual (interpersonal) factors is offered as a key consideration to creating and implementing leadership development efforts.

Individual Factors. At the intrapersonal level, a leader's individual attributes have important implications for the performance of any developmental strategy. Individual factors are latent qualities that are

Robert Reimer, Ph.D., is the Director of Academics for the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the United States Air Force Academy. Bob is responsible for the academic mission of the department where he maintains, executes, and assesses the curriculum to meet USAFA and department outcomes. As an Assistant Professor, Bob delivers academic instruction to graduate and undergraduate students on leadership, teams, and organizations. During Bob's 22 years of USAF service he has served in a variety of roles including as a Squadron Commander for the USAFA Preparatory School, Air Officer Commanding (AOC) at USAFA, and as the Director of the AOC Master's Program. Bob is a Command Pilot with 691 combat hours in the KC-135R and the C-17A. Bob received his Bachelor's Degree from the U.S. Air Force Academy; Master's Degrees from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; and a Master's and Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Pennsylvania State University.

Paul Taggart is an Air Officer Commanding at the United States Air Force Academy where he leads more than 110 cadets and one non-commissioned officer in support of the Academy's mission to educate, train, and inspire lieutenants and future leaders of character for the Air Force and our nation. Paul earned his MA in Counseling and Leadership in 2019 and his MA in Diplomacy in 2012. He has led individuals and teams at numerous levels within the Air Force and has expertise in multiple weapon systems.

Ben Chapman is an Air Officer Commanding assigned to the United States Air Force Academy where he is responsible for educating and training leaders of character to serve as Air Force officers. He graduated from USAFA in 2006, and has since earned Masters of Arts degrees in English and in Counseling and Leadership. Ben is an active duty aircraft maintenance officer with experience on KC-135, U-2, C-17, and F-15E aircraft. His areas of interest include leader development, team and organizational dynamics, and finding novel ways to provide maintenance support for training and combat aviation.

not directly observable. It is important to note that individual factors are addressed as antecedents and moderators of developmental efforts, not as objectives of developmental efforts. Three key individual factors are beneficial to informing the creation and implementation of a leadership development strategy.

First, individual differences (e.g., personality, motives, and values) affect how individuals think, experience, and manifest leadership behaviors. Decades of evidence indicate that dispositional qualities broadly predict leadership potential, of which personality emerges as the key contributor (Kaiser & Hogan, 2011). Simply stated, who a leader is affects how they lead (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005). As a consequence, individual differences predict important leadership outcomes including emergence, follower perceptions of leader effectiveness, and overall job performance (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Judge, Colbert, & Ilies, 2004; Lord, De Vader, & Alliger, 1986). The evidence suggests that organizations with leaders who lack certain essential individual qualities will struggle to achieve the intended outcomes.

Second, developmental strategies further benefit from accounting for a leader's learning orientation. Learning orientation is an individual characteristic that describes how individuals master tasks and seek challenges to advance job-related knowledge and skills. Organizations wanting to create the best conditions for leadership development should consider how potential leadership students are likely to benefit from the experience offered. In all likelihood, many developmental interventions fail to work simply because organizations overlook how a leader learns or that they may be reluctant to do so. For example, organizations should consider that leaders might have bias against new knowledge that appears contradictory to past successes. As a result, the Achilles heel of high potential leaders may be a tendency to seek information that is consistent with their past leadership experiences

(Bandura, 1971; 2012). In contrast, developmentally-ready leaders integrate experiences and internalize thought to adjust their behavior to meet new situations (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Of note, research demonstrates an important link between personality and learning orientation. Conscientiousness, openness to experience, and emotional stability predict learning outcomes for structured developmental activities like reflective assignments or developmental experiences (DeRue, Nahrgang, Hollenbeck, & Workman, 2012). Thus, organizations and leaders alike are encouraged to look beyond past success as the only evidence of future potential. Organizations need to undertake intentional efforts that account for effectiveness that results from a leader's willingness to learn.

Third, leadership development strategies can further benefit by accounting for a leader's motives to become proficient at leadership competencies. For example, one's *motivation to lead* (MTL) predicts leadership potential over and above general cognitive ability, values, personality, and attitudes (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). Furthermore, leaders' self-comparisons to other leaders (i.e., exemplars and global representations) predict leader potential, leadership emergence, and overall team effectiveness (Guillén, Mayo, & Korotov, 2015). MTL and leaders' comparisons to prototypes affect how they interpret their leadership experiences and adjust their leadership behaviors. When controlling for personality differences, research indicates that organizations that are willing to make costly investments to improve leadership bench strength are wise to account for MTL as an indicator of which leaders are more adaptable (Hendricks & Payne, 2007).

What this means is that organizations can maximize the returns on developmental interventions. By selecting individuals who are open to learning and most likely to benefit from experience, organizations are more likely to observe measurable differences in leadership development outcomes. Leaders' needs for development

and the organization's need for performance combine to create a symbiotic relationship between leader behaviors and organizational performance.

Interpersonal Factors. Where the preceding section addressed who a leader is, this section focuses upon how they lead. A common characteristic of prominent leadership theories is the effort to explain how and why leaders are able to influence others (e.g., Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, Authentic Leadership). With few exceptions, leadership definitions consistently invoke language to account for how a leader interacts with others to produce desired outcomes (Yukl, 2013).

Leadership and its development encompass dynamic contexts and the interactive process where leaders mine accumulated experiences for valuable lessons to be applied to present and future work. Leadership is manifested at the interpersonal level as behavior. Development is a progressive, logical growth toward an advanced state over time (Bass, 1990). Therefore, the logical progression toward an advanced state of leadership capacity (leadership development) requires improving the quality and quantity of leadership behaviors. To be certain, vision statements and desired outcomes are beneficial statements that bespoke of organizational values and intimate plans and policies required for performance. Practically speaking, achieving an organization's vision and associated outcomes requires deliberate attention, planning, and execution. Accordingly, it is equally consequential to know where the journey is to start from in order to plan the route to get there. Experts recommend that organizations should begin by defining leadership in terms that reflect the competitive value of teams, implement competency models that incorporate the skills needed to effectively lead these teams, assess how leaders affect team performance, and focus training and developmental efforts to improve team and organizational performance (Kaiser & Curphy, 2013).

Approaches to developing leadership knowledge and skills in postsecondary academic environments (Rosch, 2018) and in corporate settings (Kaiser & Curphy, 2013) are not consistently producing measurable, much less desirable, improvements in leadership capacity. One explanation for this lack of improvement rests upon ill-formed ideologies on how leadership capacity is advanced. For example, teaching leadership as an academic topic can and should reasonably produce outcomes related to knowledge and comprehension, but is substantially limited when it comes to students applying concepts. In fact, evidence demonstrates that delivering curricula to improve knowledge and comprehension of leadership concepts without implementing additional interventions to improve self-efficacy are of little effect to improving leadership capacity (Dugan, 2011). Thus, it is necessary to scope leadership education efforts to build an accurate understanding of concepts while also providing structured opportunities for leaders to practice effective leadership behaviors.

An emphasis on building leader self-efficacy and behavior can be compared to developmental approaches that rely on teaching leadership in an explicit manner. A meta-analysis on the effectiveness of eighty-three leadership development programs shows that training interventions are the most effective when they have knowledge outcomes (Collins & Holton, 2004). While knowledge plays an important role in leadership activities, effective leadership involves active learning (e.g., interpreting past experiences and applying acquired concepts to new experiences). Leadership capacity is thus best understood in terms where acquired knowledge interacts with reflective interventions and experience. By its nature, leadership involves influencing others. A leader's daily experiences are offered as a primary source of leader development beyond knowledge. Approaching development in this manner reflects a theoretical model of work experience that integrates interactive qualitative and

quantitative elements that accrue over time (Tesluk & Jacobs, 1998). To the extent that leadership is non-routine and unstructured, Tesluk and Jacobs propose that exposure to unique and diverse situations are particularly important for gaining experience. With these observations and theoretical underpinnings, interpersonal interactions in leaders' daily work experiences are offered as the best context for development.

Practicum as a Means of Experiential Leadership Development

Experience is central to many domains of work performance (Tesluk & Jacobs, 1998), of which leadership is a valuable element. Taking a systematic approach to identifying leadership needs and providing robust developmental experiences is of value. However, as indicated in the discussion on intrapersonal

factors, shared experiences do not produce common developmental outcomes across individuals. Given the relative stability of individual factors like personality, research suggests that learning outcomes that result from developmental experiences can be enhanced.

With a particular emphasis on the role of interpersonal factors, practicum is offered as an experiential learning intervention to supplement classroom-based academic leadership instruction. While research on practicum as an educational intervention to promote leadership development is limited, preliminary research is promising. Evidence suggests that practicum is an effective tool because it requires students to integrate theory and practice while addressing legitimate organizational problems (Lindsay, Tate, & Jacobs, 2008). Lindsay and colleagues evaluated graduate students' experiences with practicum projects and

Table 1

Proposed Relationship Between Bartram's Great Eight and Competency Areas Affected by Practicum

Great Eight Competency Factor[a]	Competency Domain Definition[a]	Proposed Relationships to Practicum Competency Category[b]	Percentage of Students Who Reported Benefits[b]
Leading and Deciding	Takes control and exercises leadership. Initiates action, gives direction, and takes responsibility.	1. Personnel recruitment, selection, placement, and classification 2. Performance appraisal and feedback 3. Leadership and management	100% 80% 77%
Supporting and Cooperating	Supports others and shows respect and positive regard for them in social situations. Puts people first, working effectively with individuals and teams, clients, and staff. Behaves consistently with clear personal values that complement those of the organization.	1. Ethical, legal, and professional contexts 2. Consulting and business skills	84% 97%
Interacting and Presenting	Communicates and networks effectively. Successfully persuades and influences others. Relates to others in a confident, relaxed manner.	1. Consulting and business skills	97%

Analyzing and Interpreting	Shows evidence of clear analytical thinking. Gets to the heart of complex problems and issues. Applies own expertise effectively. Quickly takes on new technology. Communicates well in writing.	1. Job/task analysis, job evaluation, and compensation 2. Judgment and decision making[c]	90% 52%
Creating and Conceptualizing	Works well in situations requiring openness to new ideas and experiences. Seeks out learning opportunities. Handles situations and problems with innovation and creativity. Thinks broadly and strategically. Supports and drives organizational change.	1. Criterion theory and development	81%
Organizing and Executing	Plans ahead and works in a systematic and organized way. Follows directions and procedures. Focuses on customer satisfaction and delivers a quality service or product to the agreed standards.	1. Organization development	77%
Adapting and Coping	Adapts and responds well to change. Manages pressure effectively and copes well with setbacks.	1. Work motivation 2. Small group theory and team processes	52% 35%
Enterprising and Performing	Focuses on results and achieving personal work objectives. Works best when work is related closely to results and the impact of personal efforts is obvious. Shows an understanding of business, commerce, and finance. Seeks opportunities for self-development and career advancement.	1. Consulting and business skills 2. Human performance/human factors	97% 58%

Note: Proposed relationships are expected to vary (e.g., according to the nature of the assigned practicum project and with respect to an increased emphasis on developing leadership capacity).

[a] Bartram (2005)

[b] Lindsay et al. (2008)

[c] Within Bartram's (2005) framework, "judgment" is a component of *Analyzing and Interpreting* and "making decisions" is accounted for within *Leading and Deciding*. For the purposes of this table, "judgment and decision making" are accounted for in Bartram's *Analyzing and Interpreting* level of description only.

observed that seventy-seven percent of students reported increases in leadership and management competency areas. Other outcomes observed by Lindsay, Tate, and Jacobs can be translated into the leadership domain using the Great Eight Competency Framework (Bartram, 2005). This comparison reveals important potential applications of practicum to developing specific leadership competencies (Table 1). Practicum demonstrates potential benefits across the Great Eight as a predictor of leadership performance.

Experiential learning provides leaders with practical knowledge (e.g., skills and abilities) from naturally occurring uncertainties that create legitimate needs for dynamic leadership behavior. Bartram's (2005) framework offers a focused view on what we can hope to gain through leadership experience against the backdrop of meaningful and important workplace behaviors. In short, experiential leadership activities require leaders to enact a variety of critical leadership behaviors. Performing leadership roles requires leaders to make decisions, take responsibility, understand others, adapt to the team, manage conflict, and adapt to change, setbacks, and other pressures (Bartram, 2005). Yet, organizations, leaders, and supervisors who lack the requisite knowledge and skills to reliably identify, describe, and learn from observed leadership phenomena are at a substantial disadvantage. For an organization's senior leaders to model and prescribe reliable and validated behaviors, they need to learn them.

Leaders require accurate and reliable means to interpret and learn from experience. Misinformed or simplistic observations of work characteristics and the corresponding need for specific leadership behaviors are likely to result in unbefitting behaviors and deleterious effects. When leaders manifest non-relevant behaviors they are more likely to be perceived as wasteful or distracting to work efforts (McCall & Lombardo, 1983). Thus, organizations require reliable means of diagnosing leadership experiences. First, the leader requires accurate representations of work-related phenomena from which they can identify needs and apply the most appropriate behaviors. Additionally, while experience is a well-documented developmental approach that is especially valued for leaders, supervisor support is needed (DeRue & Wellman, 2009). Therefore, the leader's supervisor (presumably a more developed leader) requires additional knowledge, skills, and abilities to facilitate personalized developmental feedback (e.g., coaching and other developmental interventions) to build the leader's capacity to support organizational objectives. Therefore, organizational members responsible for planning and/or implementing leadership development must carefully consider the role of individual and interpersonal factors. To maximize the benefits leaders gain through experiential learning, organizations must provide guidance under advanced leaders who possess requisite complementary skills (e.g., leadership, teaching, coaching, and counseling) that promote the development of a superior workforce. Practicum is an example of such an effort.

Method

A practicum project was embedded as the capstone project in the final of a three-course sequence within a graduate leadership curriculum that progressively surveyed leadership topics through the scholarly literature. General areas of coverage in these three courses included intrapersonal, interpersonal, teams and organizational content. This sequenced delivery of leadership knowledge draws upon conventional conceptualizations of leadership theory (Yukl, 2013) that are consistent with USAFA's *Personal, Interpersonal, Team, and Organizational (PITO) Model*. Upon graduation, the students are employed as frontline supervisors who function as leader and leadership developers for cadets at USAFA.

While the PITO model reflects conceptual levels of knowledge and skills, USAFA's *Leadership Growth*

Model (LGM) prescribes how these concepts can be learned. Consistent with the generalized leadership development strategy addressed herein, development under the LGM results from expectations, inspiration, and instruction that are matched with feedback and opportunities for reflective learning. Thus, the practicum project is grounded in the academic literature and employed through an institutionalized framework. This framework is also consistent with pedagogical recommendations for leadership education. For example, the *Know, See, Plan, Do* approach borrows from an array of learning theories that suggest that learning occurs from interactions between a student's knowledge, observations, planning, and practice (Allen, Miguel, & Martin, 2014; Martin & Allen, 2016). The model relies heavily on a constructivist approach whereby students acquire knowledge and meaning by actively interacting in a structured learning environment. Students learn through activities that inform internal principles that transcend superficial and simplistic representations of knowledge (Piaget, 1965). Similarly, practicum includes elements of social cognitive theory that describes how people interact with social systems that influence personal learning and development (Bandura, 2012). Thus, practicum is an extension of the learning environment that involves more than simply collecting and storing knowledge, but is a complex process whereby individuals form representations that can be accessed and applied.

To bridge the scientist-practitioner gap, the practicum project was designed with these elements in mind.

At the beginning of the third and final semester, the Teams and Organizations course instructor introduced the practicum project as a practical application of program content in support of an assigned client. The course instructor coordinated the clients and general practicum constraints in advance. The students had the opportunity to identify their preferences for the projects sponsored by four separate agencies at USAFA. The project prompt identified practicum as an opportunity to apply the graduate program's content to real-world challenges at USAFA as teams. Team sizes varied from four to six members. The clients were

> *...practicum is an extension of the learning environment that involves more than simply collecting and storing knowledge, but is a complex process whereby individuals form representations that can be accessed and applied.*

USAFA agencies with interest in receiving external assistance to address challenges and opportunities at USAFA. In this fashion, students used knowledge from coursework, applied knowledge to matters with real-world consequences, and worked with agencies that are connected to the students' future leadership roles at USAFA. This latter point is predicted to assist the students in relating and networking with future associates, producing opportunities for mutual influence between academic material and practical considerations, and generally contributing to student involvement in the broader organization.

The cohort of students were active duty and reserve officers in the USAF who had approximately 12 to 14 years of professional experience in a variety of occupational fields. The cohort attends the master's program as a developmental leadership opportunity. A senior USAFA official selected the cohort for the program on the basis of the cohort members' past leadership experiences and stated interest in assuming developmental and leadership roles for the cadets at USAFA.

As a project, practicum was further divided into six assignments. Assignments included identifying the student preference for the project, reflective assignments (e.g., identifying three ways that the student expected practicum to prepare them to take on a leadership role at USAFA), self- and peer-assessments of contributions to the practicum project, presentations, and an assessment of team processes.

The purpose of the initial presentation was to provide students an opportunity to formalize the agreements made between team members and the assigned clients. Students were required to provide a clear problem statement for the designated issue, address how the client described their needs, define their team's culture (e.g., expected values and norms), and to establish a plan for how to meet the clients expectations. Student teams received written and oral feedback from the instructor. Additionally, students were encouraged to ask questions and make observations about each other's presentations.

The purpose of the final presentation was for student teams to outbrief the rest of the class on the results of the team's practicum effort. Students were asked to analyze and communicate organization/institutional lessons learned from the experience, synthesize and communicate knowledge learned from the practicum that applies to their future leadership roles, to apply course concepts to identify and share lessons learned on team experiences, and to encourage class participation in discussion about the experience.

Additionally, the instructor collected observations in the form of notes derived from in-class interactions, meetings, and electronic communication with teams, team members, and clients throughout the semester. These observations were used to complement formal assessments of student experiences, key challenges, and learning outcomes.

Results

Individual Factors. Following the posting of the project to the course's learning management system and an in-class discussion of practicum, students offered questions that indicated a variety of individual differences with respect to how they were thinking about, experiencing, and manifesting leadership behaviors in reaction to practicum. Questions and comments from the cohort fell into four general categories as qualitative observations of student motives and learning orientation. These categories reflect classifications of the behaviors and expressed feelings and are not categorizations of the students.

The first category of student behavior was constructive in nature. Constructive behaviors appeared as questions and comments from students that served to satisfy curiosity about what they expected to experience and to clarify objectives for the project. The nature of these constructive behaviors is hypothesized to indicate students with high levels of conscientiousness, openness to experience, and emotional stability. Furthermore, the nature of these types of questions indicate that a percentage of the students possessed learning orientations with a greater proclivity to master tasks and seek challenges that would further advance their leadership-related knowledge and skills. Example statements by students that reflect constructive attitudes and behaviors include "A positive attitude is critical to achieving my goals, and maintaining awareness of my values, and how they may be changing," and "This assignment assists [me] with the development of leader and leadership development, improved effectiveness when working within teams and organizational leadership, and executive coaching and career development [for cadets]."

