AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF HOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY INNOVATORS IN DEVELOPMENTAL READING AND WRITING EXPERIENCED ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis was to investigate individual experiences of community college English faculty who increased student success at scale through developmental reading and writing innovations in order to understand the faculty’s perceptions of academic leadership during the process of innovation. Knowledge generated is expected to inform preparation of community college academic leaders who wish to enhance student success through innovation. Numerous studies have investigated the changing requirements for community college leadership, demonstrating increased need for a holistic set of skills which supports innovation aimed at increasing persistence, retention, and graduation rates in the context of increased accountability and fiscal restraint (Cole, Dumford, & Laird, 2018; Gambino, 2017; Hassan, Dellow, & Jackson, 2009; McNair, Duree, & Ebbers, 2011). Data collected through nine, one-to-one, semi-structured interviews with community college faculty in the Northeast who had participated in developing innovations in developmental reading and writing which increased student success at scale over the past five years led to findings covering three superordinate themes related to leading academic innovation. These themes include catalyzing innovation, supporting innovation, and empowering the innovation hub – the community of practice (Wenger, 2002). The study revealed that faculty perceive external and internal catalysts to instructional innovation. The study also found that faculty recognize academic leaders who demonstrate leadership activities associated with all four frames of the Bolman and Deal Leadership Framework (1991, 2017) while supporting faculty innovation efforts. In addition, faculty described the community of practice (Wenger, 2002) as the instructional innovation hub, with particular leadership activities associated with empowering the community of practice.
Keywords: Community college academic innovation, community college leadership, community college innovation, community college instructional innovation, developmental reading and writing, developmental education, community college student success, interpretative phenomenological analysis, perception, corequisite delivery.
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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family: my husband, Bill, our daughter, Marina, and our sons, Jake and Mark. Wherever we are together, I am home.
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Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis was to investigate perceptions of community college English faculty who increased student success at scale through innovation in delivery of developmental reading and writing courses in order to understand the faculty’s perceptions of academic leadership during the process of innovation. Student success at scale was defined as an institutional increase in the percentage of students who completed a college-level English composition course compared to the percentage who dropped, failed, or withdrew. Knowledge generated is expected to inform senior, community college leadership practices which seek to stimulate ongoing academic innovation to advance the completion agenda. This study employed interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to illustrate the phenomenon under study.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the research related to community college leadership which supports academic innovation, particularly with regard to developmental reading and writing, to provide context and background to the study. The rationale and significance of the study is discussed next, drawing connections to potential beneficiaries of the work. The problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, and related definitions are presented to focus and ground the study. Finally, the theoretical framework that serves as a lens for the study is introduced and explained.

**Statement of the Problem**

Today’s community colleges are increasingly asked to do more with less. In particular, the community college completion agenda has dominated discourse while rising costs and debt for students have worked against efforts to increase degree attainment in the sector, with low-income
and minority students most adversely affected (Kramer, Holcomb & Ketchen, 2018; Osterman, 2015; Wilson et al., 2018). As a result, numerous studies have investigated the changing requirements for community college leadership, demonstrating increased need for a holistic set of skills which supports innovation aimed at increasing persistence, retention, and graduation rates in the context of increased accountability and fiscal restraint (Cole, Dumford, & Laird, 2018; Gambino, 2017; Hassan, Dellow, & Jackson, 2009; McNair, Duree, & Ebbers, 2011).

However, the focus of existing research has been primarily on the role of the community college presidency. Little is known about the role of academic leadership in fostering innovations which demonstrate measurable impact on the key completion challenges facing community colleges today. Among the categories receiving particular calls for innovation is developmental education which includes course sequences in developmental reading, writing, and math (Osterman, 2015). Here, many students, particularly students of color, fail to persist through completion of developmental sequences impeding degree and certificate attainment (Bettinger & Long, 2005; de Lourdes Villarreal & Garcia, 2016). In response to numerous calls for innovation in this category during the first decade of this millennium, community college faculty have begun to innovate in developmental education in a variety of ways with measurable differences in outcomes beginning to emerge (Wilson et al., 2018). Understanding faculty perceptions of leadership effects on this effort, in this case, specific to developmental reading and writing, may facilitate further innovation in community college developmental education.

Therefore, this study sought to explore the perceptions of community college faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing concerning academic leadership.
Significance of the Research Question

The rationale for this study was the researcher’s interest in expanding inquiry on leadership which fosters instructional innovation in the community college sector in pursuit of improved student success. Currently, community college graduation rates are improving slightly following nationwide efforts focusing on student success, with 25.4% of first time, full-time students completing a degree or certificate within 150% of time, up from 21.1% for the recession cohort (Juszkiewicz, 2017). With community colleges accounting for 43% of postsecondary enrollment, completion rates significantly impact the U.S. economy (Osterman, 2015).

The nature of academic leadership in the community college setting is changing as institutions strive to balance demand for innovation which improves student success with a reduction in government subsidies. Among the innovations attempted in the community college sector since the beginning of the new millennium is course redesign in developmental sequences which attempts to hasten time to graduation and lower instructional costs while improving student learning outcomes (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015; Volchok, 2018; Wilson et al., 2018). Therefore, the topic of this analysis was the manner in which community college faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing perceived academic leadership during this critical process of innovation. The goal was to generate insights which can inform development of academic leaders to advance academic innovation in the community college sector.

Research Problem and Research Question

There is growing pressure on community colleges to increase graduation rates without sacrificing quality of the educational environment (Gambino, 2017; Osterman, 2015). The “Completion Agenda” President Obama established for higher education was followed by a pledge from the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of
Community College Trustees to increase the number of graduates by 50% by 2020 (Clagett, 2013). Many believe community colleges are failing in this effort (Bailey et al., 2015; Tutty & Ratliff, 2012). The slow-paced, historical nature of change within these institutions can no longer withstand competitive pressures from new, for-profit players who are demonstrating nimble responsiveness to the lifestyle needs of adult learners and enjoying diminishing regulation under the Trump administration (“Decline and Fall,” 2017; Osterman, 2015; Shults, 2008). Under these conditions, academic leaders are hard-pressed to lead innovation efforts for the purpose of improving completion due to financial pressures on both students and institutions. Yet Osterman (2015) calls upon community colleges to overcome the historical delay between execution of an innovation and examination and implementation of useful findings. Academic leaders are often regarded as holding as much importance as community college presidents in terms of the academic affairs of the college (Anderson, Murray, & Olivarez, 2002). Though the quest for best practices is ongoing, Osterman (2015) argues that enough is known about good practices to move forward with community college reform. Thus, the success of the community college system will rest on how well academic deans lead their units (Sypawka, Mallett, & McFadden, 2010). Focus of existing leadership research on the community college sector has primarily been on the role of the presidency. Community college academic leaders will benefit from an exploration of how leaders associated with academic innovation are perceived by faculty innovators in the context of this process. The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis, therefore, was to investigate individual experiences of community college English faculty who increased student success at scale through developmental reading and writing innovations in order to understand the faculty’s perceptions of academic leadership during the process of innovation.
**Research Question**

How do community college faculty members who have created and scaled innovations to improve student success in developmental reading and writing perceive academic leadership during the process of innovating?

**Definition of Key Terminology**

For the purpose of this study, the following terms were defined as follows:

**Term 1-** Academic Leader: a community college president, provost, academic dean, department chair, or program coordinator who had responsibility for academic affairs related to developmental reading and writing.

**Term 2-** Developmental Reading and Writing: courses below college level which are designed to remediate students who do not place into college-level English composition courses.

**Term 3-** Increase in Student Success at Scale: an institutional increase in the percentage of students who completed a college-level English composition course compared to the percentage who dropped, failed, or withdrew.

**Term 4-** Innovation in Developmental Reading or Writing: a change in pedagogy, curriculum, or instructional delivery which resulted in an increase in the percentage of students who successfully completed a college-level English composition course compared to the percentage who dropped, failed, or withdrew, or a change which resulted in a shorter length of time for students in the developmental reading and writing sequence while the percentage of students who passed English Composition I was at least maintained.

**Term 5-** Process of Innovation: a process which commenced with the moment of recognition by faculty innovators that a need existed which required an innovation, and the activities involved in responding to the need until a change in student success at scale was achieved.
The following section of this chapter will include a description and discussion of the theoretical framework which served as the lens for this study.


Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Multi-Frame Leadership Theory and Organizational Change Model has had extensive acceptance in the field of educational research and has informed leadership development programs in the community college sector. However, it does not appear that the framework has been used to investigate phenomena specifically associated with academic innovation in the community college sector. For this reason, a qualitative study employing interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) utilizing the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework could advance the investigation of leadership which supports organizational change and innovation in this important subsector of higher education. Schults (2008) suggests major restructuring is required to transform top-down, bureaucratic institutions to decentralized models which can support innovation. To date, published leadership studies which have utilized the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework in the community college sector have employed primarily quantitative approaches via the Bolman and Deal Four-Frame Leadership Orientation Survey instrument. Qualitative investigations using IPA to elicit insights regarding faculty innovators’ perceptions of academic leadership during the important process of developing and bringing innovations to scale which advance student success do not seem to have occurred. This investigation, therefore, was designed to inform preparation of academic leaders who can advance the innovation goals inherent in meeting the comprehensive community college mission in the face of competing priorities. Specifically, the study can help community college boards of trustees, presidents, and academic leaders understand faculty innovation processes and provide leadership which facilitates these processes.
The nature of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework, its connections to this research strategy, its critics, and a rationale for using the framework in this context will be discussed next.


The research and writing collaboration of Bolman and Deal and the resulting Four-Frame Leadership Theory have influenced leadership research and training extensively for the past three decades. Currently, more than fifty dissertations have applied the Four-Frame Leadership model as a framework, with most falling within the realm of educational research (Bolman, 2017). The historical trajectory and an overview of the four frames contained within the model will be reviewed next.

**Historical trajectory.** The Four-Frame Leadership Theory emerged somewhat accidentally as scholars Lee Bolman and Terrance Deal sought to integrate their perspectives of organizational management and leadership while team-teaching a course at Harvard Business School during the late 1980s (Bolman & Deal, 1991). While attempting to process the implications of sweeping changes in the auto industry during the 1980s and 1990s, the two professors realized that their individual lenses caused each to approach the explanation of leadership style and decision-making differently (Bolman & Deal, 1991). Based on this insight, the Four Frame Leadership Model was inspired with the intention of operationalizing a model which would explain how leaders approach their worlds (Bolman & Deal, 1991). As such, the Bolman and Deal Four-Frame Leadership Model was originally developed for explanation of leadership orientations in the private sector and bridges the disciplines of organizational management and leadership.
At the same time, research in higher education leadership was beginning to demonstrate that hierarchical leadership models borrowed from organizational management theory were ineffective in the participatory governance environment of higher education (Kezar, 2000). Researchers began to conduct new investigations examining leadership from an identity perspective to determine whether different leadership lenses influence perspective and decision-making (Kezar, 2000). Bolman and Deal’s Four-Frame Leadership Model became a framework for numerous investigations in primary, secondary, and post-secondary research during the 1990s and continues to serve in this capacity today.

**Seminal authors.** The Four-Frame Leadership Model was developed in collaboration by Professors Lee Bolman and Terrance Deal who came together at Harvard University as faculty members collaborating on leadership instruction and research, each employing different lenses. Dr. Bolman’s disciplinary focus is leadership studies with an organizational studies perspective (Bolman, 2017). He is a Professor of Leadership and holds the Marion Bloch/Missouri Chair in Leadership at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (Bolman, 2017). Previously, he taught at Carnegie Mellon and for over twenty years at Harvard University (Bolman, 2017). Dr. Bolman holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Studies from Yale University, and has authored or coauthored more than twenty books on leadership, most with a particular focus on nonprofit leadership and framing theory (Bolman, 2017).

Terrence E. Deal is the recently retired, Irving R. Melbo Professor at the University of Southern California’s Rossier School of Education (School Improvement Network, 2017). Dr. Deal earned his Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Sociology from Stanford University and has taught at Harvard, Stanford, and Vanderbilt (School Improvement Network, 2018). He has authored over 20 books and 100 articles with a focus on leadership, particularly as it is
applied to educational settings (School Improvement Network, 2018). He has extensive experience as a teacher, principal, and administrator (School Improvement Network, 2018).

**Multi-Frame leadership theory tenets.** The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Multi-Frame Leadership model describes four frames through which leaders perceive challenges and opportunities and act upon their environments. The first frame described is the Structural Frame in which leaders act as social architects and utilize analytical and design skills to create plans to achieve goals (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). Highly structured organizations are characterized by clear strategy, focus on mission, defined roles, and top-down coordination of integrated units in pursuit of established, common goals (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). The Structural Frame emphasizes a rational approach to maximizing efficiency (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). The second frame described is the Human Resources Frame. Here, the leader acts as a catalyst or servant, supporting or empowering individuals in their assigned roles (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). The Human Resources Frame recognizes mutual need between organizations and employees (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). For this reason, organizations strive to maximize the employees’ ability to find meaning, expression, and satisfaction in their work in order to derive talent and energy which benefits the organization (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). The third frame is the Political Frame. In this context, the leader acts as an advocate to ensure adequate support for initiatives in an environment of scarce resources, networking and building coalitions to secure power (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). In the Political Frame, a leader establishes agendas, maps the political terrain, and negotiates while considering ethical and moral dilemmas presented within the organizational arena (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). The Political Frame acknowledges that leaders act as competitors who may experience conflict as power and scarce resources are sought in pursuit of the agenda. Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) emphasize that
despite the discomfort the notion of politics typically conjures within organizational settings, constructive politics is possible and necessary in order to create just and efficient institutions (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). The final frame is the Symbolic Frame in which leaders assume that the environment is chaotic, and meaning needs to be attached through myth and symbols to create a motivating culture and sense of mission (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) describe symbols as the building blocks of organizational culture. Within organizational contexts, meaningful symbols are found in the form of rituals, heroes and heroines, ceremony, and specialized language that foster passion and purpose.

Next, criticisms of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework will be considered and alternative theoretical frameworks for this study will be discussed to build rationale for selection of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework as a lens for this analysis.

**Criticisms of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Theory**

Given the pervasive pressures on the higher education sector to respond to demands for innovation, particularly within the community college sector, significant investigation has been undertaken to explore effective leadership approaches which support change. Although the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework has been used in dozens of doctoral investigations, the framework has been subject to some criticism. For example, the decreasing applicability of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework to the higher education setting was addressed by Lueddeke (1999) who questioned whether the anthropological and sociological influences of the framework, particularly as reflected in the Symbolic Frame, were as pertinent to higher education in the decades since its inception given the trend toward more corporatized leadership strategies now employed in this setting. The importance of sociological principles in
higher education organizational behavior is particularly relevant to the influence of shared governance; however, this influence is diminishing given lower participation in governance caused by the increasing use of adjunct instructors and strengthening allegiance to disciplines, rather than institutions (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework has been used to describe structural, hierarchical, and bureaucratic theories of organizational behavior in the past, as well (Kezar & Eckel, 2004). At the same time, leadership studies in higher education have demonstrated that hierarchical leadership influences are less effective in the shared governance environment of higher education (Kezar, 2000). Finally, Taylor & De Lourdes Machado (2006) have questioned whether the emphasis on strategic planning inherent in the Structural Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework creates an inflexible condition which prevents adaptability and creative, strategic thinking from occurring during the implementation phases of strategic initiatives. Other frameworks borrowed from both leadership and innovation could have been used, arguably, in this study to accomplish the research objectives. These theories will be discussed next in preparation for building a rationale for the use of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework in this context.

**Complexity leadership theory.** One of the newest leadership frameworks developed in response to the unique demands of the Knowledge Era is Complexity Leadership Theory (Clark, 2013; Lichtenstein & Plowman, 2009; Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). This model has been described as an effective framework which recognizes dynamic interactions between all individuals which can be facilitated by management of the environment during a period of disequilibrium to enable emergence of creative solutions, punctuated by amplifying actions and self-organization, and finally made more permanent by stabilizing feedback on the part of leadership. This theory provides counter-argument to the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017)
Framework by suggesting that it is not leadership’s lens which influences innovation, but more so the leader’s ability to shape the environment to facilitate many, dynamic, adaptive interactions between peers which result in innovation. This is especially important as the bureaucratic framework, which informed leadership theory during the industrial age, leading to rational, structural, goal-oriented, leadership approaches, has been said to be inappropriate during the Knowledge Era as it suppresses informal network dynamics which stimulate innovation (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Complexity Leadership Theory is appealing in this context as it recognizes the speed of information exchange in the Knowledge Era. Yet no published studies utilizing this leadership framework can be found as applied to the community college setting. In addition, the sector’s leadership development programs and current language rely heavily on Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), which allows this new leadership research on developmental education innovation to be situated and applied more readily.

