

EDITORS' NOTES

The two of us have spent most of our adult lives in and around community colleges. Over this time, we have been a part of the evolution of the community college as it has grown and responded, taking its place now as a powerful force for the advancement of American society. We are persuaded that community colleges are a vital and permanent, if underappreciated, part of higher education in our country.

We are equally persuaded that community colleges, like any other type of complex organization, must have competent leadership to be effective. We have come to understand that leadership in higher education is distributed: it is exercised by members of the faculty, by key members of the support staff, and certainly by administrators and members of governing boards. (We note as well the importance of student leadership; however, we leave to other, more qualified, writers the task of discussing student leadership development issues.)

As we begin the twenty-first century, we note that community college leadership has never been more complex and challenging. The distributed nature of leadership is inherently complicated. Add to this the intricacies of serving new populations and local needs, state law and coordinating agencies, state and local budgeting systems, unstable financial environments, collective bargaining, capital construction bonding, federal labor law, instructional and administrative technology, calls for accountability including the assessment of learning, articulation with high schools and baccalaureate institutions—pew! There is a lot to understand.

We have had the opportunity to work with a large number of colleges—and college leaders—for an extended number of years. Even as the community college has exhibited its importance as never before, we must also observe that the current state of community college leadership is not good. Indeed, we would join with those who have labeled the current situation a “crisis.” The evidence of this circumstance can be found in the reluctance of faculty to assume faculty leadership roles; the limited number of faculty members and others who move into junior administrative roles; the increasing tendency to seek leadership talent from outside the academy in some areas of specialty (for example, personnel, finance, information technology); the reduction in the size (and quality) of candidate pools drawn to middle management and senior executive positions; the difficulty frequently experienced in drawing women and persons of color into these pools; the limited access most leaders and could-be leaders have to high-quality, sustained opportunities for development; and the typically poor sets of support systems and local institutional incentives and policies that would encourage leadership development.

We have been increasingly concerned about this state of affairs and, for the past several years, have been working with others to better understand the problem and develop responses to it. That is what this volume is about. We are joined in this project by an accomplished set of scholars and practitioners similarly concerned about community college leadership and its development.

James G. March, professor emeritus at Stanford University and one of the most respected thinkers about organizational phenomena, and Stephen S. Weiner, a distinguished higher education leader and former member of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, set the stage. They discuss the nature of leadership in higher education generally and community colleges in particular. They not only note the dynamism and complexity of leading in the twenty-first century but further illuminate changes in the community college environment that make for extraordinary claims on leaders. Central to their concerns is the notion of civility, and they propose some simple steps to advance it.

George Boggs, president of the American Association of Community Colleges, then uses information collected by his organization and others to provide a national perspective. He articulates a concern for the flow of leaders based on expansion of the demand for community college services just as a wave of retirements in the corps of leaders will surge. The development of leaders is advanced by an exposition of the skills that contemporary leaders must master and the policies that colleges might foster to encourage this activity.

Joanne Cooper, professor of education at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, and president of the university's academic senate, and Louise Pagotto, assistant dean of arts and sciences at Kapi'olani Community College, remind us of the importance of faculty leadership and that almost all who move into administrative roles came from the faculty ranks. The authors have initiated and are deeply involved with the implementation of an innovative faculty leadership development program. They discuss its features and its performance.

Chris McCarthy, recently appointed president of Napa Valley College, reflects on the roles of faculty and administrative leader and the peculiarities of making the transition from one to the other. As one who has made his way up this classic path, the author shares important observations, emphasizing with appropriate humor the interpersonal dimensions of the journey. He also provides a most insightful list of personal attributes that would benefit anyone moving into middle management.

George B. Vaughan, long-time community college leader and now scholar at North Carolina State University at Raleigh, and Iris M. Weisman, associate professor of higher education at Antioch University McGregor in Yellow Springs, Ohio, focus on the preparation of community college presidents. Noting the unique features of the presidency and the increasing problems evident in securing appropriate candidates for this role, they urge

individual college campuses to accept the responsibility for preparing future presidents. They call on boards of trustees and presidents to design, recruit for, and carry out community college-based programs and provide details on how this might be done.

Betty Duvall, professor of higher education and coordinator of the community college leadership program at Oregon State University in Corvallis, describes university-based community college leadership programs. She confirms the centrality of Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs and provides information about national availability. Changes to these programs that would make them more appropriate for aspiring leaders in the twenty-first century are discussed. Most significantly, Duvall identifies the limitations of the university as a provider of leadership development services for aspiring community college leaders.

Cristina Chiriboga, currently vice president of instruction at Cuyamaca College in El Cajon, California, and completing her doctoral studies, provides a careful examination of a leadership development program offered by a statewide professional association. Data gathered from both presenters and participants in the program were analyzed to arrive at a profile of its strengths and weaknesses. Case studies of this sort are few in number and sorely needed.

Constance M. Carroll, president of San Diego Mesa College and long prominent in the area of leadership development, and Martha G. Romero, professor of higher education at Claremont Graduate University in California and director of its Community College Leadership Development Initiatives, review the origins, design, and implementation of the program. This different approach to leadership development weds an ambitious range of intentions with a large and various group of providers. The early successes of this effort suggest a new, more diversified, regionally oriented basis for serving emerging and established leaders.

Drawing on the work of all of our colleagues, the two of us share our concerns and ideas. We believe that the challenge of providing development programming for community college leaders is among the two or three most important issues facing the enterprise. To overcome this crisis will require departures from the patterns with which we have grown comfortable, new thinking, and sustained effort. But meeting the challenge provides the promise of well-prepared and motivated leaders for community colleges far into the new century. Concluding this volume, Karen Kim in Chapter Ten provides program descriptions and contact information for readers interested in obtaining more in-depth information about programs for community college leadership development.

You will note that the authors of this volume embody a wealth of practical or scholarly experience or both. This mixture was intentional. We badly need both of these perspectives in the development and execution of top-notch leadership development programming. They lead to a melding of

thoughtfulness, creativity, and practicality that will bring the progress we need. We hope you find the articles in this issue stimulating and useful, and if we can be of service, we hope you will contact us directly.

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