Certain student reactions appeared to delay the learning process. Negative reactions included manifestations of neuroticism and general doubt about the effectiveness of the project as a leadership

development experience. Negative reactions manifest as expressions of feeling overwhelmed by the magnitude of the effort, criticizing the probability of success in the stated approach, and comments that generally served to raise alarm about the effort. Some negative reactions may have resulted from mismatched expectations between the course's focus on the organizational level and student expectations to learn about their projected leadership roles. Additionally, some students initially offered constructive inputs about how they thought the project could be adapted to meet these expectations, but then demonstrated less favorable reactions when the instructor did not put all of the inputs into practice. Example student statements from this category include "My expectations for the class was that it would help immerse me with the [leadership role] I will be taking over," and "[practicum] left me with the perspective of being hired help."

Through written reflective assignments, the instructor identified a third, less obvious category of student reactions to the project. Compared to the observed constructive and negative responses, students in this third category exhibited generally neutral reactions to the project during in-class discussion of the project. These students remained relatively or completely silent about their reactions to the project or to other students' interactions. However, these students did share approval or disapproval of the project and their expectations of the effort through written reflections. Example statements from students in this category include, "I am still extremely hesitant to define the benefits that will stem from this experience," and "I am having a hard time actually understanding what our assigned practicum will do to help prepare me to take on a leadership role at USAFA."

Taking a longitudinal perspective, the authors observed a fourth category of behaviors that were developmental in nature. While the first three categories of behavior represent snapshots of student reactions at the onset of the effort, student attitudes toward the project were not static. As the learning experience evolved, the students demonstrated dynamic change in response to interactions within their teams and through contact with clients. These evolving perceptions demonstrated practical value to learning and draw attention to the value of working in teams as a developmental experience, especially for developing agentic views. Some of the students in this category initially took hard stances against the project, but adjusted their perspectives as they observed and experienced benefits. A student statement that fits this category is, "I was very skeptical of practicum...I am beginning to see some of the connections to becoming an effective and successful [leader]."

Interpersonal Factors. Evidence indicates that practicum's structure served to improve knowledge and comprehension of leadership concepts while also requiring students to improve observational capabilities and to promote leadership self-efficacy. Using the twenty competency dimensions underlying Bartram's Great Eight (2005), the instructor inventoried student stated expectations of practicum to prepare them for leadership roles. Responses were collected from a reflective assignment. Of note, student-stated expectations demonstrated opportunities to gain experience in seven of the eight leadership competency factors, with Creating and Conceptualizing being the most popular response (28.6%) (See Table 2 for a full list of results for Reflective Assignment #1 that capture expectations at the individual level). The instructor also catalogued competencies observed during the final practicum presentations observed at the team level (See Table 3 for a list of results for the Final Presentation that captures experience at the team level. Figure 1 provides a comparison of the individual and team level behaviors reported in Tables 2 and 3).

Discussion

As an approach to leadership development, practicum demonstrated the value of measuring behaviors that are under the control of the leader that contribute

Table 2

Inventory of Observed Competency Dimensions for Reflective Assignment #1 (Individual Level)

Great Eight Competency Factor[a]	Competency Dimension	Frequency of Observation	Percentage of Observations Within Competency Factor
Leading and Deciding	Deciding & Initiating Action Leading and Supervising	4 2	9.5%
Supporting and Cooperating	Working with People Adhering to Principles and Values	8 2	15.9%
Interacting and Presenting	Relating & Networking Persuading and Influencing Presenting and Communicating Information	9 1 1	17.4%
Analyzing and Interpreting	Writing and Interpreting Applying Expertise and Technology Analyzing	1 3 3	11.1%
Creating and Conceptualizing	Learning and Researching Creating and Innovating Formulating Strategies and Concepts	13 0 5	28.6%
Organizing and Executing	Planning and Organizing Delivering Results and Meeting Customer Expectations Following Instructions and Procedures	4 4 0	12.7%
Adapting and Coping	Adapting and Coping Coping with Pressure and Setbacks	0 0	0%
Enterprising and Performing	Achieving Personal Work Goals and Objectives Entrepreneurial and Commercial Thinking	3 0	4.8%

Note: Observations independently coded by the instructor.

[a] Bartram (2005)

Table 3

Inventory of Observed Competency Dimensions for the Final Presentation (Team Level)

Great Eight Competency Factor[a]	Competency Dimension	Frequency of Observation	Percentage of Observations Within Competency Factor
Leading and Deciding	Deciding & Initiating Action Leading and Supervising	3 4	11.1%
Supporting and Cooperating	Working with People Adhering to Principles and Values	10 1	17.5%
Interacting and Presenting	Relating & Networking Persuading and Influencing Presenting and Communicating Information	1 2 1	6.3%
Analyzing and Interpreting	Writing and Interpreting Applying Expertise and Technology Analyzing	4 5 3	19.0%
Creating and Conceptualizing	Learning and Researching Creating and Innovating Formulating Strategies and Concepts	4 4 3	17.5%
Organizing and Executing	Planning and Organizing Delivering Results and Meeting Customer Expectations Following Instructions and Procedures	7 7 1	23.8%
Adapting and Coping	Adapting and Coping Coping with Pressure and Setbacks	3 3	9.5%
Enterprising and Performing	Achieving Personal Work Goals and Objectives Entrepreneurial and Commercial Thinking	0 1	1.6%

Note: Observations independently coded by the instructor.

[a] Bartram (2005)
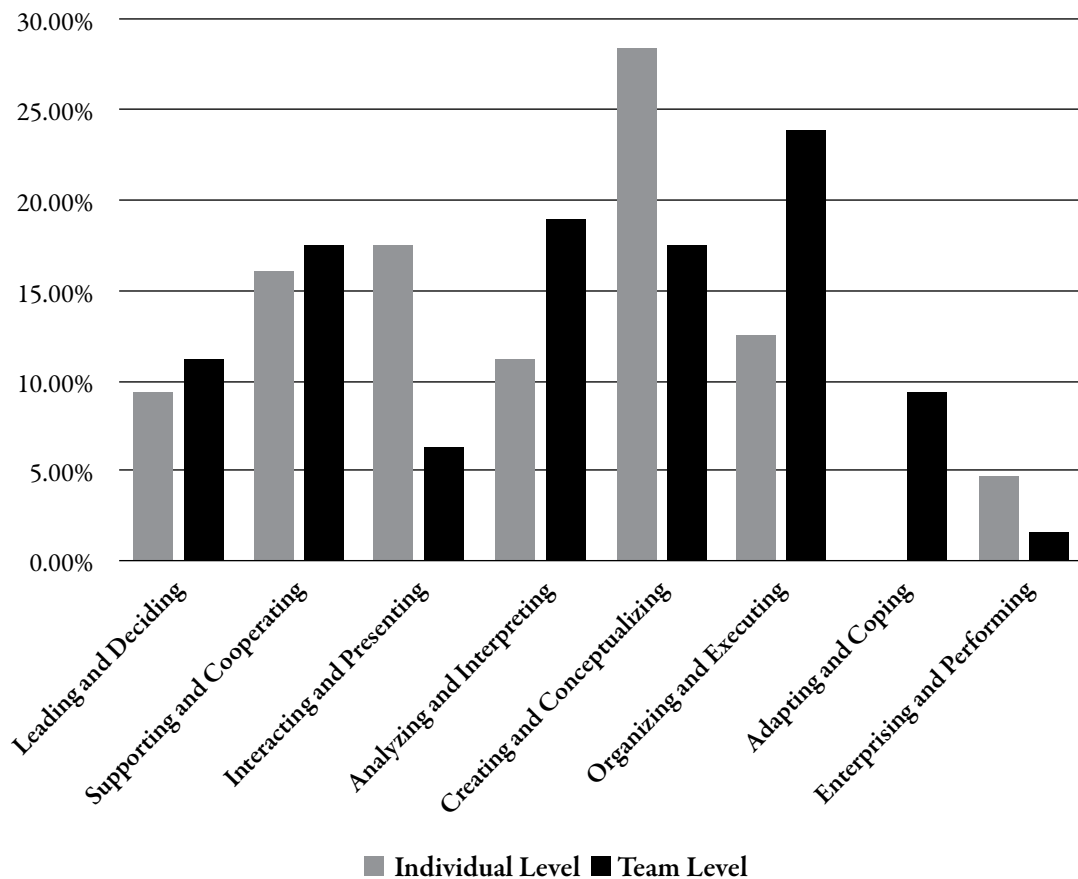
Figure 1. Comparison of Observed Team and Individual Level Competency Factors

to organizational goals. In contrast, claims of developmental success often rely upon leaders' self-reported levels of satisfaction with training or interventions. Organizations also miss the mark when they predominantly rely on consequences or results of leaders' actions as the measure of leadership performance. While there are legitimate reasons to measure leader satisfaction and objective results, the observed leadership behaviors that occurred at the team and individual levels during the conduct of practicum suggests the value of measuring leader actions and behaviors—in developmental contexts behavior is performance.

As an observation of an evidence-based learning approach, the methods used to explore the practicum project were principally qualitative. As an exploratory assessment, our efforts revealed the need to create clear priorities for future iterations of leadership development in similar academic settings. Observed results shed light on how to approach qualitative and quantitative assessments of leadership development in the future.

Conceptually, observed attitudes and behaviors illustrate the value of selecting measures of performance that have broad applications. We observed that

individual-level tendencies were characteristically different from team-level behaviors. Though not a focus of this assessment, we also suspect that the qualities of the assigned projects, subordinate roles of team members, and culture of the teams affected which behaviors are needed to achieve superordinate and supporting goals. Alternatively stated, no one approach to leadership works equally well across situations. Different situations require different kinds of leaders (Fiedler, 1964). Thus, it is also worthwhile to consider that developmental goals at the individual level not only resulted from self-comparisons against prototypical leaders, but also emerged when students compared themselves to the roles and requirements of the project.

The Great Eight demonstrated its potential as an a adaptive structure for differentiating leader performance while remaining generalizable across a variety of leader roles (Bartram, 2005). The Great Eight provides a universal competency framework of distinctive job performance measures that function across roles, work experiences, cultural contexts, and time. Additionally, the structure demonstrates usefulness across organizational levels (e.g., individual and team). While the approach in assessing practicum in the present effort was rather subjective (although the instructor is an industrial organizational psychologist trained in assessment), it none-the-less demonstrated the value of adapting Bartram's framework to suit diverse organizational needs.

Limitations. The qualitative approach used to identify student individual differences, learning orientations, and leadership development was helpful to interpreting observations of student behavior, but is not without error. Using self-reported data to code responses is standard practice in the leadership development industry. As a first step towards purposeful assessment efforts to support leadership development, the catalogued observations of student behavior served to suggest the nature of formal assessments needed in developmental contexts like the one we observed.

The cross-sectional design employed in this assessment of practicum is extremely limited for understanding leadership development. Accurately measuring leadership development requires an explicit model of individual growth (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). By measuring leaders across multiple points in time, growth can be observed. By nesting measurements within the individual, individual change can be represented via a two-level hierarchical model as an individual growth trajectory. Because trajectories theoretically rely on person-level and contextual characteristics (e.g., solving real-world problems, within team interactions, or individual-level reflection), the causes of observed growth can more readily be determined. Additionally, the growth model has the added benefit of permitting estimated growth trajectories. Comparing trajectories is potentially more useful for certain leader-to-leader comparisons than simple comparisons of objective results. Comparing growth trajectories reveals who is learning the knowledge, skills, and abilities that translate into effective leadership as an explanation of objective performance. Without assessing the learning process, objective results can falsely indicate who is an effective leader. In addition, multiple observations of individual leader behavior provide a more accurate picture of how leaders change over time with respect to their agentic views, motivation to lead, and leadership competencies. We propose that organizations interested in developing leaders need to apply an explicit model of individual growth.

Finally, for the purposes of the project, assessments focused on student learning at the individual and team levels. Given the nature of the projects, however, there were potential effects at the organizational level that were experienced by the students, but not directly observed by the instructor. Future applications of

similar practicum experiences could further benefit by incorporating additional measures throughout the experience. Once students set developmental goals for the experience, targeted assessment of how they are practicing such behaviors is one potential option. Similarly, collecting and assessing client observations of the teams would be of added benefit to better understand what types of organizational-level learning are being achieved. Considering that for this project students worked with members of the organization they were preparing to join, what clients take away from the experience and the future benefits of established relationships are potentially fruitful opportunities for exploration.

Individual Development. Leadership development is often the principal consideration for organizations wanting to become more responsive to change. To create leaders who are more effective in guiding their teams, work groups, and organizations, it is helpful to offer specific strategies that relate to the prescribed approach. Following are three recommendations for organizations wanting to develop leaders through similar experiences.

The first recommendation concerns the inherently complex nature of leadership experiences. Because experiential learning is not automatic, the use of interventions like reflection assignments as a form of after-event reviews (AER) appeared to enhance learning and developmental outcomes during the practicum project. By challenging leaders to evaluate expectations and consider why events unfolded as they did, research demonstrates that AERs generate systematic thinking about behavior and thereby improve performance (Ellis & Davidi, 2005). For practicum, there were observable differences between unrehearsed, in-class discussions and the reflective assignments. Finally, research suggests that without AERs, even highly conscientious leaders regress (DeRue et al., 2012). Thus, AERs represent an important characteristic of maximizing the leadership lessons learned through any developmental experience.

For the initial reflective assignment, the instructor did not require students to identify developmental efforts directly from the Great Eight (Bartram, 2005). Requiring students to select efforts with direct reference to Bartram's Great Eight could be advantageous for organizations managing large-scale efforts that require tracking student-generated developmental goals, and to allow for ready comparisons across students and developmental experiences. However, there are also potential benefits to encouraging open and honest answers where students do not feel constrained to pick efforts from the Great Eight or similar list of leadership competencies. The open-ended prompt may be useful for getting students to consider personal developmental needs without the option of thoughtlessly selecting concepts from a laundry list. As demonstrated, a subject matter expert can readily categorize student open-ended responses for the purposes of comparison across students.

Further demonstrating the versatility of practicum as a developmental experience, students who experienced the same projects identified and experienced unique developmental opportunities. Presumably, students selected team roles, tasks, and other efforts to meet personal developmental needs in the conduct of the assigned project. A benefit of this approach is that it does not require all of the team members to be evenly matched in terms of their leadership development. Students at different stages were free to focus their efforts as needed. The result is that practicum offered simultaneous learning at individual and team levels. Research findings also suggest that as leaders gain experience their perspectives on what constitutes effective leadership continues to evolve (Nichols, 2016). In addition to in situ learning, practicum may have lingering effects as students continue to refine personal efforts to develop.

An additional benefit observed in this effort relates to how organizations can help leaders meet developmental goals. Organizations should intentionally help leaders

appreciate how their behaviors affect others. In a general sense, feedback is indispensable to learning from highly-challenging experiences that otherwise deplete cognitive resources (DeRue & Wellman, 2009). Regular exposure to specific behavioral assessment from multiple sources (e.g., setting developmental objectives for specific leadership behaviors) is more valuable than providing generalized feedback (e.g., "You are my top leader" or "Nice job") to leaders. Providing team members with formal and informal opportunities to provide and receive feedback are proposed as an important characteristic that supplements practicum as a developmental experience.

Team-Level Competencies. It was interesting to see the differences between what the students expected to gain from practicum as leaders, versus what they experienced as members of the team. In part, this is an illustration of the conclusions offered by Kaiser and Curphy (2013) about the need for greater emphasis on leadership development that purposefully involve teams. While our observations of student intent and experience are potentially biased, we nonetheless have support that indicates that working in a team environment on practicum created opportunities for students to look beyond themselves as individual leaders.

In three of Bartram's competency areas we observed noteworthy shifts in what students expected to learn from the practicum experience. Students' emphasis on Interacting and Presenting, Creating and Conceptualizing, and Enterprising and Performing were discernably lower at the team level compared to the individual level. Even though all four teams selected formal leaders, in-class emphasis on practicing shared leadership, and exercising individual and mutual accountability may have had consequential effects that contributed to the observed differences. This characteristic emphasis on team effectiveness may

have contributed to an increased capacity for leadership beyond what students expected at the outset of the effort.

The way that leaders process information and think in social situations (e.g., teams) demands additional attention. Not only did the team environment diminish the perceived value of certain individualized leadership competencies, it appears to have elevated the emphasis upon others. It is important for organizations to consider how the team environment affected the shifts illustrated in Figure 1. Nonetheless, organizations that want their leaders to think critically, work in systematic ways, and adapt need to consider that team-based developmental assignments may produce change that is more valuable. Considering the military background for the students who experienced this project, practicum also appears as a possible way to develop skill sets required to share leadership on military teams. Addressing increasingly complex missions and challenges requires shifts in the skill sets leaders need (Lindsay, Day, & Halpin, 2011). Practicum offers an opportunity to focus leadership training and education efforts to improve team and organizational performance in a manner that requires developing leaders to approach problems differently than they might on their own.

Conclusion

In a general sense, organizations need to provide experiences and interventions that facilitate raising leaders' comprehension of new experiences and the application of relevant leader behavior. Research demonstrates that experiential learning is enhanced when more senior leaders act as mentors by modeling effective leadership behavior and by providing job-relevant information to more junior leaders (Dragoni, Park, Soltis, & Forte-Trammell, 2014). This research demonstrates the importance of approaching development as an organizational effort, not as stand-alone interventions aimed at specific leaders. Key

outcomes associated with this leader-as-mentor model include leaders who learn new roles faster and therefore spend more time motivating and inspiring others. Overall, by establishing a leaders-as-developers culture, organizations are poised to accelerate the transition between leaders' self-perceived role knowledge and performance. To achieve this recommendation, we suggest that organizations provide education and training that are matched to the expectations of senior and junior leaders alike.

Educating and training leaders to meet modern demands cannot afford to overlook the role of teams as valuable learning opportunities. Teams, and not leaders, are the building blocks of modern organizations (Kaiser & Curphy, 2013). Providing a team context and real world consequences in the practicum environment appears to have offered a distinctive experience for each of the four teams and their twenty-one members. As observed by Kaiser and Curphy (2013), "Very little leadership training and development content concerns how to launch, maintain, and improve teams" (p. 298). Through this exploratory assessment of leadership development, we offer the following priorities to encourage the application of the lessons learned:

- **Team and Organizational Leadership**— leadership at the team and organizational levels is not simply leading more people, it is characteristically different and requires new skills and abilities.

- **Behavior is Performance**—adopt a reliable and validated competency framework (e.g., Bartram's Great Eight) as the foundation of assessing leader effectiveness for developmental purposes.

- **Growth Trajectories**—implement individual growth models to assess leader development over time.

- **Purposeful Assessment**—integrate empirically validated assessments (e.g., individual differences, learning orientation, and motives) into the developmental strategy.