**Transformational leadership theory.** Another theory which has received attention for its implications for innovation is Transformational Leadership Theory, as investigated by Shin, Seo, Shapiro, and Taylor (2015). This behavior-based theory suggests leaders provide sufficient and sincere information and exhibit transformational leadership behaviors associated with informational justice and inspiration during change in order to sustain employees’ initial commitment to change. This perspective emphasizes the importance of affective relationships in sustaining change among employees which may lend itself to the nuances made possible through IPA research. However, the theory represents a singular focus on leadership behavior rather than the multi-dimensional perspective presented by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017). IPA as a research methodology has been influenced by Husserl’s work in transcendental phenomenology and philosophy which focused on the nature of experience, the study of things
as they are, and which relied on the use of data reduction, or bracketing, to describe themes and essences which are free of suppositions and related to the phenomena (Dowling, 2007; Larkin, Eatough, & Osborn, 2011). Given the breadth of themes made possible through the analysis of rich descriptions in IPA, it is believed that the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four Frame Leadership Model may provide a more inclusive framework for identifying leadership perceptions particularly associated with fostering innovations.

**Diffusion of innovation theory.** Another potential framework which could have been considered in this study is the Diffusion of Innovation framework as proposed by Rogers (1983). In this framework, they key elements influencing the rate and acceptance of innovations are explored, including communication channels, time, and the social system, which provides context (Rogers, 1983). The framework has been used extensively in higher education research to investigate the adoption of new technologies by higher education students or faculty (Al-Qirim, 2016; Merhi, 2015). However, the theory places less emphasis on the roles and processes of innovators, themselves. As such, it is valuable in examining the phenomena which affect product or service adoption, but not the phenomena which influence innovators to persist through the stages required to bring innovations to scale.

**Change macro framework.** Advanced by Kezar (2014), the Change Macro Framework attempts to describe how organizations manage intentional, rather than adaptive or evolutionary change. The approach analyzes the content and process of change initiatives and has been applied successfully to a qualitative research investigation in the community college sector on the role of academic administrators in affecting resource prioritization for male, Latino programming (Rodriguez, Garbee, Miller, & Saenz, 2018). Of the alternative frameworks which could be used for this researcher’s investigation, the Change Macro Framework is perhaps the
most compelling because it was created specifically for higher education by a contemporary, prolific researcher on higher education change processes (Mayer, 2015). The challenge with applying this framework to an IPA approach investigating faculty perceptions of academic leadership during innovation in developmental education is the absence of peer-reviewed research using the Change Macro Framework at this time.

An examination of alternative theories to the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Model is helpful in revealing potential limitations of the framework as well as the framework’s impact on situating new research within the realm of higher education leadership research. This discussion demonstrates that while alternative leadership and innovation frameworks exist which are worthy of consideration, none provides a multi-factor context for examining the relationship between the faculty innovator and academic leader, accompanied by the opportunity to frame findings within the context of other leadership research within the community college sector. Next, a rationale for application of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework in this research investigation will be reviewed.


Innovation in the community college sector has been described as a critical strategy for enabling these institutions to rise to the competing demands of fiscal restraint with improved outcomes (Caton & Mistriner, 2016; Cejda & Leist, 2006; Gambino, 2017). Developmental education has been identified as a significant barrier to increasing student success outcomes in the community college sector (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010). Given these factors, it could be expected that investigation of leadership environments related to innovation in the developmental reading and writing pathways would be a high priority. Yet no published studies which focus on community college academic leadership as it relates to innovation in
developmental curriculum, pedagogy, and delivery exist in the literature at this time. Here, a rationale for the use of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework will be developed which demonstrates that current leadership preparation programs for prospective community college leaders rely on the framework, though little evidence currently connects the framework to academic innovation, much less innovation in developmental reading and writing, necessitating need for empirical investigation. In addition, usefulness of the framework in the context of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) will be demonstrated through examination of recent applications in higher education research.

**Situating the study within the context of community college leadership research.**

Given the complexity of the new environment in which community colleges currently operate, numerous leadership studies have been conducted utilizing the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Theory to investigate traits evident and desired among current community college leaders. For example, McArdle (2013) evaluated Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Model in the community college context in a multi-stage, quantitative and qualitative study which examined the frame orientation of the fourth generation of community college leaders. This study found that the majority of participants did not report the use of multi-framing leadership strategies when responding to their most critical leadership challenges (McArdle, 2013). Rather, community college presidents and their direct-report administrators were more likely to use single or paired-frame approaches grounded in Human Resources or Structural frames, as defined by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), particularly when building teams which would embrace innovation and prepare students to do the same in a changing world (McArdle, 2013).
Bolman and Deal’s (1984) Four-Frame Leadership Model was used again in a quantitative study targeted specifically to academic deans (Sypawka et al., 2010). Sypawka, Mallett, and McFadden (2010) validated a past study by Yim (2003) which demonstrated that the Human Resource frame was most used by academic deans, followed by the Structural Frame. Conversely, Sypawka et al. (2010) report that academic deans evidencing use of the Structural frame were more oriented toward purpose and proficiency, utilizing data and analysis to stay focused on the bottom line and to hold people accountable for results. The study suggests that there is opportunity to elevate the awareness of multi-frame leadership approaches in order to strengthen leadership development efforts among academic deans (Sypawka et al., 2010). It appears that viewing challenges through more than one frame is beneficial to leadership which enhances institutional focus on quantifiable goals and diagnostics.

The preferred leadership orientation was also evaluated by Clark and Lindahl (2014) among the population of academic department chairs in Educational Leadership or Administration programs at member colleges and universities of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA). Use of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Leadership Orientations Survey occurred again, and descriptive and inferential statistics were used to report findings. Once again, a strong, dominant orientation associated with the Human Resource frame emerged, with the Structural frame reported as the second of preference among the department chairs.

The impact of leadership studies utilizing the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework in the community college sector can be seen in the recently published American Association of Community Colleges Core Leadership Competencies (AACC, 2017). All four frames of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) leadership framework are evident in the rubrics of competencies for
developing and advanced, community college leaders which include: organizational strategy, fiscal management, communication, collaboration, and advocacy, though the Symbolic Frame is not addressed on its own, but is embedded throughout the aforementioned competencies (AACC, 2017). The review of peer-reviewed research using the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework demonstrates that this lens has not been specifically applied to investigation of leadership related to innovation or developmental education innovation in recent years. Given the focus on examining leadership practices which stimulate innovation in the community college sector for this study, it appears necessary to include all tenets of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Model to examine which frame(s) are most influential in managing specifically for academic innovation. It seems that no prior qualitative investigations have focused exclusively on faculty perceptions of academic leadership to support innovation in the community college sector, yet numerous studies have called for more research in this area (Hassan et al., 2009; McNair et al., 2011). For this reason, this study included all four tenets of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) model to explore the research question.

Clearly, use of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Framework is valuable in situating this investigation in the context of community college leadership research and development. The study has the potential to provide insight into which frame(s) are perceived to be particularly influential in supporting faculty innovators who have developed new, scaled approaches in developmental reading and writing that positively impacted student success as no studies have been published on this topic in the past. Next, the appropriateness of this framework as used within the methodology of IPA will be examined.

**Benefits of Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework as applied to IPA.** Given the unique influence of faculty through academic freedom protections and shared governance
models, it can be argued that strategic planning, budgeting and change management efforts on the part of institutional administrators will find little success without the long-range commitment of faculty. Vials (2016) describes active, collective bargaining efforts in faculty unions throughout the United States who attempt to make grievable perceived assaults on academic freedom by high level administrators pressured in this accountability era. Descriptions by Sutin (2018) of an increasingly hostile, external environment, unattained institutional missions, and higher education curricula which are unfocused and less relevant depict the importance of engaging faculty in the process of innovation. Sutin (2018) emphasizes the requirement for higher education leaders to individually rejuvenate college faculty and staff through the complex process of higher education reform.