- **Purposeful Experiences**—intentionally match leaders to developmental interventions (e.g., assignments based on level of challenge and developmental needs).

- **Purposeful Support**—educate and train supervisors to reinforce lessons learned and to increase leader self-awareness and use AERs and reflective assignments to complement these efforts.

- **Flexibility**—developmental needs and rate of growth will vary for individual leaders, across time, and in different contexts.

The logical growth of leaders to advanced states over the course of time involves subscribing to a scientifically grounded approach that is matched to relevant assessment (e.g., leadership behaviors and with the passing of time). The culmination of this effort involves theoretical, scientific, and practical insight for organizations to select and develop leaders. In review, the prescribed developmental approach suggested three key considerations with respect to leaders' intrapersonal characteristics (i.e., traits, developmental readiness, and motives). Building on these ideas, we framed an interpersonal approach around leaders' interactions in practical work contexts. These interactions provide a developmental context and involve learning and practicing normatively appropriate conduct. Bartram's Great Eight was offered with a proposed methodology to implement the prescribed approach. Practical recommendations were offered to aid organizations in the application of practices designed to enhance leader development and performance.

Finally, we acknowledge that our observations of leadership development provide no clear summit. To be precise, incremental development to advanced roles and responsibilities provide progressive and potentially unique developmental needs. In this manner, as leaders master competencies in present roles, leader potential is demonstrated by the development of competencies that transcend present needs and account for projected ones. This process is offered as one that occurs indefinitely over the course of a leaders' professional career and represents a lifelong pursuit that only ends when development plateaus or leaders depart their professions.

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Excellence with Integrity: Culture Assessment & Development

Matthew Davidson, Excellence with Integrity Institute

Vladimir Khmelkov, Excellence with Integrity Institute

Background

The Excellence with Integrity Institute (formerly the Institute for Excellence & Ethics—IEE) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to achieving excellence with integrity. The Excellence With Integrity Institute (the Institute) designs and implements assessment strategies, delivers targeted professional development, and develops instructional resources to guide organizations through the intricacies and hurdles of continuous self-reflection and improvement. The Institute is primarily a research and design organization helping organizations develop the culture and character needed for mission excellence. The Institute has served many organizations from schools and youth leadership, sports and business, manufacturing and service, military, government, and healthcare.

ABSTRACT

This article presents the story of the team culture grounded theory and assessment approach of the Excellence with Integrity Institute and its collaborative partners. The article begins with an overview of character, culture, and leadership assessment and development theory, which has evolved over nearly 25 years of work in diverse sectors including education, nonprofit, workplace, and athletics. The theory development forms the foundation to the authors' particular assessment philosophy and practice. This is followed by the rationale underlying the key design solutions represented in the Excellence with Integrity Culture Assessment Approach. The article concludes with specific examples of the use of the Excellence with Integrity Culture Assessment in Division I, II, and III intercollegiate teams and whole athletic departments.

In order to understand the strategic intent and applications of the Excellence with Integrity Culture Assessment (which will be laid out in the second part of this article), this article begins by laying out foundational theory that has emerged from bootstrapping between the theory, practice, assessment, and development. In this issue devoted to expanding the dialogue around the challenges of assessment of leadership and character development, the Institute believes that contained within the evolution of our grounded theory and practice are some pieces of the shared challenges of all who attempt assessment in this area. Our evolving grounded theory is most certainly co-mingled with the development of our particular assessment tools.

At the outset of our work on character education, leadership, and organizational development some 25 years ago, the initial focus was on assessing character. The Institute began with a narrow focus on character informed by theoretical and practical needs of the modern character education movement of the 1990s and 2000s, bringing cognitive moral psychology roots deeply influenced by human ecology, sociology, and social learning theory. Specifically, the goal was to be able to tell if an individual was changing and growing in cognition, affect, and behavior, usually around a specific set of values and virtues. Regardless of the sector, the leaders served wanted to know if their interventions were improving character traits in individuals. They also wanted to know if the development of these character traits was having a mediating impact on other important outcomes, such as grades, test scores, wins and losses, profits and efficiency, safety and overall well-being, and recruitment and retention.

Thus, at the outset the Institute focused primarily on the measurement of specific values and virtues, but always maintained a focus on culture as the mechanism through which character was developed. Over the years, the Institute has developed a variety of instruments driven by our interests and expertise, but also very much by the pragmatic needs of those in the field. Not all of these tools have received the same amount of developmental attention or rigor; often, our organization has moved on to a next iteration of a new instrument, informed by new insights, improved design solutions, or changing customer focus.

Leading for Optimal Performance

The evolution of our grounded theory (Davidson, Khmelkov, & Baker, 2011; Lickona & Davidson, 2005), which is informed by our diverse applied research experiences and supported by research studies on talent development and organizational success, can be summarized as follows: Team or organizational excellence is achieved by specific personal habits and mindset of team members that are formed from a team/

Matthew L. Davidson, Ph.D., is an original founder and the current President of the Excellence with Integrity Institute. Previously he served as Research Director at the Center for the 4th & 5th Rs (Respect & Responsibility) at SUNY Cortland. He has also been on staff at the Family Life Development Center at Cornell University, the Values Program at Le Moyne College, and the Mendelson Center for Sport, Character, and Culture at the University of Notre Dame.

Vladimir T. Khmelkov, Ph.D., is the Vice-President and Director of Research and Technology at the Excellence with Integrity Institute. Before co-founding the Excellence with Integrity Institute, he was a senior research analyst in the Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Research at the University of Notre Dame and served as research consultant for the Notre Dame Center for Ethical Education.

organizational culture, and that culture is shaped and built by a leader (see Figure 1).

The Institute defines culture as "the intentional norms, practices, and collective habits of a group or team." Culture shapes, molds, or builds the personal habits, skills, and competencies of team members (i.e., character). Therefore, it can be asserted that character is the personal habits (i.e., cognitive, affective, and behavioral habits; the head, heart, and hand) and that character is shaped by culture. This model is seen most easily when one looks at religious and military formation. It is evident that individuals entering these groups have certain personalities, abilities, and character traits. But after entry, these are shaped and formed by the culture and collective habits. However, every team and organization is faced with the same challenge: How can a group of individuals develop around a shared set of mission values and tactical goals? The answer is that leaders shape the culture (collective habits), which in turn shapes character (individual habits).

Whereas leadership, culture, and character can be viewed as an important organizational goal or focus, they are also the means to achieving mission excellence and "optimal performance." The Institute defines optimal performance as "the highest level of excellence achieved with integrity." Leadership expert Peter Koestenbaum (1991) asserted that "leadership is the art of combining results and heart" (p. 22). The heart of leadership is motivating, empowering, and persuading others to buy into not only the performance goals and expectations, but also into individual growth and the

Figure 1. Leading through culture and character process diagram.
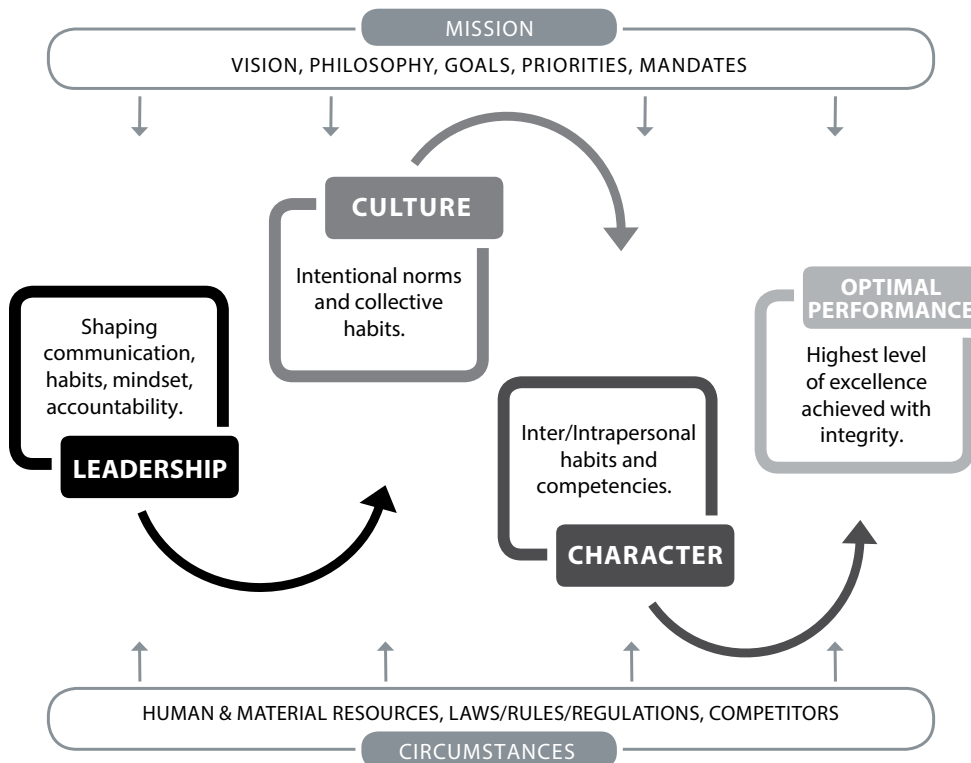
collective good. In other words, it is not just about wining, but doing so in a fair, ethical, and harmonious way. Moreover, it is not just about achieving excellence, but achieving excellence with integrity.

The Leading Through Character and Culture (LTCC) model includes two additional macro forces that impact the organizational development process—mission and circumstances. The first important macro force is the mission of the organization and its related goals, priorities, mandates, and philosophy. It is from the mission that teams and organizations derive their bedrock virtues or animating values be they faith, hope, and love or honor, duty, and country. Character can be operationally defined as values/virtues in action. Putting them into action requires a mix of knowledge, affect, and skill. One's character can be considered the consistency (or inconsistency) with which one puts their espoused values/virtues into action. The questions our organization often faces include "which values?" or "whose values?" When working with teams and organizations, the answer can be found in the organizational mission and vision. To be certain, there are powerful sports teams whose culture is built around the animating values of a coach leader reminiscent of John Wooden's "pyramid of success" (Biro, 1997) or the All Blacks rugby culture (Kerr, 2013). In business, case studies such as Patagonia highlight instances where a leader such as Yvon Chouinard (2006) created an organizational culture animated by his or her personal values. At the origins of those cultures, the animating values were those of the leader. Over time, however, the powerful leader's values become the organizational identity and other coaches and leaders are invited in to extend, refresh, and reanimate those founding values.

However, in many settings, the teams are part of a larger mission—of the university, corporation, or larger universal system. In these settings—be they military, monastery, athletic, or business—intentional cultures are guided by bedrock values derived from the organizational mission. The organizational mission is an essential influence on the process since in an intentional culture every other action and inter-action is ultimately designed to put those foundational values into action.

The Institute has often used Soldiers First by Joe Drape (2012) as both a case study and a metaphor to explain our approach. Drape has shown how football at West Point exists to serve the organization mission of creating soldiers. This is an illustrative example of coaches leading a team guided by a larger mission than football. However, it is also a metaphor that accurately captures what many other team leaders within many other team settings are challenged to lead. For example, in working with Catholic universities, "soldiers first" conveys that transmission of Catholic mission and values represent the raison d'être for university athletics (Davidson & Davis, 2018). Thus, a distinctly Jesuit athletics experience is one where coaches are expected to amplify and deepen the Jesuit mission firstly. Or, consider the De La Salle High School football case, whose 151-game win streak was chronicled by leadership experts (Kanter, 2004) and popularized in documentaries (Heiser, 2005) and pop culture movies (Carter, 2014). De La Salle Head Coach Bob Ladouceur has consistently maintained that football simply represented his opportunity as a leader to create a culture that concretized and amplified the school's Catholic mission expressed as "enter to learn, leave to serve."

In collaboration with Stanford University Athletics, the work of culture assessment and development with the department's 36 teams is animated by the core values and strategic intent of the department to create what they refer to as, Champions in Life." "Soldiers First at Stanford translates to "Champions in Life"—as the primary goal or priority. This is mirrored in many of the workplace settings our organization serves, and was also found in James Collins' (2001) *Good to Great* organizations who were guided by mission-touchstones, which made bedrock values a good

for daily behavior (Collins, 2001). In other words, in education, business, nonprofit, and government, leaders and teams most often are using their leadership talents to operationalize the mission values of the organization. This was a significant but perhaps subtle lesson from *Good to Great*: It was not the rock star personality, nor was it the cult of personality that created sustainable excellence; instead, it was the culture shaped by the leaders animating the vision and values of the organization, which was most resilient and transformational over time (Collins, 2001).

The second significant macro force is the specific circumstances facing the organization, including the human and material resources, the laws, rules, and regulations, and the competitors and competition. Optimal performance (i.e., the highest level of excellence achieved with integrity) is not a constant or permanent standard. The highest level of excellence achieved with integrity depends a great deal on a variety of fluid factors and circumstances within the organization and within the wider culture in which the organization is nested. Intercollegiate athletics is a relevant example where the changing circumstances have deeply impacted what the highest level of excellence achieved with integrity means for all stakeholders. Both macro forces substantively impact teams, team leaders, and the overall culture—and are often beyond the control of team leaders.

Our model is not revolutionary in terms of human and organizational development. It is evolutionary in its representation of overall change theory, which has dynamically informed and been informed by our assessment and strategies. The Leading for Optimal Performance—highest effectiveness achieved with integrity—model is rooted in the truth of the adage that "culture eats strategy for lunch." More specifically, it can be argued that unintentional culture—the de facto, unofficial, yet widely accepted collective habits of a group or team—eats strategy for lunch. Few leaders have been able to achieve optimal performance without

intentionally shaping the culture and character of the team or organization they lead. Our work helps build the kind of leadership that is needed for the organizational culture to be intentional in the pursuit of excellence with integrity.

Culture and Character Theory Overview– Optimal Performance Behaviors

The Leading for Optimal Performance model summarizes the mechanisms and the structural inputs needed to achieve excellence with integrity in pursuit of the team/organizational goals. The model focuses on team/organizational leadership as the necessary input for team development, not on leadership as an outcome of personal development. Although development of future leaders can be the goal (outcomes) for teams, such as in intercollegiate athletics or military academies, it is not the focus of the assessment work described here. The Institute assesses the inputs into team development and performance, informed by the evolution of our grounded theory.

Culture—the collective habits of a team, group or organization—is essential for optimal performance because the unintentional culture can kill the strategy of any and every organization no matter its size or resources. In addition, our applied work convinces us that intentional culture is how great organizations outperform their resources and achieve sustainable excellence. This notion is not necessarily novel or entirely revolutionary; however, many leaders continue to dismiss it hoping that improvements in talent development and recruitment and overall enhancements in technology alone would move their organizations beyond the fickle fate of culture.

While the Institute is focused on culture and character as the specific focus of our assessment and development work, over time our view has widened to understand the mediating role of culture and character on optimal performance goals. Every affiliated team, group, or organization has been interested in performance

excellence. They seek help defining, measuring, and exploring the factors that promote or prevent it. While the circumstances and strategy surrounding the pursuit of excellence continue to change and evolve, the quest for excellence is timeless. *The ancient Greeks used the term arête* to describe excellence of any kind—the excellence of a work of art, a machine, or a person. Arête also referred to the excellence found in the act of living up to one's full potential (Liddell & Scott, 1940). Scholars argue that the person of arête is a person of the highest effectiveness, someone who combines their talents and abilities with strengths of character like courage, perseverance, resilience, wit and ingenuity to achieve real results (Hooker, 2011). In other words, excellence means the highest effectiveness in achieving real results by a person, team, or organization. Highest effectiveness is not defined by one standard or one pathway. However, highest effectiveness, no matter the goal or circumstances, is that which is achieved with integrity.

Integrity can be defined as "the quality or state of being complete or undivided and having strong moral principles" ("integrity," 2019). Integrity means not lying, cheating, stealing, or engaging in unethical, illegal, or unhealthy behaviors when pursuing a goal. This definition of integrity speaks of the negative breaches of integrity that should be avoided. Thus, it can be posited that the highest effectiveness is that which also does not violate the law, the rules of participation, or moral principles of justice and fairness. But integrity is also defined as "being whole and undivided." This definition speaks to the desirable aspects of integrity to be pursued, things like growth, improvement, balance, and joy. Thus, integrity is not limited to not breaking the rules or the law. Integrity requires commitment to pursuing actions that are beneficial to oneself and others beyond the demands of a current objective or goal. Therefore, excellence with integrity is honest, ethical, and fair, helping to achieve intrapersonal and interpersonal balance and harmony.

Some might argue that it is in fact the relentless pursuit of excellence itself that leads to feelings of burnout, fatigue, and is characterized as seeming to "lack integrity." In other words, the pursuit of excellence, critics would assert, is at odds with or in conflict with the pursuit of integrity. However, this goes against the sentiments of Abraham Maslow (as cited in Neehall-Davidson, 2004, p. 95) that "[i]f you plan on being anything less than you are capable of being, you will probably be unhappy all the days of your life." The answer to achieving excellence with peace, joy, harmony, and happiness is not simply to be content with good enough, but to pursue excellence in a particular way. Whether it is rooted in fear, performance anxiety, personality, or personal preference, for many people and organizations good enough is simply good enough, and the quest for excellence and realization of full potential simply does not resonate or motivate everyone. However, the organizations typically served seek the Institute out because they already have achieved some level of success. They are good, but desire to be great. They also often seek out assistance even though they may already be considered great by others. To some degree, those served believe that they have yet to realize their full potential for excellence with integrity.

The Institute understands and acknowledges the importance of recruiting talented, strong individuals of character for achieving optimal performance. However, this alone is not a sufficient solution for achieving excellence with integrity in organizations with problematic culture, and neither is simply securing "ample resources," another means by which people believe they can short circuit the process to achieving optimal performance. Highly resourced teams are not immune to excellence or integrity threats—in fact, they may even be more susceptible to certain threats (e.g., perfectionism, competitive, or drive). This article has asserted that culture shapes character, yet culture can also corrupt character. Talented individuals of strong character who are placed in corrupt teams or systems often are not strong enough alone to maintain their

individual moral and performance character strengths. Talent and resources do not necessarily remove problems by themselves; in fact, they may simply lead to a different set of problems. Intentional culture assessment and development are essential, regardless of the human and material resources. The real world is messy, unpredictable, and still based in large part on human beings, who bring with them intrapersonal and interpersonal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The development of our assessment and development theory and practice has evolved through the exploration of the most common strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to achieve excellence with integrity and optimal performance in individuals, teams, and organizations.

Our early original work asserted that excellence with integrity is the synergy found at the intersection between what was originally called performance character and moral character (Davidson & Moran-Miller, 2006). Performance character competencies—including perseverance, work ethic, positive attitude, initiative, creativity—are those habits that enable us to achieve our goals. At the same time, moral character competencies—such as caring, courage, respect, and responsibility—are those habits that ensure that our goals are achieved in ethical, fair, and harmonious ways. Moral character habits help protect, grow, and balance our inner-selves and our relationships with others. Based on this, two essential theoretical underpinnings should be kept in mind:

1. First, the performance character and moral character concept can be understood as a heuristic, not a strict empirical construct. Moral and performance character can be understood separately, but in reality are interdependent. For example, perseverance ensures integrity, curiosity is needed to experience empathy, critical thinking helps to apply fairness, honesty underlies enthusiasm, patience works to manage our drive,

loyalty directs our effort, diligences sustains citizenship, and resilience helps to maintain civility.