Given the nuanced nature of personal relationships, the application of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework to understanding faculty perceptions of academic leadership during the process of bringing developmental reading and writing innovations to scale seems particularly well-served by IPA methodology. Merleau-Ponty (1962) advanced the notion of situated meaning-making in relation to the temporal nature of experience and contributed the notion that sense-making occurs not only within the individual, but through the individual’s intentional, bodied engagement with the external world (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2011; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). Analyzing the rich descriptions of English faculty members concerning their perceptions of leadership while bringing developmental reading and writing innovations to scale provides an opportunity for this researcher to engage in deep reflection and analysis of the relative contribution of human relationships, planning structures, institutional symbols, and politics on the process of innovation as perceived by community college English faculty innovators. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012) argue that IPA is actually a double,
hermeneutic process as it engages the researcher in making sense of how individuals make sense of their experiences. Through the double hermeneutic, this researcher had an opportunity to deepen my own leadership capacity by gaining insight into how each of the four factors of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework are perceived to have influenced faculty innovation in developmental reading and writing.

**Application of Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework to Study**

The research question allowed for the application of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework as it clearly calls for a leadership framework with multiple prongs to shape the categories of codes generated during analysis following the inductive phase of coding. The question was stated broadly to ensure that leadership practices which relate to any of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) four frames could be captured in the analysis so that the dominant frame(s) as they related to leadership which supports faculty innovation could be identified. At the same time, because IPA methodology calls for researchers to remain in an inductive posture during analysis, the coding scheme for this study remained flexible, rather than fixed, throughout the analysis to allow other leadership considerations to emerge.

**Methods of Data Collection**

Analysis of leadership research in the community college sector which utilized this framework previously seemed to demonstrate effective implementation of a wide variety of methodologies. This study employed interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), collecting data in a semi-structured, one-to-one interview format among nine faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing. These innovators were identified through purposive, sampling techniques. First, institutions located in the Northeastern United States who had innovated at scale by advancing student success in developmental reading and writing, as defined
in this study, were identified through self-reported results found on publicly accessible websites. Then, English and/or Developmental Reading and Writing faculty members of qualifying institutions received an outreach email (Appendix B) which had been approved by the Northeastern University Institutional Research Board (Appendix A) inviting individuals to take part in one-to-one interviews if they had participated in bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing to scale which had impacted student success in the past five years. Email outreach efforts occurred from July, 2018 to September, 2018. Given the traditionally slow response rates of faculty to email outreach during the summer months, some faculty received a second and third follow-up email or phone call. Participants interested in granting interviews received an email response with the Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) attached and a request to schedule a specific date. All interviews occurred from August, 2018 to September, 2018. Eight interviews were conducted at participants’ campus offices, at their request, and one was conducted virtually via GoToMeeting, at the participant’s request. The Interview Protocol (Appendix D) was followed throughout the sixty minute sessions, and interviews were recorded with participants’ approval. All interviews were transcribed via Rev.com and provided to participants for approval within 48 hours. Respondents had up to two weeks to request changes. Anonymity of participants and their institutions was assured and maintained throughout the process, and pseudonyms have been used in reporting data and throughout analysis and discussion.

In considering a leadership study about how faculty innovators perceive academic leaders during the process of innovation as it applies to developmental reading and writing, the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Model has been helpful in identifying the frames which characterize effective leadership in the community college environment. In addition, the
framework presented an opportunity to examine the relative influence of one or more leadership frames over others as they apply to the important challenge of advancing innovation in today’s complex environment. At the same time, there was potential to overlook other factors which could have contributed to innovation which may not have been accounted for by this framework. Future research which could build upon the investigation described here could apply Bolman and Deal’s quantitative instrument, the Leadership Orientation Instrument-Self (LOI-Self), to a larger sample of community college faculty innovators in developmental innovation (Bolman, 2017). In addition, studies could explore whether academic leaders perceive themselves as drawing upon the same frames during academic innovation as faculty innovators. These insights could contribute to community college leadership development programs.

**Conclusion**

American community colleges find themselves at a challenging crossroad in which demand for improved student success outcomes outpaces resources. This chapter has described the nature of the problem of practice for community college academic administrators who attempt to support faculty innovation. The research question has been identified and the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) theoretical framework has been established for this interpretative phenomenological analysis conducted among community college faculty innovators of developmental reading and writing. In Chapter Two, related literature will be analyzed. In Chapter Three, research methodology will be described. Chapter Four will review study data and analysis, and Chapter Five will provide findings, limitations of the research, and applications to practice.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

In an environment in which community colleges are expected to do more with less, the ability of community college leaders to facilitate problem-solving, instructional innovations in order to meet improved educational outcomes is more critical than ever. This literature review will examine the external environment in which community colleges currently operate in order to demonstrate expansion to a comprehensive mission which requires increased instructional innovation to improve student success (Bailey et al., 2015; Caton & Mistroner, 2016). At the same time, the complexity of this challenge will be revealed given factors in the external environment which threaten the historic, open access mission (Gilroy, 2012). Next, research which identifies leadership attributes that support instructional innovation in the community college sector will be described, revealing a gap in the literature with regard to understanding market-responsive, multi-frame academic leadership that leads to instructional innovation. Finally, new reforms reaching scale in developmental reading and writing will be identified as a timely and high impact opportunity for investigating faculty perceptions of academic leadership which contributed to these instructional innovations.

New Complexities in Community College Environment Impacting and Necessitating Instructional Innovation

Community colleges have historically been recognized as a force for innovation in American higher education. In fact, community colleges have been at the cutting edge of change since their widespread establishment following World War II. Caton and Mistriner (2016) go so far as to say that for community colleges, “innovation is in their DNA” (p. 617). Today, these 1,000 institutions serving 6,000,000 students are faced with the objective of innovating at scale to improve student success and meeting national, economic growth objectives despite operating
with fewer resources and increasing demands for accountability (Kramer et al., 2018; O’Banion, Weldner, & Wilson, 2010, 2011; Osterman, 2015; Wilson et al., 2018).

Here, the comprehensive mission of community colleges as an economic force preparing American workers for in-demand occupations will be illustrated. In addition, the increasingly complex, fiscal environment will be described to portray resource challenges which impede progress toward faculty-led innovations which support improved student success. Finally, the impact on student access will be revealed as a consequence of the challenging forces facing the sector. Collectively, this review of contextual conditions will establish both the need for instructional innovation in the community college sector and the challenge of leading to achieve it.

**Meeting the Expanded Comprehensive Mission**

While accessible transfer to baccalaureate programs has been a major emphasis for community colleges historically, these institutions are increasingly seen as a key, strategic, national resource for economic development in the Knowledge Era (Caton & Mistroner, 2016; Burns, 2017). In particular, community colleges are playing an expanded and vital role in supporting the economic and workforce development needs of the communities they serve, while continuing to meet the traditional needs of transfer-intent students (Adams, Edmonson, & Slate, 2013; Cejda & Leist, 2006; Fong, Davis, Kim, Y., Marriott, & Kim, S., 2017). As a result, community colleges are attempting to offer a wider array of services to a wider range of the population, with more comprehensive missions, technical advances, and innovative leadership characterizing the current environment (Caton & Mistriner, 2016; Cejda & Leist, 2006; Gambino, 2017; Sutin, 2018). Adams et al. (2013) argue that this expanded, comprehensive mission requires “an instructional framework which responds to multiple missions” (p. 538).
Clearly, the nature of the innovation demands on community colleges has implications for the leadership capacities of community college senior staff to elicit and support innovation.

President Obama’s call for an increased number of students to earn credentials, despite the typically underprepared and under-resourced populations served by community colleges has resulted in several examples of instructional innovation and expanded mission in the community college sector even in an environment of scarce resources (Burns, 2017). For example, the Complete College America movement which has swept the nation since 2011 has come with a series of recommended initiatives that have influenced the pace and nature of instructional innovation (Complete College America, 2018; Morris, 2012). In addition, the Department of Labor’s $2 billion Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Program (TAACCCT) grant, launched in 2014 and expired in September, 2018, is another example of the increased strategic importance of the community college sector in responding to workforce development needs (U.S. Department of Labor, 2017; Wong, 2014). These early responses to calls for instructional innovation represent valuable opportunities for leadership research which investigates conditions that foster instructional innovation, yet no published leadership studies on these topics in peer-reviewed journals exist. The evidence demonstrates that community colleges face increasing pressure to expand workforce readiness while advancing the transfer mission, despite declining college readiness among incoming, community college, student populations (Bailey et al., 2015). For this reason, research which investigates academic leadership that advances instructional innovation in the community college sector is timely.