2. Second, the fundamental quest to achieve excellence with integrity involves navigating the balance, synergy, or harmony between moral and performance character, rather than just "more of each." Excellence with integrity is achieved by working hard and smart, by effectively managing emotions and energy, and by maintaining the right perspective. It is achieved by pushing oneself but doing so in a healthy and sustainable way. It is achieved through harmony between our drive for achievement and our need for relationships, through our fundamental need for both doing and being, through the joyful, fearless pursuit of excellence in a peaceful and centered way. In organizations, it is achieved by pursuing the team goals while seeking harmony and balance between the intrapersonal dynamics within oneself and the interpersonal dynamics between and among team members.

Performance character, moral character, intrapersonal, interpersonal—for short excellence, integrity, teamwork, and self-work—these four domains represent the foundations of a dynamic process for achieving excellence with integrity, which is represented in Figure 2 below.

Mastery of this set of relationships is complex and dynamic and thus achieving excellence with integrity does not look identical for everyone, everywhere, and at all times. So, where one might conceive of the excellence with integrity as a single standard, it is actually a singular vision with a multitude of pathways and end-points. Even a quick glimpse at these and one is struck by the obvious challenge of mastering any one of these, let alone the challenge of mastering the harmony between all four. And yet, in every affiliated individual

Figure 2. Four domains to achieve excellence with integrity.

OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE — A SYNERGY OF:

EXCELLENCE
WORK ETHIC
GOAL ACHIEVEMENT
PROBLEM SOLVING
INNOVATION

INTEGRITY
FAIRNESS
RESPECT
RESPONSIBILITY
COURAGE

GROWTH &
BALANCE
GROWTH MINDSET
ENGAGEMENT
RESILIENCE
STRESS MANAGEMENT

TEAMWORK &
COMMUNITY
CIVILITY
LEADERSHIP
COMMUNICATION
COLLABORATION

and organization, the pathway to optimal performance is achieved through intentional development that pursues a synergy of these domains.

One metaphor for understanding these is to envision a wind turbine, in which wind turns propeller-like blades to spin a generator and create electrical power. The blades of a wind turbine must be individually strong and collectively balanced with one another. If a single blade is weak, it would break off due to the force of the wind. Equally important for turbine long-term performance is the balance between the blades, especially as the wind force increases and spins the blades faster. Similarly, when a team or organization works together in harmony, these four 'blades'— excellence, integrity, teamwork, and self-work— generate power for achieving the performance goals of a team or organization. When these four domains are individually strong and collectively balanced, efficiency and longevity are produced for use in the service of the

mission performance goals. However, if these domains become individually weak, it creates an imbalance that produces less power, or possibly breaks down altogether.

The four domains can be broken down further into specific competencies to focus our development and assessment. These competencies are drawn from the Institute's field research and empirical knowledge about factors that contribute to organizational success, or detract from it when missing or underdeveloped. In our experience, these competencies are the catalyst, the hidden driver of optimal performance, in every field, profession, industry, and walk of life. As Koestenbaum asserted:

The future of industry demands employees and managers—white- and blue-collar workers alike—with highly developed character who understand loyalty, promote inventiveness, are at home with change, and are masters in the paradoxical craft of integrating

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results and heart, and do it for the sake of the growth of their own souls, for personal fulfillment, not because the business threatens them if they fail. (Koestenbaum, 1991, p. 21)

A few important insights regarding our more evolved understanding of the Optimal Performance Pinwheel and contributing competencies are as follows:

1. The identification of more specific competencies within each domain allows for targeted program development and delivery. Ultimately, however, sustainable excellence generally results from the more nuanced vision of harmony and balance amongst the four domains. For example, stress management training for individuals can make a difference, but is strengthened in many instances by also focusing on communication, collaboration, and effective teamwork.

2. The answer regarding how to take these character competencies and instill them into individuals, in our experience, is not consistently or sustainably answered by the individual "self-help" approach. Instead, it can be asserted that the mechanism, lies in the culture. Culture shapes character. Therefore, intentional culture must embody these habits collectively as a mechanism for individual character development.

3. Finally, finding balance within and between the four domains is an ongoing process—not a stagnant destination. Finding optimal is a dynamic relationship requiring a never-ending process of action and reflection, which is why formative assessment approaches that continuously focus on inputs—the structural aspects of the process of development itself—such as culture assessment are so important and why the Institute embraces *forget perfect; find optimal* as an assessment and development mantra.

Thousands of years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle (1962) argued that virtue can be described as the middle between excess and deficiency. This age-old wisdom matters to today because when it comes to achieving excellence with integrity, it is about finding the balance between achieving the most favorable outcomes and the most favorable ways of doing so. Achieving excellence with integrity is about (a) the right degree of performance effort for the circumstances and the expectations; (b) the right relationship—with ourselves, with our colleagues or teammates, and with our circumstances; and (c) choosing right from wrong, and good over bad. However, the more difficult challenge of achieving excellence with integrity is about choosing the better:

1. Choosing between two good things.
2. Choosing that which leads to positive outcomes in both the short- and long-term.
3. Choosing what which is good for the individual and for the team or organization.

Choosing the better involves a discernment process, not simply the willpower to memorize and act upon the right choice. In the real world, optimal performance defies any one perfect standard response. What is the right amount or type of communication, honesty, courage, toughness? The answer, of course, is that it depends. Finding optimal is all about the process of establishing high expectations and choosing the best response, the response that considers the circumstances as well as differences in knowledge, ability, and sensibility. That is why it can be said to forget perfect, and find optimal. For most people driven by the pursuit of excellence, it is not easy to make peace with the forget perfect, and find optimal mantra and mindset. It seems that somehow this approach lowers the bar in not striving for perfection. However, others have affirmed the challenges to perfectionism in pursuit of excellence and integrity (Ben-Shahar, 2009; Guiberson, 2015). However, the notion of optimal performance has a

more nuanced understanding. By definition, perfect is the ideal, meaning beyond theoretical or practical improvement. It is known theoretically that there may exist some perfect response. However, when factoring in constraints of time, human and material resources, and varying capabilities and sensibilities, the perfect response can be hard to uncover—that which is beyond improvement. However, it is generally apparent what failure or an unacceptable solution looks like. The optimal response is that which is best suited to the performance goals, the situation or circumstance, the people involved, and the standards of excellence and integrity. Optimal is the best possible response for a given set of circumstances. In other words, optimal performance is the highest effectiveness that can be achieved with integrity. This is why it can be asserted that in its simplest form, optimal performance is excellence with integrity.

Optimal performance means meeting the highest standard of excellence without violating integrity. Stated differently, it implies that the "ends don't justify the means." Many high performing teams and organizations sense that the means, journey, or process to achieving their goals seems to lack integrity. Even if they are getting the results without violating ethical norms, the cost to themselves and to the team may not be right or fair, and does a disservice to the spirit. Fatigue, burnout, low morale, lack of civility, respect, and collegiality, lack of happiness, joy, and a lack of life balance—these are the types of symptoms that people note when they are describing the opposite of optimal performance. They often say, "we are either underperforming expectations or we are meeting expectations but doing so at a great cost to the individuals and the team," as well as "while we are not violating any legal rules or ethical norms, we are violating the rules and laws of our human nature."

Optimal is not the same thing everywhere and for everyone. Therefore, it can be argued that leading for optimal performance is informed by and determined relative to:

1. The unique organizational mission and values.
2. The team's specific goals and objectives.
3. The capabilities and sensibilities of team members.
4. The ever-changing day-to-day circumstances faced.

In *Switch*, Heath and Heath (2010) asserted that "what looks like resistance is often a lack of clarity about what to do better or do differently" (p. 17). Too often, it is assumed that people are resistant, unwilling, or unable to make changes in their behaviors. In fact, change is more likely to occur when there is clarity about what to do differently or better. Individuals need the "what" (e.g., what I should do differently or better) as well as the "how" (e.g., how I can learn to implement this habit or skill in an optimal way amid the real-world challenges and circumstances that I may face).

Culture as Performance Shaping Input

The Excellence with Integrity Assessment and Development process starts by defining the "what" and the "how" in the form of optimal performance behaviors (OPBs) and practices. Optimal performance behaviors provide clarity regarding what the expected performance skills and mindset look, sound, and feel like in action, what team members are expected to do better or differently. Optimal performance behaviors represent the organization's desired performance competencies and mission values broken down into concrete actions that are contextualized for particular circumstances and individual capabilities and sensibilities. The first part of the assessment specifies the most common optimal performance competencies and actions (i.e., behaviors) organized thematically down around the four domains of excellence, integrity, teamwork, and self-work. In this part, the assessment seeks to answer the question whether the people on

the team put the team values into action. This part simultaneously looks at whether the team implements the shared norms in their actions, as well as do the individuals on the team demonstrate the competencies required of them (in an aggregate form). This is both the collective culture and the collective character of the team.[1]

The second part asks the following: What is it that our leaders, coaches, or mentors do to develop an intentional culture that embraces and embodies our values/virtues? How do the leaders develop the team/organizational culture? These can be called optimal performance practices, which serve to define and contextualize expectations for leadership practices that leaders, mentors, or coaches need to engage in to lead their teams and organizations. These practices form the collective habits (or culture) through which individual character competencies are shaped. In other words, optimal performance practices represent the intentional culture shaping inputs used by leaders to shape the culture, which in turn shapes the individual and collective habits (i.e., the OPBs).

Apart from powerful personalities, our organization has been searching for the mechanism (what is sometimes called "the operating system") for consistent replication of best practice. The most recent iteration of these can be described as the "CHAMP Approach." In essence, this is what great leaders engage in to flesh out and standardize expectations for themselves. While there are nearly unlimited particular examples or manifestations, they roughly fall into these four categories. Great leaders shape character by shaping the culture through *Clarity, Habit, Accountability and Mindset (which leads to) Performance (CHAMP)*. The

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1   The Excellence with Integrity Institute has also created customized versions of this standard instrument that translates excellence, integrity, teamwork, and self-work categories into the more specific language and expectations of various organizations' particular values/virtues, including a version for Stanford University Athletics around its department values and a Jesuit version being used in athletics at Le Moyne College and The University of Scranton.

acronym helps to convey simply the four key types of practices for shaping culture and character. However, the implementation process is more nuanced than a simple acronym would suggest (e.g., the practices are not always done in the same order or even sequentially). What follows is an overview of the contribution of each of the four major categories in the CHAMP heuristic, presented in their most logical flow (which is altered to meet the specific implementation circumstances and needs).

Establishing Clear, Specific, Contextualized Expectations (CLARITY). Clarity and communication about expectations is the single most frequent driver (or preventer) of optimal performance cited in almost every affiliated team, group, or organization. Setting, communicating, and reinforcing expectations is a never-ending process for those seeking to achieve optimal performance. It includes the following:

1. Identifying the needed value, skill, or competency.
2. Setting clear optimal performance expectations;
3. Contextualizing expectations for the specific situation, event, or circumstances.
4. Clarifying expectation for particular roles.
5. Continuously clarifying, contextualizing, reiterating and adjusting expectations as needed.

Regardless of the values, skills, or practices that have been identified as essential, optimal performance development begins with establishing shared expectations for the group and for each individual. This means being specific and concrete when clarifying expectations around the most common circumstances currently faced by the group.

If, for example, a core value of a team or organization is honesty, identifying it as such is a good starting point. But it is not enough. Honesty is not one set of expectations but many, depending on the context, circumstances, and expectations. Optimal performance

requires clearly setting and communicating important big picture expectations, as well as urgent, mission critical expectations.

Habit Development Through Targeted Practice (HABIT). Leading for optimal performance is most definitely about the formation of habits. Leaders shape culture and culture shapes character. When it comes to the formation of habit, clarity of expectations and communication are important but not sufficient. Habit is not formed by knowledge about a skill alone. Habit is formed by an experience of a targeted skill. In fact, habit is achieved through targeted practice, or what the expertise literature refers to as "deliberate practice." Habits are formed from intense and intentional real-world practice simulations. These simulations begin with clarity of expectations—clear models of what the skills and values look like optimally implemented for the current circumstances and expectations. Deliberate practice is often accompanied by mental training and preparation, the mindset development that visualizes what one can expect and a plan for response. But then one must engage in practice simulations that are equal to, or greater than, what one is likely to face in the real world. This practice must be monitored and mentees must be given timely, growth-focused feedback including praise and polish. Leading for optimal performance around the formation of HABIT includes the following:

1. Engaging in deliberate practice of essential skills.
2. Intentionally creating real-world practice simulations.
3. Increasing intensity of deliberate practice and monitoring improvement.

Mental Preparation and Mindset Formation (MINDSET). Leading for optimal performance requires the formation of habits of mind and heart, or "mindset." The mindset aspect of leadership is all about the mental preparation practices designed to develop focused, tough-minded individuals who understand and accept that goal achievement will rarely occur in a straight line. Leading for optimal performance around mindset includes practices that are designed to emotionally visualize likely situations, to frame and reframe mistakes and missteps, and to focus on controlling what's controllable—and letting go of what's outside of one's control. In *Mindset*, Carol Dweck presents the research on the importance of having "growth mindset" for thriving in every aspect of human development and performance (Dweck, 2006). Adopting a growth mindset for any new, different, or difficult situation can help people and organizations learn, grow, and improve in a way that increases our human capacity. The experience of adversity has the potential to make us stronger and wiser, with new skills and strength of character than could ever have developed without the experience.

Overall, the optimal performance approach is centered on growing, learning, improving, failing faster, and making adjustments. Expectations have been set for the circumstances, for the goals, and for the various roles of team members. Only rarely in the real world do things go as planned. Thus, the mindset for optimal performance is one of visualizing prior to entering the situation, and preparing mentally to make the adjustment, to grow and let go, to focus on what's in our control. If a growth mindset is the habit of mind required for optimal performance, emotional toughness is the habit of heart within our concept of mindset that is needed for optimal performance. A growth mindset in certain ways requires, and is certainly strengthened and enhanced by emotional toughness. Author Jim Loehr describes the importance of emotional toughness competencies such as emotional flexibility, emotional responsiveness, emotional resiliency, and emotional strength (Loehr, 1994), all of which contribute to the overall mindset needed for optimal performance.

Leading for optimal performance around mindset uses the experiences and challenges of everyday living to stretch and strengthen the habits of mind and heart

needed for the challenges faced, and as preparation for those which may be faced in the future. Leading for mindset is like being a strength coach for mind and heart, using every single experience of life to develop inner strength and capacity needed to survive and thrive. The optimal performance approach requires leaders to seek optimal intensity, when stretching and pushing are just right. Too much results in anxiety, fear, and neurosis; too little results in softness, selfishness, and weakness. Optimal Performance leadership for MINDSET includes the following:

1. Developing a forget perfect-find optimal, grow-and-let-go growth mindset.
2. Visualizing the situation response scenarios.
3. Continuously refocusing on controllables, reframing challenges, and emphasizing quick recovery.
4. Examining conscious belief systems.
5. Practicing positive self-talk.

Support and Challenge (ACCOUNTABILITY). Expectations have been set. Conditions for deliberate practice (real-world simulation) have been established. Now comes the support and challenge needed to ensure that expectations are met—and course correction occurs when they are not. Accountability is one of the hallmarks of leading for optimal performance. Clearly, great performers in every walk of life excel at holding themselves accountable for meeting their standards and goals. But at some point all great performers require the support and challenge of others—especially around areas of struggle and weakness. Accountability is not simply someone making sure you do what you said you would, but in the ideal it also involves teaching, correcting, and inspiring. The most effective accountability practices balance honesty and respect with unwavering commitment to excellence. Leading for optimal performance requires accountability that is rooted in truth and trust, leaving no question about the gap between current performance and ideal

standards. Accountability means accurate feedback that does not overlook details, accept excuses, or waver on expectations, but also is delivered without embarrassing, insulting, or otherwise demotivating. Accountability through support and challenge not only points out what you've done wrong, but provides the do better-do differently feedback that is specific, tactical, and replicable.

Accurate measurement and benchmarking of performance is essential for accountability. Accountability requires feedback processes that promote honest self-reflection and ensure that the individual leaves with a sense of what to do better or differently to more optimally meet the standards. The danger of isolated self-evaluation can be over-estimating strengths; however, it can also result in underestimating strengths and over-playing weaknesses. Goal partners, accountability pairs, small groups, and the like are needed to create a culture of trust and truth where self-evaluation is healthy and constructive. Leading for optimal performance through accountability requires both challenge ("that is not good enough") and support ("here is what you need to do better or differently"). Optimal performance leadership for accountability includes the following:

1. Providing support and challenge on the development of essential skills.
2. Providing constructive criticism and "do better-do differently" feedback that is specific, tactical, and replicable.
3. Using performance data for accountability, teaching, correcting, and inspiring growth.

The second part of the culture assessment captures most common optimal performance practices organized thematically around the CHAMP heuristic, primarily in terms of inputs designed to shape clarity and communication of expectations, habits, accountability, and mindset.

The Institute views LTCC and CHAMP as applied theoretical models that are universal. Applied means that the models strive less to fully describe reality with all its nuances. Rather, they are heuristics that identify and focus on the core factors and mechanisms that leaders leverage to improve performance of their teams, doing so with integrity toward customers and team members). They are universal because they apply equally to all teams and organizations as long as they are truly pursuing excellence with integrity (aka, optimal performance)—not merely saying they want to do it. The universal LTCC and CHAMP models underlie the core structure and content of the Excellence with Integrity Assessment approach.

The Theory Applied as Assessment and Development

This section demonstrates how the theoretical underpinnings manifest themselves in the Culture Assessment Surveys, focusing on the Sport Team Culture version. The Excellence with Integrity Culture Assessment Surveys gather formative data for benchmarking and continuous improvement of team culture as well as and leadership and coaching practices.

Data is collected by a cohort approach (i.e., by team, department, or organization). For each team, there is a survey for team members and for team leaders with parallel content (i.e., the same questions). Team members see a section asking about their fellow teammates' behaviors and a section asking about their leaders/coaches/manager practices. Leaders, coaches, and managers report on behaviors among members of their team, as well as their own practices. This parallel structure and content allow for data on the same items from two perspectives.

The survey does not ask individuals "Are you hard working?" or "Are you selfless?" rather, it asks for the team, group, or cohort perspective: Rate the performance of your teammates on the following. In a predecessor assessment, respondents were asked to rate themselves, then in subsequent section to rate their teammates or classmates. It was found that the self-ratings were generally high and flat (impacted by the social desirability phenomenon); however, the ratings of classmates and teammates showed lower means and significant variation. Similarly, in workplace settings, employees have tremendous skepticism and fear about how individual data will be used against them: Asking questions about individual performance would undermine the culture of trust and result in useless data from the perspective of seeking insights for improvement.

Thus, the instructions ask team members to think about their team and teammates. The survey also asks respondents to reflect about the general experience—meaning usual or typical—performance. The survey is designed to have people thinking about their Team Culture which is another way of saying "Our patterns, Our habits, or Our norms. This approach asks respondents not to focus on a single or random instance, a bad day or a poor interpersonal exchange. The survey focuses on stable strengths of the team rather than inconsistent behaviors or weaknesses. In some instances, respondents are asked about how their team responds to negative incidents. If no such incidents happened to them or their team in this time period, they are instructed to reflect on how they believe their team members would react if something like that were to happen.

Safety and trust as foundational to the process cannot be underestimated, since social desirability and fear often contribute to data that is used as a weapon against individuals (or team leaders), rather than as a tool for improvement. Our third party involvement as the collectors and processors of the data further helps in this regard. Part of the survey process is to assure respondents that the survey responses are anonymous (our collection method is indeed

anonymous). Interestingly, this method presented some concerns from coaches and leaders who worried that anonymity would encourage team members to be unfair and uncharitable. In fact, that has not been our experience; instead, team members seem to be more negative toward themselves in certain areas compared to coaches. Qualitative comments help corroborate quantitative insights (e.g., determining if the issue is a person problem or a team trend/issue).

Organizing presentation of the data around our optimal performance framework is essential for engendering trust in the process of the data's use as a continuous improvement tool. As mentioned above, the fear factor or social desirability phenomenon, is in part driven by a belief that the actual purpose of the assessment is not human and organizational development but rather individual reward or punishment, merit or demerit. When asserting that culture eats strategy for lunch, this also applies to assessment strategy. If the culture does not believe assessment results are used exclusively for culture and character development, assessment will distract, divide, and undermine the very culture it is intended to build. There is also strong resistance to the idea of character report cards and even to 180- and 360-degree assessment processes. This is in part drawing upon a perfectionist tendency to think you are either honest or not, hard working or not. In other words, individual-targeting assessments are perceived as a judgement of me as a good or a bad person, not the effectiveness with which I put my values in action amid real-world challenges.

The presentation of the data with interpretive help is also decidedly pragmatic. Our organization works hard to stay focused on improvement, striving to help participants efficiently move from the what, to the so what, to the now what—what does the data say, why does this matter to our vision, values, and performance goals, and what can be done better or differently based on the data. Similar to your annual physical, the data presentation is aligned with the goal of thriving health within team culture, rather than just identifying life-threatening problems. It would certainly be an oversight to respond to any one item without putting it into the larger context. The intention is not to identify bad people to get rid of necessarily, nor is it searching for a reason to get out of doing intentional culture formation. The goal is to promote growth in the culture, character, leadership and organizational development. The summary reports provide a series of dashboard scale summaries and data detail sections, along with over-time comparisons when available.

A typical Division II or III athletic department would have 18 to 20 teams, whereas a robust Division I might have more than 30. In our nearly 10 years of doing this assessment, no two teams have been the same. There is always a pattern of cohort movement that is particular to that team and its performance and circumstances that which contributes to face validity from coaches whereby they consistently affirm that the data reflects their team. This has been apparent in recent national championship caliber teams, where the data exhibit different patterns than an outsider might expect. For example, the reports detect angst in the culture, a partying subculture, or discomfort in giving and receiving constructive criticism. If growth is the only evidence of life, what the reports often show is the culture growth, or culture rot going on beneath the surface, that often precedes great breakthroughs, or great decline. In many athletic settings, the process is benefiting from the wide number of team samples—not one team, but 18, 20, and 30 plus teams. In addition, the advantage of long-time trends collected over a number of years has also become increasingly evident. Time is a much neglected aspect of something that is essential for understanding growth in culture, character, and leadership. Single time point evaluations, regardless of their empirical rigor, are limited. Trends provide invaluable insights into problem patterns and growth trajectories.

The formative assessment survey works accurately by showing a scan of the culture, but one that must be contextualized with other kinds of data such as sport and academic performance, observations, and other existing metrics and measures. Best practice in evaluation has often advocated triangulation of data sources and data types. When it comes to the evaluation of culture, character, leadership, and organizational development it is rare to observe strong iterative, mixed-method evaluations as the norm. Our culture assessment takes the first step by gathering qualitative and quantitative data, while also putting at least two key stakeholder perspectives next to each other for comparison.

Nuances of Assessment as Development

Our assessment approach is formative—an integral, indispensable component of organizational and leadership development. Involving team and organizational leaders in the process of reviewing the survey results helps educate them about the key aspects of what they need to do as leaders to develop the culture and character of their team as well as what their team members need to believe and to do to pursue excellence with integrity. This means helping them develop as leaders by teaching the core structural factors and mechanisms that ensure team performance—and doing so not only through lecture, but also by deliberate practice using the data to create plans for improvement (personal and collective), implementing those plans, and repeating the cycle continuously.

Leadership development programs often focus on developing personal qualities of future leaders, or enhancing individual leadership skills of current leaders. Yet, they fail to describe the process of leadership as a whole—what leaders actually need to do in a systemic way. Taken together, LTCC and CHAMP describe the process in practical terms. Working with the survey results that are organized around the components of LTCC and CHAMP, leaders internalize the knowledge summarized in these models, they learn what they need to do and to have their team members do to pursue better performance, and they practice the how by putting this knowledge into action in their daily work with their teams. Because formative assessment is a development process, it can be argued that while doing a one-time baseline assessment is useful, only by engaging in ongoing assessment and development process will leaders master leadership skills in practice and will shape the culture and character of their team or organization.

The use of data to drive assessment and development ideally must model what it attempts to measure. In other words, if measurement of leadership, character, and culture does not model fairness, safety, trust, personal and collective accountability, then regardless of its psychometric properties, it may undermine the very thing it seeks to measure and improve. The process is one that most coaches tell us they see as fair, even if it does not always conclude that everything they do or say is perfect. Student-athletes believe it has given them voice to course-correct team cultures that are missing the mark on both excellence and integrity, which has in turn lead to universal, targeted, and intensive programming to build up the needed assets. They have also been able to advocate for themselves when coaching practices threaten the excellence or integrity of their experience. In lower performing years, the culture assessment has saved coaches whose culture was strong in spite of their on-the-field record. And, in high performing years, the culture assessment has saved players from coaching practices that threatened health, well-being, and sustained excellence. To date, having collected hundreds of reports in numerous departments and settings, there has not been a single experience where the report did not accurately capture the culture as seen by essential and informed members of the team or organization. Nor have there been a single instance of an attempt or a strategy design to "game it" by any stakeholder group and make things

look better or worse than they are. This includes the very real concern coaches have that the players who did not get playing time they wanted or who had other conflicts with the coaches or department would use the survey for a scorched earth personal retaliation.

One essential caveat to the claims above about the fairness and efficacy of the approach: it works best when it used in cultures, or by leaders, committed to growth in culture, character, and leadership. All of our clients desire improvement in performance outcomes. At the same time, they are also committed to a "margin through mission," or excellence with integrity approach. This means a commitment to the time and focus being on the culture, character, and leadership. It means strong collegiality and mentoring relationships amongst coaches and leaders, since the defining and refining of OPBs and practices is ongoing. The assessment truly works when it does not stop with a report card, but begins further exploration and dialogue through strong mentoring relationships.

The theoretical roots of this instrument are not accidental to its strategic intent and use by organizations. The data yielded by the instrument and the process matter to stakeholders committed to mission-first, culture-first approaches. Beyond its validity and reliability, it must be pointed out as to who is using this instrument and how they are using it, as the process is vital to monitoring and improving their intentional culture efforts. Over time, the athletic departments and teams served have improved winning percentages, they have improved academic performance behaviors, reduced problem behaviors, and even improved fund development efforts by demonstrating a mission-driven value add through athletics. These are supported by multiple independent settings over a period of 7 to 10 years. However, they are limited by our dependence on small samples, correlational outcomes, and more of a case study methodology. Our approach is by no means a panacea, nor does it dispute the myriad social science

limitations related to our claims. In this issue dedicated to a dialogue about assessment and development of culture, character, and leadership, our work instead represents a potential evolution in assessment design thinking which points to proof of concept for an entirely different way of thinking about the role of assessment for development of leadership, culture, and character.

Affiliated organizations consider the Institute "strength and conditioning coaches for culture, character, and leadership." This description can be likened to the field of physical strength and conditioning as a comparison. Today in intercollegiate athletics, strength and conditioning coaches are an invaluable part of performance excellence. However, it is a short history lesson to understand the journey to today (Shurley & Todd, 2001). The field cites 1969 as the first year when a formal strength and conditioning coach was used by a college football program. In 1978, the National Strength Coaches Association was formed. Much of the early days of the field were spent learning to measure and quantify something that everyone thought they understood, and very few knew how to systematically measure or develop.

It is clear that our evolution to today's culture assessment and development has the potential to change forever the viewpoint regarding our role in the formation of character, culture, and leadership. Our sole purpose in measuring it is to develop it. There are many who believe that the push to improve organizational and team outcomes through quantitative measures has created a culture of gaming and manipulation (Muller, 2018). Our goal is not to create an assessment weapon to be used against the individuals and teams. Our goal is not to create metrics, measures, or processes that justify the existence or power of a character trait, or skill, or mindset. Our goal is to help leaders shape team culture that is aligned with mission values, which in turn develops individual and collective character

habits, which in time advances performance outcomes. The Institute acknowledges that our process and outcomes deserve additional scrutiny, and the support and challenge of a wider community. Our hope in this article is to invite both. However, for the scrutiny and community to truly help those served through our work, there must be a fundamental gestalt change in our view of assessment, as assessment for development. In other words, it will not help our work to improve or serve others if the critique of our work is simply that is not what assessment is. Critique and community that would serve the field include an expanded focus around assessment tools and methods utilizing assessment as strength and conditioning for the development of culture, character, and leadership.

Assessment for development requires more than good science and rigorous methods. It requires tools for more efficiently and consistently putting the power of character and culture to work, since if our experience tells us anything it affirms that culture shapes character and it most certainly eats strategy for lunch. Since culture eats strategy for lunch and given that culture, character and leadership are indispensable to achieving performance goals, our work will remain steadfast in advancing a field with the theoretical, empirical, and practical tools to see strength and conditioning coaches for culture, character, and leadership grow and flourish in the next 25 years.

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PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Building Moral Imagination, Emotionally Engaged Thinking, and Adaptive Leadership Capacity in Leadership Learners Through the Power of the Holocaust

Anthony C. Andenoro, Iowa State University

JoAnna Wasserman, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

W. Jake Newsome, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

ABSTRACT

In 2015, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) and the University of Florida collaborated to develop a holistic model for moral decision-making within leadership learners. The collaboration yielded innovative learning experiences leveraging the power of the USHMM's Ethical Leadership Modules linked to their special exhibition, *Some Were Neighbors: Collaboration and Complicity in the Holocaust*. The learning experiences were piloted at the University of Florida in 2016, 2017, and 2018 with multidisciplinary undergraduate leadership learners. Learners engaged in intentional learning experiences grounded in reflective and agency-oriented behaviors through the intentional use of authentic memorabilia, audio recordings, and videos collected during the Holocaust. Qualitative findings collected over three years indicate that the content and methodological processes led to the development of moral imagination, emotionally engaged thinking, and adaptive leadership capacity in the learners. The resulting discussion provides implications for addressing and mitigating the challenges associated with systemic oppression, groupthink, social deterioration of moral judgment, and creates opportunities for change and social justice in our world.

Introduction

Decision-making is becoming more complex for leadership learners due to an overwhelming amount of misinformation, competing priorities, and powerful implications for sustainability in our world (Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017). Thus, it becomes increasingly important for leadership educators to develop the skills, capacities, and dispositions in learners that will lead to moral decision-making. This challenge is further complicated by a "morally complex landscape providing a veritable minefield of potentially damaging options that cut at the morally fragile credibility of organizations" (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015, p.130). In addition, narrow mental models often used by positional authority have a tendency to lead to superficial and unsustainable decisions (Enlow & Popa, 2008; Werhane, 1999). The sum of these factors creates increasing prevalence for substandard practice and morally clouded decision-making that can erode the ethical foundations of our organizations and communities. However, leadership educators play a critical role in addressing these challenges. The development of intentional leadership learning experiences rooted in historical perspective, applied practice, and oriented toward the future could prove to be beneficial.

The ever-changing dynamics of challenges facing our societies today create a need for developing Adaptive Leadership capacity in our learners. Problematically, leadership education often fails to extend beyond traditional educational methodologies. In fact, adaptive leadership and the accompanying principles are often presented in lecture form followed by the immersion of students in forced collaboration via group work that often leads to unintended consequences including the early departure from agency (Banerjee, 2013). This illuminates the critical need for a revision of current

Anthony C. Andenoro, Ph.D., currently serves as a Leadership Studies faculty member within the Department of Psychology at Iowa State University. His research initiatives include the development of moral decision-making in leadership learners, the role of cognitive diversity and active learning strategies in the development of engagement, positive sentiment, and neuroplasticity within leadership learning environments, and the use of behavioral economics principles to shift attitudes and change behaviors in under-resourced communities for the purposes of addressing complex problems and creating sustainability. He has published 20 refereed journal articles, presented 69 refereed and invited conference papers, and secured and managed more than $10.3 million in gift and grant funding to advance his teaching and research initiatives. He is also actively engaged in the field of Leadership Education and Development through several professional associations and is the Project Lead for the National Leadership Education Research Agenda.

JoAnna Wasserman, M.A.T., is the Education Initiatives Manager for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. She manages new audience outreach and cultivation and the creation of educational resources and programs. Her work involves developing partnerships and stewarding relationships with a range of educational institutions and organizations with the goal of integrating the Museum's content into new and diverse contexts. She has developed educational materials and programs rooted in the Museum's special exhibitions and initiatives on topics such as Nazi propaganda, human behavior, and Americans and the Holocaust. A Museum staff member since 2004, she has developed programs and resources for the general public, families, teachers, students, and specialized professional audiences. She received a BA in communication from the University of Pennsylvania and a MAT from the George Washington University's Museum Education Program. Prior to the Museum, she worked at Grey Worldwide, an advertising agency in New York.

practice. In an effort to develop adaptive leadership skills, competencies, and capacities necessary for addressing our most challenging organizational and community-based problems, leadership educators must be open to the utilization of diverse learning methodologies. Active learning methodologies aimed at advancing sustainable adaptive leadership behaviors provide leadership educators with a foundation for neurologically shifting attitudes and shaping behaviors that create a foundation for Adaptive Leadership practice and by association, for beginning to mitigate the challenges of our world.

To address this timely challenge, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the University of Florida have collaborated to deliver learning activities aimed at the development of mental models and behavioral dispositions that promote reflective decision-making in leadership learners. An approach based in historical exploration of the Holocaust examined how, when, and why ordinary people supported, acquiesced to, ignored, or resisted the violent and racist policies of the Nazi regime. It was developed by the Museum and piloted at the University of Florida. The purpose of the teaching resources were to enable learners to understand the causes, events, and consequences of the Holocaust, recognize the importance of its lessons about human nature and societies, and consider how to take an active role in confronting divisions that

threaten human solidarity. The teaching modules and accompanying facilitation methods support three theoretical foundations – *Moral Imagination* (Werhane, 2008; 1998), *Emotionally Engaged Thinking* (Andenoro, et al., 2019; Stedman & Andenoro, 2015), and *Adaptive Leadership* (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009).

Together the noted theoretical foundations create an underpinning for the development of positive decision-making in leadership learners. This underpinning becomes contextualized and gains an applied nature for leadership learners when it is connected to historical examinations of individuals' actions and choices during the Holocaust.

Literature Review

Moral Imagination

Moral imagination is "the ability to discover, evaluate and act upon possibilities not merely determined by a particular circumstance, or limited by a set of operating mental models, or merely framed by a set of rules" (Werhane, 1999, p. 93). It provides a foundation for escaping limiting mental models (Werhane, 2008) and allows individuals to perceive interpersonal relationships, parameters, and social dynamics immersed within a given context (Werhane & Moriarty, 2009). Ultimately, this leads to more

W. Jake Newsome, Ph.D., is the Manager of College Student Leadership Initiatives at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where he works with college students, faculty, and campus life professionals to teach civic engagement, ethical decision-making, and responsible citizenship through the study of the Holocaust. Through a range of programs and resources, he strives to empower students with the knowledge and skills necessary to take an active role in promoting social cohesion and human dignity. Dr. Newsome is a scholar of American and German LGBTQ history whose research focuses on Holocaust history, gender and sexuality, and memory studies. His current book project, *Pink Triangle Legacies: Holocaust Memory and Modern Gay Identity*, explores how various individuals and groups in Germany and America have debated the legacy of the Nazis' violent campaign against homosexuality. These debates ultimately shaped contemporary understandings of sexual identity, human rights, and citizenship in modern democratic societies.

effective moral decision-making and creates an intuitive connection to leadership. By shifting leaders away from prescriptive or habitual ways of thinking, moral imagination prioritizes reframing existing situations, moving beyond constraining mental models, and formulating innovative responses.

Applicable moral imagination stems from the development of interpersonal competencies aligning with heightened awareness for the complexity of problems within diverse contexts (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015). Specifically, moral imagination includes the following three areas (Werhane, 2008):

1. Reproductive imagination - Reflection about oneself and the given situation, including disengagement from and awareness of the given situation.
2. Productive imagination - Reframing the problem and imagination of new possibilities.
3. Creative imagination - Development of moral alternatives for problem solving contextualized within the given situation.

Researchers have valued the inclusion of moral imagination at the higher education level to promote the development of moral decision-making (Enlow & Popa, 2008; Liddell & Cooper, 2012; Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015; Swaner, 2004; Whitely, 2002). Specifically, moral imagination challenges operative mental models in order to discover new ways of framing ethical problems and providing innovative solutions (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015). It is the critical cognitive connection between what is and what might be (Enlow & Popa, 2008) assisting the individual in disengaging from a specific process, evaluating the perspectives which are incorporated within it, and thinking more creatively within the constraints of what is morally possible (Werhane, 2002). Through the development of moral imagination, learners have the potential to develop heightened awareness, understanding, and capacity for action with respect to morally ambiguous situations.

The priority for the development of moral imagination in higher education settings coupled with the need for moral leadership in the face of pervasive denialism (Specture, 2009), politically charged rhetoric, and misplaced decisions grounded in asserting authority and maintaining control, illustrate the need for leadership educators to consider how they can effectively develop moral imagination in leadership learners. Leadership educators are uniquely positioned to "purposefully develop activities aimed at developing the moral reasoning and imagination of students" (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015, p. 141). Universities can leverage the power of moral imagination to assist learners in developing diverse viewpoints and producing new mental models and innovative solutions to complex challenges (Enlow & Popa, 2008).