**External Conditions Create Fiscal Challenges for Educational Performance and Innovation**
Numerous conditions in the external environment are increasing the fiscal pinch on community colleges and demanding new and refined skill sets as senior leaders attempt to lead for innovation. Next, influences of competition, demographics, and fiscal challenges will be reviewed, illustrating new threats to the open access mission of community colleges, and demonstrating the need for research on academic leadership which fosters instructional innovation that is characterized by timely, market responsiveness in a challenging context.

**An increasingly competitive environment.** The ability to respond to more diverse student needs through instructional innovation which advances student success is made more difficult by the complexity of the environment in which community colleges are operating. Bailey, Jaggars, and Jenkins (2015), Juszkiewicz (2016), and Sullivan (2001) describe a sector characterized by lack of resources, changing student and staff demographics, increased demands for assessment, increased financial burdens on students, increased regulation, disruptive technology, increased competition, particularly from for-profit competitors, and blurred service boundaries. In fact, many for-profit competitors pose direct competition to public community colleges by offering two-year, professional programs (Gilpin, Saunders, & Stoddard, 2015). In fact, over the past two decades, for-profit colleges have accounted for much of the growth in Associate’s degree awards as their enrollment doubled in the 15 years between 1995-1996 and 2010-2011, a rate of increase that was three times faster than in public community colleges (Gilpin et al., 2015). These institutions possess the ability to invest in marketing, charge higher tuitions, and provide technical resources which exceed the capacity of local community colleges as for-profit institutions typically focus on fewer programs delivered in higher volume (Gilpin et al., 2015; Shults, 2008). For profit colleges also have quickly leveraged new delivery modalities made possible through disruptive, technical innovations to meet demand for learning which is
compatible with lifestyle (Gilpin et al., 2015; Shults, 2008). As a result, while the role of community colleges has become more critical to the economic vitality of the United States, external competitive influences have challenged community colleges to increase the pace and effectiveness of instructional innovation in order to maintain competitiveness through rapid, market responsiveness. Yet, no recently published, peer-reviewed studies exist which examine academic leadership during instructional innovation in the community college sector to inform future practices.

**Limited access to innovation funding.** Numerous studies document the increasing difficulties faced by community colleges in the realm of fiscal management, as institutions encounter declining enrollment and increased dependence on tuition and fee income given high fixed costs. Juszkiewicz (2017) reports community colleges have experienced declining enrollment since 2010, particularly among adult learners, though drops in fall, 2015 were the smallest seen over four years (Juszkiewicz, 2017). Community colleges enrolled more than eight million students in 2011, but served only 5.7 million in Spring, 2016 (AACC, 2017). Given fixed facility and personnel costs due to tenured faculty and staff positions, it is apparent that declining enrollments put fiscal pressures on community colleges as never before.

Additional threats to political and financial resources necessary for innovation in all sectors of higher education are also seen within national political trends affecting higher education. In the face of increasing populism since the election of President Donald Trump, innovation in the public sector is experiencing increasing obstacles (Borins, 2018). A reduced willingness to collect data on issues designated as non-priorities, an aversion to evidence-based inquiry, blurring of conflict of interest ethics, and decreasing appreciation for the value of higher education all reduce access to financial resources (Borins, 2018). In addition, beyond the
challenges of enrollment fluctuations, state funding appropriations for community colleges have dropped over the past decade in the United States creating increasing challenges for community college leaders with regard to managing revenues (Flynn, 2011; Gilroy, 2012; Li, 2017; Joch, 2011; Romano, 2012; State Higher Education Executive Officers, 2013). Though federal contributions have increased in small ways through additional student aid, infrastructure funding, and workforce-directed grants, Pell grants have not kept pace with tuition increases (Crookston & Hooks, 2012; Gilroy, 2012; Wilson et al., 2018). As a result of these funding declines, overall operating budgets for community colleges only increased by 6.4% during the decade covering 1999 to 2009, while master’s-level colleges and public research institutions saw increases of 10.4% and 11.7% respectively over the same period (Romano, 2012). This data suggests reduced government allocations for community college education have severely impacted operating budgets while increasing the tuition burden on students. These conditions increase the urgency of instructional innovations which advance student success while calling upon academic leaders to find new ways to fund faculty innovation efforts.

**Expanded Open Access Challenges**

Importantly, the increasing tuition and fee burden has had worrisome consequences for students and has contributed to the urgency for instructional innovation. McArdle (2013), Cejda and Leist (2006), Price, Schneider, and Quick (2016), and Adams, Edmonson, and Slate (2013) suggest affordability and cost issues are affecting many students seeking postsecondary education, even threatening open access, itself, despite the need for postsecondary education in the majority of today’s jobs. Concern over student expense arising from multiple sequences of developmental education, along with low success rates, were the stimulus to demand for developmental education reform brought forward by the Complete College American movement
McArdle (2013) suggests community colleges will need to maintain access in the face of rising higher education costs, and this will necessitate expert fiscal leadership among community college presidents and direct-report administrators. Holding the line steady on instructional cost per student while innovating to improve outcomes is an unprecedented challenge for community colleges. For this reason, analyzing faculty perceptions of academic leaders who supported innovations that increased student success in developmental reading and writing through the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Framework represents a timely and high impact opportunity to understand the contribution of leadership practices to this success story.

This examination demonstrates that community colleges are facing unparalleled demands that increase the urgency of instructional innovation and the difficulty of achieving it. Community colleges are charged with executing an expanded mission to meet the strategic priority placed on national, economic development. Yet, changes in the external environment, including increased competition, enrollment fluctuations, and declining financial resources have created new complexities for community colleges which could compromise the sector’s capacity to respond to innovation demands. As a result, the ability to lead in a manner which advances market responsive, instructional innovation appears essential to the profile of the successful, community college academic leader going forward. For this reason, examining faculty perceptions of how multi-level academic leadership was experienced while bringing instructional innovations that advanced student success to scale is helpful to future academic leadership development in the community college sector.
Next, the existing research investigating attributes associated with community college leadership that advances instructional innovation will be explored, and gaps in knowledge will be revealed.

**Leadership Competencies Needed to Support Instructional Innovation in the Community College Setting**

Given sweeping changes in the external and internal community college environments, a review of recent research into needed leadership competencies to support instructional innovation will reveal a focus on the role of the presidency and an absence of published, empirical research concerning academic leadership which supports instructional innovation to advance student success. In conducting an investigation of attitudes and behaviors among community college innovation award winners, O’Banion, Weidner, and Wilson (2011) reported the discovery of over five million links to definitions for innovation, and narrowed the field through focus group investigation to: “The development or adoption of new or existing ideas for the purpose of improving policies, programs, practices, or personnel” and “The creation of new opportunities that are transformative” (p. 475). Here, studies identifying necessary leadership attributes associated with advancing innovation will be examined for community college presidents and academic leaders revealing a gap in the literature with regard to leading for instructional innovation. In addition, appropriateness of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework will be demonstrated as needed competencies will be shown to align with the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Model. In addition, this analysis will be valuable in shaping interview questions and coding schemes in this study of successful community college faculty innovators to determine whether faculty perceived academic leaders
employing recommended high impact practices while bringing innovations in developmental
reading and writing to scale.

**Market Responsive, Integrated Strategic Planning and Budgeting**

As described previously, the Structural Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017)
Leadership Framework emphasizes rationale, analytical planning to reach clearly established
organizational goals. Raughton (1997) demonstrated in his case study report of Colorado
Community College and the occupational education system that clear, simple goals for
innovation on a system-wide basis can contribute to sweeping, sustainable innovation.
Academic innovation requires the ability to articulate goals and persuade often siloed academic
deptments or even satellite campuses to work toward a common purpose (Fairbairn, 2017).
Within this context, numerous researchers identify increased attunement to market needs,
enhanced fiscal management capacity, and the ability to align institutional priorities with needed
resources as critical skill sets required for community college leaders in today’s complex
environment.

**Market responsiveness.** The capacity to identify and respond to community needs is
cited as an essential quality in community college leadership, according to multiple studies.
Adams et al. (2013) proposed the Model of Market Responsive Institutions to illustrate how core
internal and external forces interact to create market responsiveness capacities within an
institution. Integral to the model is the requirement of leadership to establish a culture of
inquiry, utilize effective environmental scanning techniques, and employ data-informed,
decision-making patterns while forming strong relationships with external partners (Adams et al.,
2013). The implementation of this model was evaluated by Caton and Mistriner (2016) using the
lens of Resource Dependency Theory. These researchers examined the interaction between the
workforce development initiative launched by Niagara County Community College and the community’s realization of benefits, such as positions filled by graduates. Results demonstrated the value of the Model of Market Responsive Institutions (Adams et al., 2013), which enables leaders to discover opportunities to meet community needs and generate revenue (Caton & Mistriner, 2016). Caton and Mistriner (2016) argued that leadership which incorporates strong community ties, data-informed decision-making, and a culture of inquiry is necessary for the successful implementation of the Model of Market Responsive Institutions. While Caton and Mistriner’s (2016) analysis is helpful in identifying leadership characteristics that contribute to market responsive, academic leadership, this study was limited to analysis of a workforce development initiative which does not represent typical instructional innovation processes associated with traditional, for-credit, academic programming, nor does it examine the requirements of engaging faculty in instructional innovation.

At the same time, other studies reveal that there is opportunity for enhanced use of outcome measurements which are responsive to the external environment. In particular, O’Banion, Weidner, and Wilson (2012) demonstrated that local communities appear to be least impacted by award-winning innovations in the community college sector, as reported by the innovators, themselves. Instead, award-winners report the internal functioning of the college to be the most likely recipient of innovation impacts (O’Banion, Weidner, & Wilson, 2012). O’Banion et al. (2011, 2012) also demonstrated that community college innovations were unlikely to receive systematic analysis in the follow-up stages of evaluation. Weidner (2010) also reported that there appears to be more room for innovation to grow and expand particularly in continuing education and workforce development, where innovation awards are rarely bestowed. This is noteworthy given the demands of community colleges to enhance workforce
readiness in the Knowledge Era (Mars & Ginter, 2012). Weidner (2010) suggests business and industry partnerships can be leveraged by continuing education and workforce development arms of community colleges to meet this need. Clearly, there is room for more systematic use of planning, evaluation, and outcome metrics to inform resource allocation and increase market responsiveness for academic innovation in the future, suggesting an opportunity to enhance professional development for upcoming academic leaders. Collectively, these studies demonstrate the importance of focusing innovative, market responses on community needs and ensuring effectiveness through ongoing analysis. Next, the need to align market-based, strategic opportunities with necessary resources will be discussed.

**Integrated strategic planning and budgeting.** Numerous reports demonstrate that the ability to integrate strategic planning and budgeting is an increasingly needed capacity among community college academic leaders to advance innovation and achieve institutional goals (Ashcraft & Jacobsen, 2017; Auer, 2016; Fairbairn, 2017; Flynn, 2013; Joch, 2011; Saunders, 2014). Indeed, evidence suggests this practice, associated with Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Structural Frame, is not employed often in current settings and is recognized as among the most difficult practices to achieve (Auer, 2016). Despite the Accountability Era’s focus on degree or certificate completion for community colleges, academic budgeting practices during periods of reduced funding often are not aligned with a completion agenda or supportive of the open access and equity mission. For example, tuition increases are a common strategy for making up budget shortfalls, and these diminish access for many students (Joch, 2011; Gilroy, 2012). In addition, full-time faculty members are often replaced by part-time faculty, though higher student-to-faculty ratios are associated with lower graduation rates (Romano, 2012). In order to avoid layoffs and conflict with faculty and staff unions, Joch (2011) and Gilroy (2012) report that
community college leaders will often delay filling open positions. In addition, outsourcing of student services such as bookstores, health centers, and career centers are often sources for funding cuts despite their connection to student goal attainment (Joch, 2011; Flynn, 2013). Finally, Joch (2011) and Gilroy (2012) report that some academic centers attempt to increase class sizes in general education classes, called “profit centers”, while limiting participation in technical or healthcare programs with high operating costs, but which also represent the in-demand jobs of the knowledge economy. Gilroy (2012) states that some community colleges will employ differential tuition policies, attaching high fees to technical or health care programs which are more expensive to run, further diminishing access for low income students. Further, upon analyzing narratives from 282 community college presidents obtained from Duree’s (2007) dissertation study, McNair, Duree, and Ebbers (2011) reported that community college presidents recognized a deficit in resource management preparation, particularly with regard to finance. Price et al., (2016) reported that the ability to navigate the financial landscape is considered critical by community college presidents to striking a balance between academic quality and affordability for community college students. These presidents were most concerned with lowering costs without damaging academic quality suggesting need for instructional innovation (Price, Schneider, & Quick, 2016). Yet, leadership attributes associated with advancing innovation practices were not evaluated within this study (Price et al., 2016).

Within the realm of integrated strategic planning and budgeting, a specialized area of academic affairs interest is academic program prioritization. Perez-Vergara, Lathrop, and Orlowski (2018) demonstrated use of the Community College Program Planning Model to align academic program offerings with community needs by assessing job projections, wages, and number of available graduates in the marketplace against availability and completion of
academic programs within a community college featured in the case study. Perez-Vergara et al. (2017) revealed that systemic analysis resulted in enhanced alignment with community needs in the form of academic program revisions, deletions, and additions which contributed to overall improvement in completion and job placement results for the institution. Mars and Ginter (2012) provided insights into academic program refinement in their qualitative, exploratory study of sixteen community college entrepreneurship programs through the lens of academic capitalism, as defined by Slaughter and Rhoades (2004). These researchers suggested that faculty engagement with community counterparts via interstitial organizations creates “new circuits of knowledge” (Mars & Ginter, 2012, p. 80) and demands for enhanced managerial capacities to support academic entrepreneurship. In particular, Mars and Ginter (2012) argue for increased academic autonomy to pursue academic innovation which will enhance the market agency of students.

Overall, these reports suggest market responsive, mission-based decision-making often is not informed by linked, strategic planning and budgeting in community college settings, resulting in choices which may fail to advance instructional innovation driven by faculty. Leaders suggest typical advancement pathways do not prepare academic leaders with this vital skill (O’Banion et al., 2011). For this reason, understanding how successful faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing were catalyzed to initiate innovation and obtain resources needed for instructional innovation will be a contribution to the literature.

**Empowering Faculty as Academic Innovators**

The notion of empowering employees to fulfill their defined roles is consistent with the Human Resources Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework. The seminal study on community college innovation demonstrated many aspects of leadership styles
which promote innovation, including the need to recognize faculty as the chief innovators in institutions (O’Banion et al., 2010). This quantitative, national survey fielded among winners of the Community College League for Innovation’s Innovation of the Year award from 1999 to 2008 found that 43.5%, were full-time faculty members, while 26.4% were administrators (O’Banion et al., 2010). Instruction was the area of innovation most recognized among community college innovation award winners (O’Banion et al., 2010). Researchers also discovered that concern for student learning and/or outcomes was the most powerful motivator for innovation (O’Banion et al., 2010). Burns (2017) reported that community colleges are not known for supporting faculty in pedagogical innovation. Her quality case study, grounded in the theory of sense-making, of thirteen community college faculty who engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) suggested that integrating the roles of faculty with learner and classroom researcher results in transformative learning experiences for faculty which advance pedagogy (Burns, 2017). Lending further support for the importance of faculty in reaching academic goals, Sirkis (2011) identified the importance of the department chair role in ensuring academic quality and a student-centered educational experience. Indeed, Sirkis (2011) stated that although department chairs rarely have managerial or leadership experience, the majority of strategic decisions are made at the department level. For this reason, faculty adoption of innovation challenges is critical to long range sustainability. Sirkis (2011) reported that department chairs’ awareness of faculty mindset is crucial to the advancement of any transformative agenda created by more senior academic leaders. Given the many benefits to be leveraged from strong relationships with effective department chairs, Sirkis (2011) argued that academic leaders should enhance the professional development and honor associated with this role. Burns (2017) also argued that academic leaders need to be mindful of faculty focus on
students and harness this narrow concentration to create pedagogical innovation by encouraging follow-through on teaching and learning assessment rather than just engagement in process.

Overall, this evidence demonstrates that empowerment of faculty in their role as instructional innovators is an important aspect of academic leadership. Yet no published research addresses faculty perceptions of academic leadership during the process of innovation. For this reason, this qualitative study and its use of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework to inform coding will address a gap in the literature.

**Political Advocacy**

The need for improved competency in legislative advocacy and in working with boards was also identified by community college presidents as an area lacking sufficient preparation (McNair et al., 2011). These competencies are associated with the Political Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework, and are necessary for instructional innovation inasmuch as they are aligned with market responsive, institutional priorities and aid the institution in obtaining resources necessary for innovation. Yet there is no evidence in the literature of any academic leadership investigations which examine the role of political advocacy to aid instructional innovation efforts in the community college setting.