Emotionally Engaged Thinking

Emotionally engaged thinking (EET) (Stedman & Andenoro, 2015) is an outcome derived from an innovative educational process grounded in the intersection of counseling psychology, psychotherapy, and neuroscience. EET promotes systems thinking by incorporating emotions as the catalyst for positive decision-making (Andenoro, Dulikravich, McBride, Stedman, & Childers, 2019; Stedman & Andenoro, 2015), and is applicable for a variety of interdisciplinary contexts, creating a powerful facilitation tool for learners. The outcome of EET stems from the use of the FACE Method ©, *(Foundational Awareness, Authentic Engagement, Connective Analysis, and Empowerment and Change)* (Andenoro, 2014; Stedman & Andenoro, 2015). This process leads to enhanced decision-making as individuals are provided the tools to think through problems, recognize their emotions, engage in dialogue, and promote shared decision-making (2015). The use of experience and emotions via constructive means allows for leadership educators to enhance the decision-making process and predispose learners to using it in the future. The process has proven to be useful in developing enhanced engagement, systems

thinking, ownership of complex problems, and agency for creating sustainable solutions in leadership learners (Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017). Further, it has been identified as a formative process for shifting attitudes and changing behaviors to mitigate complex problems (Andenoro, 2014).

As an applied process, leadership should be cultivated in learners to address organizational and community challenges in our world. Practically, emotionally engaged thinking is linked to moral decision-making (Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017) and creates a foundation for addressing adaptive challenges (Andenoro, 2014; Stedman & Andenoro, 2015). Ultimately, using the FACE Method © affords leadership educators a tremendous tool for leveraging cognitive diversity (Mitchell et al., 2017) in learners and creating sustainable behaviors that catalyze change in our world through emotionally engaged thinking.

Adaptive Leadership Capacity

Heifetz and Laurie (1997) write that "changes in societies, markets, customers, competition, and technology around the globe are forcing organizations to clarify their values, develop new strategies, and learn new ways of operating" (p. 124). This illuminates the need for adaptive leadership to mitigate the challenges of an ever-evolving and complex world. Adaptive leadership provides a means for sustainably addressing complex challenges and is essential for the development of decisions grounded in sustainable outcomes, or outcomes that align with the challenge of meeting future generational needs through daily provisions (Bruntland, 1987). More specifically, adaptive leadership is "oriented toward the engagement of complex challenges" (Nicolaides & McCallum, 2013, p. 248), and requires discovery, innovation, and collective responsibility for a given situation (Heifetz, 1994). Adaptive leaders are called to "balance intense action with the practice of constant perspective taking and reflection using the analogy of moving from the dance floor to the balcony" (1994, p. 252). This is the foundation for positive and effective decision-making and a necessary hallmark of applied leadership learning curriculum.

The evolution of leadership learning to include Adaptive Leadership is intuitive, as "traditional, hierarchical views of leadership are less and less useful given the complexities of our modern world" (Lichtenstein, Uhl-Bien, Marion, Seers, Orton, & Schreiber, 2006, p. 2). Further, it provides a culmination of additional leadership capacities that create value for organizations and communities. Specifically, self-awareness, intercultural competence, preference for collaboration, effective communication, systems thinking, and high internal locus of control create the underpinning for working with diverse populations and addressing complex problems (Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017). These capacities, and by association adaptive leadership, provide a powerful tool for understanding contexts and utilizing moral decision-making. Adaptive leadership creates the foundation for change in our world, as it reflects the skills, competencies, attitudes, and capacities necessary for fostering adaptation, embracing disequilibrium, and generating leadership (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009).

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of an intentionally designed learning experience on the development of moral imagination, emotionally engaged thinking, and adaptive leadership capacity in multidisciplinary leadership learners. The learning experience was grounded in two primary educational methodologies, 1) the FACE Method © and 2) exposure to USHMM artifacts.

The following research objectives guided the data collection.

1. Explore the learners' self-perceived disposition toward the USHMM learning artifacts.
2. Explore the impact of the intervention on the learners' moral imagination.
3. Explore the impact of the intervention on the learners' emotionally engaged Thinking.
4. Explore the impact of the intervention on the learners' adaptive leadership capacity.

Respondents were sampled over the course of three years (2016-2018) from leadership ethics and morality courses at the University of Florida. The respondents were juniors and seniors, representative of 23 majors, and 5 undergraduate colleges. A total of 136 were selected for participation based on their enrollment in courses (convenience) and 103 were purposively sampled to provide rich description of the context via qualitative data collection efforts. The students were purposively sampled based on their level of engagement and ability to provide depth of understanding for the context. Respondents were informed of the study parameters, risks, and benefits, and perceptions were coded and are reported in aggregate form to ensure for confidentiality.

Learning Methodologies

The innovative teaching methodology used in the leadership learning context stems directly from the collaboration between the USHMM and the University of Florida. The methodology was developed using backwards design (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998) and composed of a multi-stage process. Innovativeness and overall impact are directly linked to the facilitation processes inherent to the methodology. Specifically, the learning methodology is intentionally designed to develop moral imagination (MI) (Werhane, 2008), emotionally engaged thinking (EET) (Andenoro, 2014; Andenoro & Stedman, 2015; Stedman & Andenoro, 2015), and adaptive leadership capacity (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009) within the learners via a five-stage facilitation approach grounded in psychotherapy and neuroscience. The following

learning stages were facilitated over the course of four 100-minute sessions linked to the Moral Leadership course at the University of Florida. Please note that Stages 1 and 2 were facilitated by USHMM educational staff over the course of the first 100-minute session and Stages 3-5 were facilitated by University of Florida faculty in the three subsequent sessions:

Stage 1 – Exposure: The USHMM, in coordination with faculty at the University of Florida, created an opportunity for multidisciplinary undergraduate learners to participate in a series of events titled the Moral Leadership Symposium. The events associated with the symposium created opportunities for students to view, listen to, and engage with memorabilia, videos, and audio recordings collected during and after the Holocaust. The Moral Leadership Symposium also included reflective learning activities and instructor-facilitated dialogue over the course of two weeks. The symposium was marketed to multidisciplinary students across campus and faculty members from the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the College of Business assisted in the logistical efforts.

This stage centered on active interrogation of historical photographs, artifacts, film footage, and oral testimony to explore the widespread involvement of people at all levels of society in the Holocaust. More specifically, this stage utilized the USHMM ethical leadership modules developed in conjunction with the special exhibition, *Some Were Neighbors: Collaboration and Complicity in the Holocaust.* The modules examine morality and ethics in the context of the Holocaust revealing widespread leadership failures of individuals, societies, nations, and the international community. The modules also detail the political and cultural factors that influenced people's choices that were unique to the context of the Holocaust creating contemporary relevance for students. Through an understanding of the social and psychological dynamics

that played into people's decisions and actions during the Holocaust, students begin to understand similar human vulnerabilities posing ethical challenges in their lives and world today.

Students then participated in instructor-facilitated discussions addressing how the ethical failures of ordinary people in history connected with the ethical dilemmas they might face today. The narrative of the Holocaust told by the facilitators evokes emotions in the learners and engages them in the authentic nature of the atrocities perpetuated between 1933 and 1945. Consistent with the work of Litz (2000), the first stage effectively sets the foundation for managing moral decision-making by asking the learners to perceive norms, social roles, and relationships intertwined within the presented context.

Stage 2 – Foundational Awareness: This is the first reflection point in establishing EET and setting a foundation for MI and adaptive leadership. The goal during this phase is for the learner to become aware of his or her emotions related to the moral ambiguous and systemically challenged context. Using basic prompts, individuals are asked to consider personal implications of the problem. During this second stage, individuals take ownership of the problem, begin to apply their understanding of the problem to current contexts, and consider societal implications. Within the Moral Leadership Symposium, facilitators prompted students to consider the universal questions raised by the historical material explored. While some of the pressures and motivations that influenced people's actions and decisions were specific to the time period, others reflect social and psychological vulnerabilities all human beings face. The modules raise awareness of these vulnerabilities with the aspiration that learning about moral leadership in the context of the Holocaust can prepare learners to be more morally conscious leaders today.

This leads to application within similar contexts and is integral in socially constructing frameworks, which set the foundation for learners to progress to the next stage. Further, this begins the development of MI by facilitating the process of reproductive imagination (Werhane, 1998). Through this process, individuals develop awareness for contextual factors, the schema at play within the context, and what moral conflicts or dilemmas may arise as the schema progresses within the context (1998).

Stage 3 – Authentic Engagement: This stage is intentionally designed to create empathy within the learners for individuals affected by the identified problem. Authentic engagement relates to how the learner sees him or herself in the scenario. By focusing on the role of "ordinary people," the USHMM's modules move beyond the traditional categories of victims, perpetrators, and bystanders allowing learners to take ownership of the content. Learners develop historical empathy as they deduce that perpetrators cannot be simply dismissed as "evil". Instead, these were individuals responding to timeless pressures, fears, and motivations that humans continue to be susceptible to today. Therefore, these modules and the facilitation techniques presented raise questions not only about personal motivations in the past, but also prompt learners to contemplate how they might react in similar circumstances today.

Ultimately, this stage connects the learner with the problem, asking what the learner's role or obligation is with respect to the problem. This elicits an emotional response based upon the perceived situation and expectations for the situation. In an effort to best decide how to approach the situation, the learner must address how he or she feels about the problem. It provides a level of authenticity by being present in the moment. Stage 3 furthers the idea of reproductive imagination challenging or confirming the learner's perspectives and moral schema.

Stage 4 – Connective Analysis: Through a systems approach aimed at meaning-making (Neimeyer & Raskin, 2000), learners develop a critical perspective for the variables influencing the problem. This leads to an emotional connection between the learners and the problem leading to increased engagement and the desire to share their newly acquired knowledge with friends, and colleagues. Within this stage, systems thinking leads to a synthesized understanding of the learner's perspectives, their peers' perspectives, and other contextual considerations. This provides an integrated and realistic understanding of the problem. The systems understanding stemming from this stage provides a connection to others while taking new possibilities into account within the scope of their context. Werhane (1998) identifies this as productive imagination, the second construct within MI. Productive imagination includes "revamping one's schema to take into account new possibilities within the scope of one's situation and/or within one's role" (1998, p.22). Further, the increased understanding for the context and ability to apply that understanding sets the foundation for practicing adaptive leadership (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009) and ultimately leads to the development of sustainable and adaptive solutions.

The USHMM modules and the facilitation techniques presented within this stage extend learning beyond the historical events to exploring fundamental questions of human nature. During this, learners are able to develop an emotional connection while studying the interconnected nature of individuals in a society and how their seemingly mundane actions (or inactions) can affect the lives of others.

Stage 5 – Empowerment & Change: This phase psychologically shifts participants from the development of progressive attitudes to the practice of accompanying behaviors. The embedded attitudes and the related behaviors create the impetus for sustainable

and adaptive leadership practice and creative imagination, the third construct of MI. This involves the ability to imagine possibilities outside of the current context, imagine reasonable possibilities based on the context and outside factors, and evaluate the morality of new possibilities (Werhane, 1998). Further, this stage assists the learner in questioning traditional paradigms and exploring potential outcomes associated with the identified implementation plans (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015).

The USHMM's modules and the facilitation techniques within this stage prompt students to reflect on the collective impact that individual actions and inaction can have and illuminate that decisions often lead to unintended consequences. This stage is directly tied to adaptive leadership practice, as the content and facilitation techniques demonstrate that just as small, seemingly mundane actions can lead to harmful outcomes as they did during the Holocaust, individual actions can also lead to exponentially impactful, meaningful, and positive effects. This realization often leads to a sense of empowerment within learners as they acknowledge that they can exercise their agency and affect change in their communities based on moral decision-making practices.

Data Collection

The data collection was conducted over the course of a three-year period. The researchers ensured for triangulation by using multiple data sources to understand the context. First, content analyses of learners' writing were conducted for the entire sample (n =136). Second, qualitative data were collected via purposively selected focus groups (n =103). Third, personal follow up interviews were conducted with respondents who attended the focus groups and demonstrated rich perspectives and depth of understanding for the context. All respondents participating in the qualitative focus groups were contacted via email to solicit participation. Following

the focus groups a second purposive sample was identified from the respondents and were contacted via email to meet with researchers in one-on-one interview settings (n =57). Focus group sessions and personal interviews were recorded and referential adequacy (i.e., field notes, audit trail, and transcription) materials were maintained, and member checks were conducted to ensure for confirmability and trustworthiness (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004; more information on the specifics of the data collection methodology are available from the authors).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed via a constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This allowed for the emergence of categories and the accompanying relationships (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). The data analysis included identification of reoccurring themes throughout the data. Thick rich description allowed for inductive analysis and lead to the discovery of patterns, themes, and categories. A peer debriefing process was used to discuss the findings and consider future directions for the research effort.

Emergent similarities were noted and generated identifiable categories for each research objective. Data were coded into emergent categories and via a constant comparison of the categories and their properties, the researchers developed theoretical perspectives about the contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) allowed for the identification the overarching components of the context. Axial coding (2008) was then used to identify causal relationships and phenomena that demonstrate understanding for why the respondents were impacted by educational methodologies.

Trustworthiness was maintained throughout the data collection and analysis process in four ways (Shenton, 2004). First, credibility was maintained by the use of well-established research methods, triangulation, iterative questioning, and member checks to verify the data. Second, dependability was ensured for through the use of overlapping methods (focus groups and personal interviews). Third, confirmability was maintained through the use of an audit trail allowing for replicability. Fourth, transferability stemmed from the presentation of significant contextual and data treatment information allowing for the findings to find application within a wide variety of higher education leadership ethics and moral leadership environments,

Findings

Qualitative findings collected through focus groups, personal interviews, and content analyses (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993) and analyzed through constant comparative analyses (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) indicate that multidisciplinary undergraduate leaners participating in the identified learning experience are demonstrating depth of thought, increased levels of awareness, the ability to foreshadow potential complex consequences of their decisions, and improved agency for addressing and mitigating complex adaptive situations. These identified variables are foundational elements of moral imagination, emotionally engaged thinking, and adaptive leadership. Aligning with the grounded theory approach, the findings will be presented in narrative form providing a snapshot of the context (Charmaz, 2014) in addition to credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008) for the study.

Open coding during the analysis allowed for themes to emerge from the context naturalistically. This led to grounded theory. With respect to the research objectives, data showed that the respondents demonstrated positive sentiment for the learning intervention, and specifically the opportunity to engage with the USHMM content and artifacts (89% of respondents). Further, the data analysis revealed that respondents noted increased capacity for moral

imagination, emotionally engaged Thinking, and adaptive leadership due to the learning intervention. This was determined through the emergence of subthemes associated with each of the overarching themes. Specifically, within the overarching theme of moral imagination, the analysis revealed that respondents show capacity for reproductive imagination (94%), productive imagination (67%), and creative imagination (62%). The analysis also revealed subthemes identifying learner capacity for emotionally

Table 1

Frequency of Respondent Perceptions

Theme	Number of Respondents	Total Respondents	Frequency
Positive Sentiment for USHMM Content & Artifacts	92	103	89%
MI - Reproductive Imagination	97	103	94%
MI - Productive Imagination	70	103	67%
MI - Creative Imagination	64	103	62%
EET - Awareness	99	103	96%
EET - Ownership	81	103	78%
EET - Systems Thinking	91	103	88%
EET - Agency	85	103	82%
AL - Fostering Adaptation	74	103	71%
AL - Embracing Disequilibrium	96	103	93%
AL - Generating Leadership	88	103	85%
Instructor Presence & Relevance*	94	103	91%
Reflective Prompts & Processes*	84	103	81%
Relevance & Immediacy of the Content*	83	103	80%

*Reflective of why the learners were impacted by the educational methodologies.

engaged thinking (awareness – 96%; ownership – 78%; systems thinking – 88%; and agency – 82%) and adaptive leadership capacity (fostering adaptation – 71%; embracing disequilibrium – 93%; and generating leadership – 85%) due to the learning intervention.

Axial coding during the analysis further revealed the specific relationships and phenomena that created context for why the learning methodologies led to capacity development in the previously listed areas. Specifically, respondents identified three specific and consistent themes that led to their capacity development: instructor presence (91%), reflective prompts and processes (81%), and relevance and immediacy of the content (80%).

Positive Sentiment for USHMM
Content & Artifacts

Respondents (89%) noted positive sentiment and appreciation for the opportunity to interact with educational staff from the USHMM. Specifically, respondents noted their appreciation for the staff's willingness to travel, provide content and artifacts from the USHMM to supplement discussion, and validation that they felt within the context of the learning intervention.

> The videos of the survivors gave the discussion meaning. It became real for me as I watched, and it made me think about what I could do to prevent something like that from happening in the future (RC4).

> The words of the people in the videos helped me to empathize with the people of the Holocaust. However, I realized quickly that the depth of the pain and stories that conveyed that pain were more than I could feel true empathy for because I could not imagine the atrocities that they have seen and lived through. This led me to a place of reflection and I realized that the first step in preventing something like this from happening again is

listening. Once you feel the pain of the story, you will do everything in your power to prevent that pain from happening again (RC19).

Development of Moral Imagination

The analysis of the respondents' perceptions identified that the learning intervention led to the development of moral imagination due to the emergent subthemes, reproductive imagination (94%), productive imagination (67%) and creative imagination (62%). Respondents overwhelmingly engaged in the process of reproductive imagination. Reproductive imagination is grounded in the process of intentional reflection about oneself and his or her situation (Werhane, 1999).

> After watching the videos, I see the importance of self-reflection and self-analysis. It's important to make sure that the communities we are a part of never fall to a level where it is acceptable to treat anyone as less than human. Everyone should be treated equally and fairly. In making moral decisions in the future, I think it is important to consider that decisions align with our moral value, not just those of the group (RB12).

> I gave a lot of thought to what I saw and heard in the videos and from my classmates. Unfortunately, we live in a world where things that are unacceptable happen. However, I need to take time each day to consider what role I play in supporting those who cannot support themselves. That consideration needs to lead to action and I need to hold myself accountable to that action (RC39).

Productive imagination was also seen within the context. Respondents noted that that it was critical to look at things from different perspectives. This aligns with Werhane's idea of reframing possibilities that is linked to the idea of productive imagination (1999). Many of the respondents noted their desire to see the situation through another person's eyes. "I tried to put myself in his shoes, which was extremely hard because I

do not know how he did what he did" (RA17). "I could imagine how hard it must have been to hear that from someone she trusted" (RA31).

> After watching the videos, I thought differently. I tried to think what I would do if I was being persecuted by the people I trusted most. At first I thought, I wouldn't take it and just leave. However, where could they go? They didn't have options and many of them had worked their entire life to create something of value for their families. It made me think a lot harder about the freedom that I take for granted. (RC10).

> The event made me think differently about what I have in my life. The people in the shaming video didn't do anything wrong and an entire community shamed them. I can't imagine what that must have felt like. One day you have friends, and the next day the entire community is shaming you for caring deeply for someone. It made me reconsider how I look at the world and what opportunities I have (RB3).