**Establishing a Culture of Innovation to Advance Student Success**

According to Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), rituals, values, traditions, and symbols which contribute to shared culture are represented by the Symbolic Frame of the Four-Frame Leadership Framework. Mery and Shiorring (2011) demonstrated the value of developing a community college campus culture focused on student success and shared goals through the Successful Transfer Approach Research (STAR) project, which examined seven, high transfer community colleges in the California public higher education system. Mery and Shiorring
(2011) reported that transfer rates between community colleges and four-year, public universities had not changed during the prior decade. Yet, after implementation of the Transfer Velocity Project (TVP), seven community colleges were identified which had higher-than-expected transfer rates (Mery & Shiorring, 2011). Institution-wide characteristics such as culture, student-focused environment, and commitment to institution were identified in qualitative interviews among academic affairs members as most important in contributing to institutional improvements on transfer (Mery & Shiorring, 2011).

The best laid strategic plans stand no chance for success without skilled leaders who appreciate the workings of culture and distributed power dynamics in higher education environments (Fairbairn, 2017). In the community college setting, tenured faculty organized into collective bargaining units present unique challenges for academic leaders when attempting to lead change. Raughton (1997) demonstrated that culture and innovation are closely intertwined, with shared values, norms, and traditions affecting the ability of an institution to accept transactional or transformational change.

Beyond providing support for faculty, studies also demonstrate the importance of setting the institutional stage to encourage risk-taking behaviors, another leadership practice associated with the Symbolic Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) model. In 2011, O’Banion et al. reported that encouragement and visible support of innovation and risk-taking behavior was highly important in contributing to innovation, according to award-winning, community college innovators. In fact, O’Banion et al. (2011) reported the role of college leaders to be the most important factor identified in contributing to innovation. In addition, O’Banion et al. (2011) reported that recognition by self and peers was a highly important personal outcome for innovators. Furthermore, innovators were found to work in teams most frequently, and to
believe that innovations had greater chances for survival as a result of teamwork (O’Banion et al., 2011). Yet, the extent to which these practices are associated with recent instructional innovations in the community college setting appears to be unknown, based on the literature.

**Multi-frame Leadership Ability**

Given the identification of so many, distinctive leadership attributes as contributors to academic innovation in the community college setting, it is no wonder that the ability to draw upon multi-frame leadership practices has received significant attention in the literature as well as in leadership development programs advanced by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC, 2017). Yet the AACC framework which will be introduced here, and research associated with multi-frame leadership in the community college sector, has been focused largely on the role of the president and has not examined multi-frame leadership as it impacts academic innovation, despite the increasingly challenging context in recent years. For this reason, there is a need to explore faculty perceptions of multi-frame leadership during the process of bringing instructional innovations to scale.

**AACC Leadership Framework.** The Competencies for Community College Leaders Framework was proposed in April, 2005 as a result of Leading Forward, a two-year AACC initiative supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Caton & Mistriner, 2016; Hassan et al., 2009; McNair et al., 2011; Ottenritter, 2006). The framework reportedly was designed by the AACC in order to articulate a set of six leadership competencies, all identifiable within the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Framework, including organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism (Caton & Mistriner, 2016; Hassan et al., 2009; McNair et al., 2011; Ottenritter 2006). It was also believed the AACC framework could create value in establishing
language for further inquiry on community college leadership development and assessment (Ottenritter, 2006). While many dissertations have been prepared utilizing the framework, especially recently, few have been published in peer-reviewed journals making comparisons difficult, and none have focused on how the framework facilitates needed instructional innovation in this changing environment, demonstrating the need for new and rigorous inquiry. Still, studies have affirmed that these competencies are perceived by presidents and trustees to be necessary for effective institutional leadership (Caton & Mistriner, 2016; Hassan et al., 2009; McNair et al., 2011). The AACC calls for additional leadership inquiry on their Leadership Competency Framework in order to advance responsiveness to the changing environment facing community colleges (AACC, 2017).

**Research assessing multi-frame leadership in the context of innovation.** McArdle (2013) utilized the Bolman and Deal’s (1991) Four-Frame Leadership Model in a multi-stage, quantitative and qualitative study which explored the frame orientation of the fourth generation of community college leaders. This study found that the majority of participants did not report the use of multi-frame leadership strategies when responding to their most critical leadership challenges, though this capacity was identified as an essential ability for educational leaders by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), and is reflected in the AACC leadership competencies (AACC, 2017). Rather, community college presidents and their direct-report administrators were more likely to use single or paired-frame approaches grounded in the Human Resources or Structural Frames, as defined by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), particularly when building teams which would embrace innovation and prepare students to do the same in a changing world (McArdle, 2013). McArdle (2013) also identified the intentional emphasis on team-development as a leadership practice among community college presidents and direct reports, and suggested the
study is significant in calling upon the fourth generation of community college leadership to employ practices associated with Political and Symbolic Frames, as defined by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), in order to find innovative solutions to challenges such as lack of resources, operation of multiple campuses, transitions brought on by retirements, and more. Sullivan (2001) also suggested the fourth generation of community college presidents should move away from the “looser, more participatory” (p. 560) style of leadership characterized by the Human Resources Frame and toward a multi-frame approach, with emphasis on the Structural Frame, which would enable community colleges to be more nimble and adaptable as demanded by the times. Yet to date, no studies have examined community college senior leadership within an innovation context using the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework.

Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Model was used again in a quantitative study targeted specifically to academic deans, examining use of the frames as they relate to prior business experience, educational level, and number of years in the dean position (Sypawka et al., 2010). Sypawka et al. (2010) validated past studies (Aggestram, 2004; Yim & Baker, 2003) which demonstrated that the Human Resource Frame was most used by academic deans, followed by the Structural Frame. According to Sypawka et al. (2010), the Human Resource Frame is employed by academic deans because it emphasizes the use of psychology and organizational behavior principles in supporting relationships to meet both human and organizational needs, recognizing that individuals are an educational organization’s most valuable resource. Conversely, Sypawka et al. (2010) reported that academic deans drawing upon the Structural Frame are more oriented toward purpose and proficiency, utilizing data and analysis to stay focused on the bottom line and to hold people accountable for results. The study suggested that there is opportunity to elevate the awareness of multi-frame leadership approaches
in order to strengthen leadership development efforts among academic deans (Sypawka et al., 2010). While this study is useful to the current research in its examination of academic dean leadership practices through the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) lens, the study is dated and does not incorporate the context of instructional innovation or the faculty perspective.

This review demonstrates that numerous leadership practices aligned with Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework have been associated individually with effective innovation leadership in the community college setting, including market-responsiveness, integrated strategic planning and budgeting, empowerment of faculty as innovators, political advocacy, and creation of an innovative culture. In fact, multi-frame leadership is advanced as a high priority for community college leadership in the current, increasingly complex environment. While past studies of community college leadership that evaluated multi-frame practices only identified leadership drawing upon the Structural and Human Resources Frames primarily, these studies did not occur recently and were not conducted in the context of instructional innovation. For this reason, evidence suggests a new examination of multi-frame leadership in the context of instructional innovation would be a contribution to the literature on effective community college innovation leadership practices. Next, the timeliness and appropriateness of investigating innovations related to improved student success in developmental reading and writing will be discussed.

**An Opportunity to Gain Academic Leadership Lessons from the Context of Instructional Innovation in Developmental Reading and Writing**

Developmental education, or course sequences in developmental reading, writing, and math for students who present below established levels of college readiness, is an area receiving
particular focus given the completion agenda and the Complete College America movement (Complete College America, 2018; Morris, 2012; Osterman, 2015). As a result of this demand, numerous instructional innovations are reaching scale across the community college sector nationwide. Yet this analysis will demonstrate that no investigations have occurred to date to understand the role of academic leadership in bringing these instructional innovations that improve student success to scale. Here, possible influences on instructional innovations will be identified and a deficit in the literature will be revealed supporting the need for further analysis.