Creative imagination, or the development of moral alternatives for problem solving (Werhane, 1999), was evident within the context, but some of the respondents noted that the content presented was emotionally exhausting, which may have prevented more of them from reaching this stage of moral imagination. The majority of respondent perceptions aligning with this were grounded in the support of others. "This is unfair. After thinking about this situation and watching the videos, it is clear how important it is to build a coalition to address injustice" (RC11). "I feel like in times of adversity, regardless of the scale, it is critical to bond with those that you trust most" (RA22).

> When I am faced with group think, I still need to evaluate my decision-making process, starting with my core values. Once I set a baseline for moral practice, the decision will follow accordingly.

I think that this is the sign of true leadership. Regardless of what might happen, you have to stay true to your core (RB29).

Emotionally Engaged Thinking

The analysis of the respondents' perceptions revealed subthemes identifying learner capacity for emotionally engaged thinking (awareness – 96%; ownership – 78%; systems thinking – 88%; and agency – 82%) due to the learning intervention. Awareness was a foundational piece of the learning experience for the learners. Nearly every respondent noted the impact that the learning intervention had on their awareness. "I realized a lot during the sessions. I started to understand what happened during the Holocaust on a different level" (RA30). "The videos helped me to realize that I need to learn more about the world around me" (RB17).

> Through the symposium I learned a lot. I learned about the Holocaust and the horrible things that happened to the people during the Holocaust. However, most of all I learned about myself. I realized that I do not know exactly how I would act in a situation like [the Holocaust]. However, I will continue to listen, read, and share what I have learned and hopefully, grow along the way (RC2).

> I learned a lot about myself today. I learned that I need to always act in congruence with my values, regardless of the competing factors. Anything less would not be living up to my authentic self. The sessions made me think and I think that they contributed to this realization. Now, I just have to act upon it (RA6).

The respondents also accepted ownership of the problem, a critical hallmark of taking action with respect to a given problem (Stedman & Andenoro, 2015). "It is important to do more than talk. The solution starts with me, so I need to consider what I will do today to impact tomorrow" (RB16).

I wasn't alive during the Holocaust, but oppression is still seen today. The conversations today made me realize that while I might not be the one being oppressed, it is still my problem (RC15)

Systems thinking emerged from the respondent perceptions. Many students noted the complexity and overwhelming number of variables within the Holocaust. They also noted the complicity and varied methods of rationalization used by the people in the videos. "I knew a lot about the Holocaust going in, but I have a renewed appreciation for how complex the situation was" (RB28).

When we understand the systems, we can understand where the shadows are coming from. The behaviors were normalized by the people in the communities, Hitler, the military, police -- by everyone. However, it's even harder to believe we are still experiencing similar atrocities with refugees around the world (RA41).

Even though the problems seemed insurmountable in the time of Holocaust, when we began to break down the systems that affected how the people acted it helped me to see that if I take time to understand all of the factors influencing a given situation, I will be better able to practice leadership within that situation and promote change in the world (RC14).

Through the final stage of the FACE Method students also noted that they developed agency, a temporally embedded process grounded in an understanding for the past, context for the present, foresight for the future, and a propensity to act on that knowledge (Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017). "Once you know, you can never go back to not knowing. The only thing left to do is act upon that knowledge" (RC13).

The videos showed me the dangers of group think from the past, but I also see things happening today and most likely things will continue into the future. While this is frustrating, it should not prevent action. Today and every day we need to do something tangible that creates change for our world. (RB39).

Adaptive Leadership

The analysis of the respondents' perceptions revealed subthemes identifying learner capacity for adaptive leadership capacity (fostering adaptation – 71%; embracing disequilibrium – 93%; and generating leadership – 85%) due to the learning intervention.

Fostering adaptation is grounded in advocacy for change and a willingness to explore options. This aligns with many of the foundational elements of moral imagination but the respondents' willingness to embrace the process of change was apparent. "We have to consider our role in changing things so things like the Holocaust do not happen again" (RB15).

Change is going to happen, but we need to be ready for it. If we are proactive and stay aware, we can work with the people around us to ensure that things like the Holocaust do not happen again. Inevitably, we cannot be content to settle for status quo. We need to change, and it has to happen now (RC33).

Embracing disequilibrium was noted by a large percentage of the respondents. This aligns with the general disposition of many of the respondents' perceptions addressing the chaotic nature of the system during the Holocaust. "I cannot imagine the ambiguity and fear that the people must have been feeling during the Holocaust. Their support systems were taken from them and their lives were in chaos" (RB1).

There were a ton of things impacting the actions of the people during the Holocaust. With so many things happening, it would have been difficult to mount a resistance. However, understanding that everyone was in that same situation could have provided a brief sense of community. This could have potentially created an opportunity to challenge the situation (RC9).

Finally, the area of generating leadership was widely represented in the respondent perceptions. This is intuitive because most of the learners attending the learning intervention were from leadership courses, so they are predisposed to practicing leadership. "In the absence of leadership, leadership will emerge. It is critical to build a coalition in times of adversity" (RC18). "As a leader, it is important to understand the explicit and implicit implications that our thoughts and practices have on those around us" (RC23).

Leadership is the foundation for change in our world. We need to talk to each other, establish partnerships, and empower change. It is not enough to stand by watching people be dehumanized. Action is required, and that action starts with strategic leadership aimed at good for all (RA3).

Contribution to Capacity Development

Phenomena emerged from the respondents' perceptions about the impact of additional variables within the learning environment on the overall learning of the respondents. The following provide context for why the learning methodologies led to capacity development. Respondents identified three specific and consistent themes that led to their capacity development, instructor presence (91%), reflective prompts and processes (81%), and relevance and immediacy of the content (80%).

The instructor presence was noted by a significant number of respondents. Respondents provided that the instructor was critical to the learning environment and that the overall facilitation coupled with the materials created the impetus for learning.

I really appreciated the materials and opportunity to explore several things that I had not seen before, but it was the instructor who presented and facilitated the discussions that led to me thinking differently and hopefully applying these ideas to my life (RC15).

The staff from the USHMM were wonderful. They treated me like I was an equal part of the conversation, which gave me the confidence to ask questions and consider how I could apply what they were talking about in my life. I really appreciated the opportunity to work with them (RB38).

Specific reflective prompts and processes were also noted by the respondents as contributing factors to the development of moral imagination, emotionally engaged thinking, and adaptive leadership.

The instructor reframed the conversation about the Holocaust in current day terms. This allowed me to see that it is still an issue and I need to work to change things (RC23).

The instructor asked the class to consider how the videos and images made us feel. He then asked to think about what the videos and articles reminded us of in our lives. It seemed odd at the time, but when I left class, I had a plan for something I could do to address oppression in our world today (RC14).

Finally, the respondents noted that the materials and discussion had significant relevance and immediacy.

Specifically, they noted that an understanding of the past is critical to consider in an effort to avoid repeating mistakes. They also noted the power of the content and memorabilia. "We often talk about theory or things that don't apply to our lives in our classes, but this was real and it was timely. We need more of this" (RC11).

> The materials were powerful, and they were raw. There was a shock value to them, but then I realized that this was not sensationalized. This actually happened. This was a powerful moment for me, because it helped me to understand that while it is not happening to me, it could be happening to someone else. Real leadership requires that I am aware and I am prepared to act (RB37).

The findings demonstrate that learners began developing a more complex understanding of the causes and events of the Holocaust. Through the study of the range of motivations and pressures that individuals faced in Nazi Germany, learners extrapolated universal lessons about human nature and responsibilities as an individual in society. The findings also indicate that the modules and facilitation techniques prompted awareness of individual agency and the potential to affect positive change in their communities.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The findings indicate that there is tremendous benefit for leadership educators to use the proposed learning methodology integrating content and artifacts from the USHMM and the FACE Approach to develop moral imagination, emotionally engaged thinking, and adaptive leadership. This aligns with the previously noted literature (Andenoro, Bigham, & Balser, 2014; Andenoro, Dulikarvich, McBride, Stedman & Childers, in press; Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017; Stedman & Andenoro, 2015). The findings also show that learners show enhanced levels of moral imagination (Werhane, 2008; Werhane, 1998), emotionally engaged thinking (Stedman & Andenoro, 2015), adaptive leadership capacity (the ability to foster adaptation, embrace disequilibrium, and generate leadership; Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009), and systems thinking (Andenoro, Sowcik, & Balser, 2017) due to the intentionally designed learning experience.

This aligns with the data supporting the inclusion of moral imagination in learning contexts as a powerful tool for developing better decision-making processes in learners (Odom, Andenoro, Sandlin, & Jones, 2015; Enlow & Popa, 2008). However, when these are joined within the innovative experiential learning context of the Holocaust, a tremendous educational environment with significant implications for addressing complex problems and promoting adaptive leadership emerges.

Through this innovative approach, leadership educators have the potential to serve as a catalyst for change with respect to student learning and agency for sustainable change. This is paramount as leadership educators attempt to create powerful learning interventions within the ethics and morality contexts to assist in the shaping of attitudes consistent with value-based practice and organizational and community advancement. This study demonstrates the impact of the proposed learning intervention to create affective shifts and behavioral changes in leadership learners. However, more research needs to be done. Understanding that change is grounded in sustainable behaviors, it will be critical to explore the long-term impacts on students engaging in this learning process. Future research stemming from this will explore the sustained attitudes and behaviors developed through this process and the motivating factors for internalization of the accompanying attitudes. In addition, this work yields a sequential exploratory foundation that could lead to retrospective quantitative measures that identify impact and lead to generalizability.

Ultimately, through our continued and deepened understanding of this process and its sustained impact on our leadership learners, leadership educators can create a foundation for more impactful leadership learning environments, deeper engagement for leadership learners, and more pronounced ownership of the critical leadership work that our world needs most. This is best exemplified in the following culminating quote:

I was particularly moved by the sometimes harsh realities of human nature and behavior. Preventing something like [the Holocaust] takes individual decisions as much as or even more than mass opposition. More than anything, the Holocaust discussion reminded me of my personal responsibility to do what is right, rather than what is easy, regardless of the consequences (RA10).

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EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

Two Facets of Moral Maturity

Dana H. Born, Harvard University

William H. Hendrix, Clemson University

Justin Hartley, Global Center for Leadership Communication

Battistich (1999) noted that most research on character development has focused narrowly on a single component such as moral reasoning or an undesirable outcome such as cheating. Furthermore, Lemming (1993) indicated that thought and research on character development is atheoretical, which hampers progress in developing effective character development programs. However, there are a number of theoretical approaches and models (e.g., Berkowitz, 2002; Likona, 1991) that have been proposed for conceptualizing the construct of character and guiding character development programs. Common to many of these theoretical approaches and models are two facets: moral reasoning and moral excellence (e.g., virtues such as integrity, selflessness, honesty, etc.).

As pointed out by Walker and Pitts (1998), contemporary moral psychology models (e.g., Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Eisenberg, 1995; Gilligan, 1982; Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1987) have focused more on moral reasoning and paid little attention to the construct of moral excellence. The construct of character or moral excellence is to a large extent based on virtue ethics as originally described by Socrates and Aristotle (Born & Megone, 2019). This is reflected in an individuals' character-related traits and values. Hendrix, Barlow, and Luedtke, (2004) presented research with two instruments to measure the character values of individuals. One instrument, *Character Assessment Rating Scale* consisted of a 12-point scale for rating character traits of self and others. The other instrument *Behavioral Desirability Scale* (BDS) consisted of 65 items to measure character-related values (Hendrix, Born, &

ABSTRACT

There is emerging interest and scholarship around the world in character development. Many programs in schools and applied settings are evolving to intentionally develop character. Considerable research work has focused on a single component, moral reasoning" and undesirable behavioral measures such as "cheating." Much of the other research completed in this area has focused on "moral excellence" yielding desirable outcomes such as integrity, selflessness and conscientiousness. This study investigated whether or not moral reasoning is significantly related to moral excellence. Using two separate populations of participants, research results establish that "moral reasoning" and "moral excellence" are two distinctive facets of the construct of "moral maturity.

Hopkins, 2015; Born, Hendrix, & Pate, 2017). The BDS items formed four factors: selflessness, integrity, spiritual appreciation, and conscientiousness. Due to spiritual appreciation not being as strong a factor as the other three it was removed in later research to form BDS version two (BDS2) made up of 50 items.

Ones, Viswesvaran, and Schmidt (1993) in a large-scale meta-analysis found that integrity tests predicted both job performance and counterproductive behaviors on the job such as disciplinary issues, theft, and absenteeism. Looking over these tests they concluded that a common factor seems to be conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is one of the factors of the BDS, therefore it appears that the BDS is measuring a construct similar to those in integrity tests.

Moral reasoning has been frequently measured with the *Defining Issues Test* (DIT); Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999). The DIT is based on Lawrence Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory of ethical judgment (Narvaez, 2019). Kohlberg used a time-consuming *Moral Judgment Interview* to assess moral development. Later, James Rest and colleagues developed a survey called the DIT to assess Kohlberg's moral development stages or schema. The DIT provides three stages or schema (Narvaez, 2019). The lowest level of moral reasoning is the *Personal Interest Schema* where a person is primarily interested in his or her personal welfare. The next level is the *Maintaining Norms Schema* where a person considers law and authority important in upholding social order. The highest level of moral reasoning is Postconventional reasoning. Postconventional reasoning involves not accepting laws blindly, as would be the case in the Maintaining Norms Schema, but evaluating them in order to ensure they provide society-wide benefit (Narvaez, 2019). Since the DIT is based on Kohlberg's developmental model, it is understandable that research has focused to a large extent on student moral reasoning in educational classroom settings. The DIT is basically a measure of the development of concepts of social justice and has been found to be predictive of political attitudes and political choices (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003).

Moral reasoning or cognitive understanding of what is moral does not mean it results in moral excellence, i.e., one's value system (virtues) and moral behavior (Vance, 2016). Narvaez (2018) indicated that moral values develop by early experiences which influence

Dana H. Born, Ph.D., (USAFA 1983) is the Co-Director, Center for Public Leadership; Faculty Chair, Senior Executive Fellows (SEF) Program; and Lecturer in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and at Harvard University. A retired Brigadier General, Dana served from 2004-2013 as Dean of the Faculty at the US Air Force Academy. Her military assignments include a wide variety of duties with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Royal Australian Air Force, the staff of the Secretary of the Air Force, squadron command, and duty in Afghanistan supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. She holds degrees from the Air Force Academy, Trinity University, the University of Melbourne, and a Doctorate in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from Pennsylvania State University (1994). She received Penn State's Alumni Fellow Award in 2012 and Distinguished Alumna Award in 2018 and an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Administration from Simmons College in 2007, the Innovation in Teaching Award from the Harvard Kennedy School in 2017 along with senior military distinctions including the Air Force's Zuckert Award for Outstanding Management Achievement and the Air Force Association's Vandenberg Award for outstanding contributions to aerospace education. Dr. Born is the past President of the Massachusetts Women's Forum, serves on Mayor Walsh's Boston Women's Workforce Council, is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, is the past President of the American Psychological Association (Society for Military Psychology), USAFA Endowment Board, Falcon Foundation Trustee, and serves as an officer, member, or consultant to numerous professional associations and boards.

later moral orientations and behavior. Moral maturity is presumed to be a broader construct than moral reasoning. It includes moral reasoning and moral excellence (i.e., ethical or moral values, and ethical or moral behavior). The primary difference between moral reasoning and moral excellence is that moral reasoning deals with an individual's thought processes while moral excellence deals with one's values and behaviors. These moral values or virtues included in this research include integrity, selflessness, and conscientiousness.

The purpose then, of this research is to establish whether or not moral reasoning and moral excellence in terms of moral values (i.e., virtues) are two different components of the construct of moral maturity. This therefore leads to the following hypotheses.

Null Hypothesis:
H_o: Moral reasoning (as measured by the DIT) is significantly related to moral excellence (as measured by the BDS).

Alternate Hypothesis:
H_a: Moral reasoning (as measured by the DIT) is *not* significantly related to moral excellence (as measured by the BDS).

Study 1

Method

Participants. Participants consisted of 482 United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) first classmen (i.e., seniors) of which 81 percent were male and 19 percent female. This gender split approximated the cadet population at that time. The research protocol approved by USAFA provided for cadets in the incoming class and first classmen to be selected as participants in this research. Only the first classmen were used in this particular research effort due to the DIT only being administered to first classmen while the BDS was administered to both groups. The institution provided the group setting for the DIT and BDS to be administered.

William H. Hendrix, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Management, Clemson University. Dr. Hendrix has served Clemson University as Chair of its Emeritus College Advisory Board and Chair of its Development committee. He received a B.A. in Psychology from East Carolina University, an M.S. in Human Factors Engineering, and a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Purdue University. Dr. Hendrix, during 2004-2005, performed institutional research and analysis for senior leadership at the USAF Academy. During 2003-2004, he served as the Director, Leadership Development Assessment Office, USAF Academy. From 2002 to 2003 Dr. Hendrix served as the Distinguished Visiting Professor for Research and Assessment, Center for Character Development, USAF Academy. From 1999 to 2002 he served as the USAF Academy, Center for Character Development's Ambassador Holland H. Coors Chair in Character Development. Previously, Dr. Hendrix served on the faculty at Clemson University for approximately 16 years and held the position of Head, Department of Management for more than five of those years. During the recent past he served as a consultant with the Commission for Academic Accreditation, United Arab Emeritus. He provided reviews and evaluations of university programs seeking accreditation in Dubai and Abu Dhabi and established actions needed to meet accreditation standards. He also had a career as an Officer in the United States Air Force. His academic expertise is in the areas of leadership and character development, assessment, survey research, research methods, personnel and human resource management, organizational behavior, and industrial/organizational psychology. His research has been published in professional refereed journals, technical reports, and a series of book chapters. Dr. Hendrix has served as a consultant to both public and private organizations in the areas of curriculum assessment, leadership and character development and organizational assessment and improvement.

Measures

Moral Excellence. Moral excellence was measured by the Behavioral Desirability Survey version 2 (BDS2) which consisted of three factors: selflessness, integrity, and conscientiousness. BDS items ranged from 1 (extremely undesirable) to 9 (extremely desirable). Hendrix, Barlow, and Luedtke (2004) provide validation data for the BDS and Barlow, Jordan, and Hendrix (2003) replicated the validation with a different sample and location. Throughout its existence, USAFA has focused on developing leaders of character. Central to this mission are the Academy's core values of Integrity First, Service before self, and Excellence in all we do. In 1997, the U. S. Air Force adopted these and provided them in its 1997 Air Force Core Values Handbook. It is interesting that the three BDS factors are basically the same as United States Air Force Academy's and U. S. Air Force's three core values.

Moral Reasoning. Moral reasoning was measured with the *Defining Issues Test Version 1* (DIT1).

Postconventional reasoning is established by two scores, the *P* Score and the *N2* Score. Factors included in the analyses were those for the *Personal Interest Schema* (interest), *Maintaining Norms Schema* (norms), and *Postconventional Schema* (*P* score, and *N2* score)[1]. The DIT *P* score has been the most used measure to assess moral reasoning stages. The *N* score was added later and was also designed to measure moral reasoning stages but where the *P* score only used rankings of moral dilemmas the *N* score included both rankings and ratings.

Procedure

Participants were administered two surveys that were linked by numerical code so responses would be anonymous. The two surveys were the Behavioral Desirability Survey (BDS2) and the Defining Issues Test (DIT1). One of the co-authors of this research (Hendrix) administered both instruments to cadets during class periods. The institution established a

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1 More information on this instrument is available from the authors.

Justin R. Hartley is CEO and Founder of the Global Center for Leadership Communication. As a scholar, author, speaker, trainer and coach, Justin is an international specialist in leadership communication, character development and positive mental health. He trains hundreds of organizations and leaders around the world, including Prime Ministers and Presidential candidates and has more than 20 years experience in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors across four continents. He previously worked as a political strategist, policy analyst and campaign manager. After being awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to Harvard University, Justin was made a prestigious John F. Kennedy Fellow by the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS), elected Executive Vice-President by the HKS student body and received a Master in Public Administration (2015) graduating with straight As. He specialized in leadership, communication, effective influence and campaign management and then served appointments as a Research Scholar at Harvard's *Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Pubic Policy*; as a Research Fellow at Harvard's *Center for Public Leadership* and as a Teaching Fellow in *Authentic Leadership; The Making of a Politician; and The Arts of Communication*. Justin has also co-authored the lead chapter 'Modern Political Advertising and Persuasion' in the international text the *Routledge Handbook of Political Advertising*. In addition, he holds a Postgraduate B. Econ (First Class Honors), a B. Com. and a B. Econ. from the University of Queensland, Australia. As a not-for-profit leader, Justin co-founded Australia's first not-for-profit organization in pediatric chronic pain (2011), Support Kids in Pain (SKIP). He also spent five years with Samaritans UK, helping people who were actively suicidal and is an advocate for Alzheimer's disease awareness. He regularly lectures and appears in the media promoting mental health and teaching memory improvement and was previously a *Guinness World Record Holder* in memory and *Australian Memory Champion*.

time for cadets to be in an auditorium where both instruments were administered by the same co-author.

Results

The means, standard deviations, correlations, and coefficient alpha scale reliability indices for Study 1 are provided in Table 1. Hypotheses Ho and Ha, were tested with correlational analysis and factor analysis. A review of the correlations between the BDS factors of Selflessness, Integrity, and Conscientiousness with those of the DIT's Interest, Norms, *P* Score, *N2* Score indicate small (i.e. .10-.20) but significant relationships primarily between the BDS factors and the *P* Score and *N2* Score.

Table 2 provides the factor analysis results which show that the BDS scales load as one factor while the four DIT measures load as two different factors. That is, the BDS scales were found to be highly correlated indicating they were measuring one construct or factor that can be considered a measure of moral excellence. The DIT however had two sets of items where the items within each set were highly correlated but not correlated with the other set.

Study 2

Method

Participants. Study 2 was similar in approach to Study 1 with several modifications: occurred in a civilian

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations of USAFA Cadet Scores

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Selflessness[a]	7.59	.73	1.00						
2. Integrity[b]	7.09	.85	.53**	1.00					
3. Conscientious[c]	7.56	.72	.75**	.66*	1.00				
4. Interest[d]	28.97	18.64	-.05	.10	-.08	1.00			
5. Norms[e]	36.62	17.95	.00	.20**	.06	.26**	1.00		
6. P Score[f]	34.67	19.66	.16**	.12*	.09	.17**	.20**	1.00	
7. N2 Score[g]	38.09	21.85	.16**	.16**	.10*	.12**	-28**	.73**	1.00

[a]$N = 482$. [b]$N = 482$. [c]$N = 482$. [d]$N = 806$. [e]$N = 806$. [f]$N = 806$. [g]$N = 806$.
*$p < .05$, **p$< .01$

Table 2

Factor Analysis of USAFA Cadet Scores

	Component		
	1	2	3
Selflessness	.854	.115	-.073
Integrity	.834	.064	.088
Conscientious	.924	.019	-.022
Interest	-.126	.049	.788
Norms	.129	.167	.779
P score	.060	.922	.104
N2 score	.096	.917	.133

educational environment, with graduate students, and used the more recently developed DIT2 rather than DIT1. The DIT2 is structured and administered the same as the DIT1, however we determined the prompt statements were much more current and more appropriate for our research approach. This study's participants consisted of 41 Harvard University first year master's students enrolled in the Harvard Kennedy School ethics subject, *Responsibilities of Public Action*. Approximately 50% were males and 50% females, while approximately 70% were US students and 30% international students. This is sample is representative of the total master's student population in this program.

Measures

Moral Reasoning. Moral Reasoning was measured using the DIT2. As noted in Study 1, the DIT is based on Kohlberg's theory of moral development and is a device for activating moral schemas (to the extent that a person has developed them) and for assessing them in terms of "importance" judgments. Specifically,

this research used the streamlined version of the DIT – the DIT2 and was paper based. Participants were tasked to read five moral dilemmas, then rate and rank corresponding statements in terms of their moral importance. Participants rated and ranked items higher the more they made sense and resonated with their preferred schema. Conversely, when participants encountered items that did not make sense or seemed too simplistic or unconvincing, a lower rating was given. The DIT2 was administered to students in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Alabama.

Moral Excellence. Moral Excellence was measured using the BDS2. This scale measures individual character-related values. As noted in Study 1, the BDS scale ranges from 1 *extremely undesirable* to 9 *extremely desirable* and contains three subscales: selflessness, integrity, and conscientiousness.

Procedure

The DIT2 moral reasoning instrument was given to students in class under guidance from a trained independent tutor and not in the presence of the research team or class professor. Students were free to either participate in the DIT2 paper-based survey or not to participate, without prejudice. If students chose to participate, they were provided with a unique identification number that was used on the survey rather than their student name, ensuring anonymity throughout the study.

The BDS moral excellence survey was provided to students online. Students were free to participate in the BDS on their own time on a specified day. Students entered the BDS via a link online and securely entered the test via their unique identification number, ensuring anonymity once again. This was similar to the paper BDS administered in our first study, yet we administered in this study on-line for student convenience and to make data collection more efficient.

Results

The means, standard deviations, correlations, and coefficient alpha scale reliability indices for Study 2 are provided in Table 3. As in Study 1, Hypotheses H^0 and H_a, were tested with correlational analysis and factor analysis. A review of the correlations between the BDS factors of Selflessness, Integrity, and Conscientiousness with those of the DIT's Interest, Norms, P Score, N2 Score indicate no significant relationships between the BDS and DIT measures.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations of Harvard Student Scores

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Selflessness[a]	7.50	.64	1.00						
2. Integrity[b]	7.01	.56	.66**	1.00					
3. Conscientious[c]	7.32	.66	.74**	.48**	1.00				
4. Interest[d]	18.84	20.12	.15	.04	.06	1.00			
5. Norms[e]	29.47	21.05	.17	.05	-.32	.49*	1.00		
6. P Score[f]	57.28	19.19	-.06	-.10	-.15	.13	-.19	1.00	
7. N2 Score[g]	57.17	16.75	-.09	-.12	-.23	.12	-.02	.96**	1.00

[a]$N = 41$. [b]$N = 41$. [c]$N = 41$. [d]$N = 26$. [e]$N = 26$. [f]$N = 26$. [g]$N = 26$.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 4

Factor Analysis of Harvard Student Scores

	Component		
	1	2	3
Selflessness	.921	-.004	.159
Integrity	.813	-.043	.010
Conscientious	.853	-.133	-.042
Interest	.076	.158	.844
Norms	.009	-.144	.877
P score	-.049	.993	-.043
N2 score	-.110	.976	.058

Table 4 shows that the factor analysis results are effectively the same as those for Study 1. That is, the BDS scales load as one factor while the four DIT measures load as two different factors.

Despite a different educational environment and level of education and the DIT2 opposed to the DIT1, this result is consistent with the findings in Study 1 and confirm our hypothesis that the DIT and BDS are distinctive measures and add uniquely to moral maturity.

Results of both Study 1 and 2 support the hypothesis (H_a): Moral reasoning (as measured by the DIT) is not significantly related to moral excellence (as measured by the BDS). These results support that the DIT and BDS measure different constructs.

Discussion

The DIT was designed to measure moral reasoning and as noted by Bebeau and Thoma (2003) it is a measure of the development of concepts of social justice. One of the major threats to the DIT's validity is its political content. Rest and colleagues (1999) indicate that political preferences are highly correlated with the DIT and they suggest that morally mature people tend to favor liberal political ideology. However, since the DIT is based on Kohlberg's (1984) approach to morality, this suggests that there should be a positive relationship between the DIT score and morality.

Scoring high on either moral reasoning or moral excellence suggests a propensity to exhibit moral behaviors. This is significant since as the two are basically unrelated, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the combination of the two would be more predictive of moral behavior than either one of them alone, and better represent the larger construct of moral maturity.

Future research investigating the effects of both the DIT and BDS within business and other organizational settings would prove beneficial in adding to the understanding of the relative contribution of each in predicting moral behavior.

Another future research consideration is the addition of organizational outcome measures that could be related to measures of moral reasoning (DIT) and moral excellence (BDS). Including them in future research would help in better understanding the utility of the BDS and DIT in predicting desirable and undesirable organizational outcomes. Inclusion of integrity tests would also add to our knowledge of the relationship of integrity tests to the BDS and DIT. That is, if they share similar dimensions and the extent each predicts organizational outcomes both positive and negative.

The importance of research such as this is it provides clarity between some of the many constructs that get talked about with respect to character. Understanding the relationships between these constructs or lack of relationship helps us to better clarify what is meant by morality, character and their relationship to other constructs like leadership.

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A Review of "Hal Moore on Leadership: Winning When Outgunned and Outmanned"

Lt Gen Harold G. Moore, USA, Retired and Mike Guardia, Maple Grove, MN: Magnum Books (2017)

Review By: George Warton, Ph.D.

> "There is always one more thing you can do to influence a situation in your favor. And after that, one more thing."
>
> Hal Moore Lt Gen, US Army, Ret.

Pointed, practical, and professional, Lieutenant General (Ret.) Hal Moore offers principles on leadership in a refreshing yet seasoned manner. Moore, who led men in the jungles of Vietnam and is well known for his exploits as a battalion commander in the Ia Drang Valley, schools the reader with focused commentary on the "how to" of leading within any context, not just a military environment. His thoughts are practical without a lot of theoretical underpinnings–they are implied. He speaks from experience, which he shares from his atypical military career. The book is a biography folded into a primer on leadership lessons learned. From childhood to retirement, his leadership insights spring from a professional ethos developed through his personal journey demanding the reader's attention and careful consideration.

Hal Moore began his lifelong education in leadership development under the careful tutelage of his parents, to include traveling through a culture defined by the poverty of the great depression. Moore explains the basis of his leadership style came through mom and dad's example with their expectation of exemplary comportment within any context. This experience led him to conclude that, "The discipline that makes an effective leader begins in the home...the best leaders strive to create a 'family environment' within their organization." Moore's people were always upper most in his mind next to the mission.

Moore's journey took him through a tough application process for West Point, occupation duty in post-war Japan, platoon and company commander roles while still a lieutenant, along with numerous other assignments. Moore provides an entertaining historical tour of significant life events coupled with periodic reviews of lessons learned. These lessons interlace with personal experiences bringing basis to the ideas Moore brings forth. Most of the observations are intuitive yet some are surprisingly profound.

Four principles of leadership form the framework of Hal Moore's practical leader insights and they provide one of the threads running through the book.

1. "Three strikes and you're not out." Always be self-confident with a positive outlook. Uncertainty and defeatist attitudes are leadership death knells. Leaders, though uncertain of exact outcomes, must never allow an air of uncertainty to be part of their persona. The positive attitude and outlook of "the boss" keeps the organization functioning well despite setbacks.

2. "There is always one more thing you can do to influence a situation in your favor. And after that, one more thing."

3. "When nothing is wrong, there's nothing wrong – EXCEPT there's nothing wrong. That's when a leader has to be the most alert."

4. "Trust your instincts."

These four principles comprise the main threads running through the narrative. That is, despite working diligently, knowing your people, and staying focused on the objective, the day will arrive when you are "outgunned and outmanned." This is no excuse for lying down and giving up. Rather, "Even in the midst of

defeat, carry yourself professionally and maintain your discipline." Setbacks are no excuse for not pursuing success. Stay calm in the melee and never consider defeat because when you do, "you have already lost." Not surprisingly this philosophy translated to Moore's home life to include his two sons. Despite their young age when stationed with father in Oslo, they were tasked with some fairly strenuous responsibilities. Dad had no doubts and neither did they. "The bottom line is that Dad instilled the self-confidence and will to win in us at an early age – just as he did in every unit he commanded." One can easily see Moore's four principles supporting what to do when outgunned and outmanned.

Another essential thread noted in the historical narrative that parallels his four leadership principles but not specifically identified as an overarching construct, is what Moore considers the key center of gravity: People. Moore reveled in flipping a demoralized unit that had suffered under toxic leadership. He knew in every unit that when he challenged his people, inspired them, worked them, and trusted them, they would rise to the occasion. Along with this he made sure they got the credit for their exceptional work, never taking ownership for work accomplished by others. In the midst of the unit revitalization he came to understand: "No job is ever 'beneath' you. In whatever you do, do it to the best of your abilities." He spent hours checking up on everything in order to make sure people had what they needed to get the job done. His presence also helped his troopers know that their work was essential and thereby worth their time and worth pursuing a job well done. He set the example with intermediate supervisors and NCOs by asking them how to get the job done. Moore advocates spending time frequently in their presence engaging the battle or mission. Troops and employees rally to a boss who knows what it is like to work in the trenches. Finally, Moore understood the nature of human relationships when forced to operate under extreme conditions. "Soldiers in battle fight, kill,

and die primarily for each other." Never underestimate the nature of relationships, good or bad, within organizations as they will bring about success or defeat.

Moore's four main principles and key center of gravity are almost simplistic yet their effectual application requires some deep soul searching and candid self-critique. The book is a historical review of Moore's life, together with leadership lessons learned that spring from the narrative. If you are looking for a book by Maxwell, McGregor, or Yukl, prepare to be disappointed. Yet after reading a treatise on leadership by one of these recognized experts in the field, Moore's book becomes a logical expression of the theoretical works of these authors. Moore does not reference sources outside his own experience base, and as a result his principles are outworking's of a professional warrior ethos developed over decades. The principles he brings forth are timeless.

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BOOK REVIEW

A Review of "Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts."

Brené Brown, New York, NY: Random House (2018)

Review By: Kimberly Dickman. Ph.D.

> "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again... who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly."
>
> Theodore Roosevelt

In this new book, Brené Brown applies her arsenal of vulnerability research toward leadership and gives a practical, 'no-BS,' actionable book about what it takes to be a daring leader. She holds no punches while using data and the occasional swear word to answer the question: What about the way people are leading today needs to change in order for leaders to be successful in a complex, rapidly changing environment where we're faced with seemingly intractable challenges and an insatiable demand for innovation? One answer emerges from her research: We need braver leaders and more courageous cultures (p. 6). Brown summarizes the quote by Theodore Roosevelt into three lessons that she expands on throughout the book. First, if we are brave enough, often enough, we will fall (p. 19). Second, vulnerability is the emotion we experience during times of uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure. It is not winning or losing, it's having the courage to show up when you can't control the outcome (p. 20). Third, unless a person is in the arena and willing to "take a beating" on occasion, we should not be interested in or open to their feedback (p. 20).

Brené Brown, Ph.D., LMSW is a research professor at the University of Houston where she holds the Huffington Foundation-Brené Brown Endowed Chair at The Graduate College of Social Work. She has spent the last two

decades studying courage, vulnerability, shame and empathy. She is the author of five #1 *New York Times* bestsellers: *The Gifts of Imperfection, Daring Greatly, Rising Strong, Braving the Wilderness*, and *Dare to Lead*, the last of which was released in October 2018 and is the culmination of a seven-year study on the future of leadership. Brown spoke to the 2019 National Character and Leadership Symposium at the Air Force Academy and is known for producing one of the most highly watched presentations in TED Talk history.

The first part of the book explains the need for leaders to rumble with vulnerability. She begins by presenting the six myths of vulnerability, the first being that vulnerability is weakness. In 2014, presenting in front of hundreds of military Special Forces soldiers Brown asks: Can you give me a single example of courage that you've witnessed in another soldier or experienced in your own life that did not require experiencing vulnerability? After a long silence one man spoke up stating that courage does require managing massive vulnerability (p. 23). Leaders must rumble with vulnerability which means they have to build an environment based on trust and honesty to allow for safety when there needs to be a rumble (p. 37). Brown defines a rumble as a discussion, conversation or meeting where we stay curious and generous to stick with the messy middle or problem identification and solving where we own our parts and listen with the same passion with which we want to be heard (p. 10). She specifically lays out courage as a collection of four skill sets supported by twenty-eight behaviors. Brown provides simple and easy to remember phrases such as *"clear is kind," "putting down the armor," and "courage is contagious,"* all of which are supported by actionable skills development. They are, however, anything but simple and easy. Leaders are required to commit to doing bold work, have tough conversations and show up with whole hearts. In Brown's words, they must embrace the suck (p. 2).

The second part of the book describes the necessity of building trust and living values. Continuing with the arena analogy of Roosevelt's quote, daring leaders leave their weapons and armor at the arena door but must stand in the arena with a clarity of values (p. 186). Brené Brown takes readers through a process to determine the two core values that should be so infallible, so precise, clear and unassailable that they don't feel like a choice but, in hard moments we allow leaders to automatically choose what's right over what's easy (p. 189). Leaders must practice these values and not just profess them, and when leaders live into their values they are never silent about hard things (p. 194). The author steps readers through a BRAVING inventory that she calls the first rumble tool that is needed for daring leaders.

Brown uses several military examples throughout the book and has a few pages written by an Air Force Colonel who describes how the authors work has impacted her command. The shared research finding of this book does not fall far from the original tenets and intent of military leadership. The Air Force's first manual on leadership, Air Force Manual 35-15 written in 1948, states the tenets of leadership as mercy, kindness, and belonging, and love. Specifically, feelings were referred to 147 times; creating a sense of belonging, 21 times. The manual goes on to describe the fear of combat, the fear of exclusion, the fear of life in the profession of arms 35 times, and love, yes, the word love was in this military leadership manual, 13 times to be exact (p. 65). In searching the Air Force's most current manual on leadership, Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1: *Leadership and Force Development* written in 2012, these terms do not show up at all.

Brown develops an argument and backs it up with research that supports a quote from Minouche Shafik, the director of the London School of Economics and Political Science, who states, "In the past, jobs were about muscle, now they're about brains, but in the future they'll be about the heart" (p. 71). *Dare to Lead*

has a great deal to offer about courage and vulnerability in the context of effective leadership. I hope you take the time to read it.

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REFLECTIONS:

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UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE ACADEMY

JCLD@usafa.edu

@USAFA_CCLD