**Need for Innovation in Developmental Reading and Writing to Advance Student Success**

Few community college academic topics have garnered the level of hand-wringing as that associated with students who place into developmental classes, given their poor course completion and graduation rates. Approximately two-thirds of community college students can count themselves among this group (Bailey et al., 2015). Bailey et al. (2015) go so far as to say that the current developmental education system does not improve a student’s likelihood of successfully completing college level coursework. With regard to innovation in developmental education, the benefits may be particularly relevant to advance the interests of students of color. In particular, 52% of Hispanic, 43% of African American, and 56% of Native American students in higher education are enrolled in community colleges (American Association of Community Colleges, 2017). Yet, the percentage of degree completers is lower for these demographic segments in two-year colleges (de Lourdes Villarreal & Garcia, 2016). In addition, the benefits of advanced placement (AP) courses and college preparatory curriculum are also experienced less frequently by African American and Latino males, resulting in greater likelihood of placement in developmental course sequences with lower course and degree completion rates (Bettinger & Long, 2005; de Lourdes Villarreal & Garcia, 2016). Bailey, Jeong, and Cho (2010)
reported that one-third of community college students require coursework in developmental reading, and fewer than half of those referred to remediation sequences actually complete them.

**External Influences on Developmental Reading and Writing Reform**

Increasing demand for accelerating the progress of students through developmental sequences has been widespread in order to increase retention and graduation rates (Bonet & Walters, 2016; Complete College America, 2018; Morris, 2012; Pierce, 2017). In particular, co-requisite delivery of developmental reading, writing, and math are among the strategies recommended by Complete College America to foster degree completion in the community college sector, and results of related innovations are just beginning to emerge (Complete College America, 2018). Federal and state governments and private entities, including the Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation, have called for or mandated innovation in developmental education in order to advance egalitarian objectives as well as efficiency with educational investments (Adams & McKusick, 2014; Morris, 2012; Pierce, 2017). In fact, the state of Florida is an example of several states who have legislated change as Florida passed Senate Bill 1720 which made participation on developmental course sequences optional for community college students (Woods, Park, Hu, & Bertrand Jones, 2019). Given the strong commitment to equity and access in the community college mission, improved student success in developmental education is especially important since these courses have been highly populated by students of color who often fail to persist through completion of developmental sequences impeding degree and certificate attainment (Bettinger & Long, 2005; de Lourdes Villarreal & Garcia, 2016).

In response to numerous calls for innovation in this category during the first decade of this millennium, community college faculty have begun to innovate in developmental education
in a variety of ways with measurable differences in outcomes beginning to emerge (Wilson et al., 2018). For example, Hern and Snell (2014) have described the California Acceleration Project (CAP) as a grass-roots faculty reform movement with 42 participating community colleges that has decreased the number of exit points for students who place into developmental education and reduced the number of courses in the sequence while redefining placement strategies. In addition, Adams, Gearhart, Miller, and Roberts (2009) advanced the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) from the Community College of Baltimore which delivers integrated developmental reading and writing instruction in a corequisite delivery model with English Composition I, resulting in an increase in the number of students passing English Composition I. These instructional innovations represent an invaluable opportunity to explore academic leadership that supported instructional innovations with proven results.

**Deficiencies in the Evidence**

Each of these approaches to developmental education reform has received national attention and has been supported by national, regional, and local training and investigation, though the emphasis has been on curricular issues and academic outcomes, rather than academic leadership which has supported the instructional innovation process (Anderst, Maloy, & Shahar, 2016; Hern, 2012; National Association of Developmental Education, 2019; Pierce, 2017). Leadership studies unrelated to developmental education reform have investigated generally desirable qualities in academic leaders (Anderson et al., 2002; Burns, 2017; Perez-Vergara et al., 2017; Sypawka et al., 2010). However, little seems to be known about academic leadership qualities and practices which contribute to innovation in developmental education within the community college sector. Cole, Dumford, and Laird (2018) investigated faculty perceptions of senior leadership in supporting teaching innovation through the 2012 Faculty Survey of Student
Engagement and found opportunity for leaders to improve support, delivery of resources, and innovative culture. However, these quantitative findings were limited to four-year college environments and did not address innovation in developmental education. No studies appear to explore how academic leaders contribute to catalyzing instructional innovation which balances competing priorities in the new age for community colleges. Wilson et al. (2018) suggest studies of innovation in developmental education in the community college sector are particularly difficult for reasons such as emphasis on teaching over research, high faculty teaching loads, resource limitations, and haste in moving to scale for new innovations. In addition, Burns (2017) notes that community college faculty report a deficit in teaching and learning opportunities which support reflection and refinement in practices which stimulate innovation. Yet, in the community college sector, research related to academic leadership which supports student success advancements is difficult to find in peer-reviewed journals, demonstrating the importance of subjecting research to the rigors of publication in order to advance the field (Fong et al., 2017).

Although some research on developmental education has occurred, the approaches have been primarily quantitative and demonstrated broad focus on all forms of developmental education seeking patterns in student outcomes (de Lourdes Villarreal & Garcia, 2016). Little has been done from a qualitative perspective to examine the experiences and perceptions of faculty innovators whose innovations improve outcomes, particularly in developmental reading and writing. Understanding timely faculty perceptions of leadership practices specific to developmental reading and writing instructional innovation may facilitate further advances in community college developmental education. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the
perceptions of community college faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing concerning academic leadership through a multi-frame lens.

**Conclusion**

Today’s community colleges are faced with unprecedented challenges which demand new academic leadership skills sets as institutions are tasked with doing more with less. This analysis has demonstrated that the community college sector is challenged with an increasingly comprehensive mission and complex environment which demand increased instructional innovation. In addition, a new, more holistic set of leadership skills is demanded of community college leaders with particular emphasis on the ability to manage market-responsive, fiscal, and strategic planning requirements, empowered faculty, political environments, and culture which support innovation. These qualities are represented by the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Framework, yet the framework has not been applied to an analysis of leadership practices which support instructional innovation in the community college context. The opportunity to leverage instructional innovations which are now coming to scale in developmental reading and writing has been identified in this chapter as a timely and high impact prospect for examining multi-frame, academic leadership practices which support instructional innovation. Next, methodology for pursuing this study will be described.
Chapter Three: Research Design

The nature of academic leadership in the community college setting is changing as institutions strive to balance demand for innovation which improves student success with a reduction in government subsidies (Hassan et al., 2009; McNair & Ebbers, 2011). The literature review demonstrated a gap in existing leadership research concerning understanding of the faculty experience of academic leadership in the community college sector as recent instructional innovations in developmental reading and writing have been brought to scale. For this reason, the topic of this analysis is the manner in which academic leadership contributes to instructional innovation which balances these competing priorities in the community college setting, particularly as applied to the advancement of innovation in developmental reading and writing. Little is known about the role of academic leadership in fostering innovations that demonstrate measurable impact on the key challenges facing community colleges today. In particular, the voice of the primary innovators, community college faculty members, is absent in the literature.

Leadership which stimulates innovation in the community college sector has been deemed so important that the American Association of Community Colleges has initiated awards which recognized CEOs whose campuses have innovated to increase student success (Whissemore, 2017). Yet, the nature of this leadership as experienced by faculty innovators, particularly among those who achieved innovations at scale, has not been investigated in recent years, despite reports demonstrating that faculty are the primary innovators on community college campuses (O’Banion et al., 2012). The purpose of this research, therefore, was to understand how community college English faculty who have innovated in developmental reading and writing at scale to achieve progress in student success perceived academic leadership during the process of innovation. The following research question guided this study: How do
community college faculty members who have created and scaled innovations to improve student success in developmental reading and writing perceive academic leadership during the process of innovating?

This chapter will provide an overview of the principles of qualitative research and the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm. A description of the selected methodology, interpretative phenomenological analysis, will be discussed next, along with its philosophical underpinnings. Then, the intended outcome of the strategy will be described, followed by the source of the strategy. Appropriateness of interpretative phenomenological analysis for this research question and context will be discussed, as well, along with data collection and analytical techniques. Participants targeted for the study will be identified, along with recruitment strategies. Credibility and positionality of the researcher will be discussed, along with strategies employed to manage effects of researcher positionality. Finally, limitations of the study will be identified to ensure use of findings remain within research limits.

Qualitative Research

The appropriateness of qualitative research, and interpretative phenomenological analysis in particular, will be reviewed next for its fit with this research question and the researcher’s background and aims. The origins of IPA will be explored along with the impact of the double hermeneutic on the study and the researcher simultaneously. Once the researcher’s aims are revealed as they pertain to the researcher question, it will be demonstrated that IPA is an appropriate methodology for purposes of this study, particularly given the manner in which data collection and analysis occurs.

Overview of Qualitative Research
Qualitative researchers serve the research interest best when data is made “star” of reports (Chenail, 2012). In addition, some paradigms within qualitative research also account for the changing views of the researcher during the course of conducting research and the impact this process has on developing the researcher’s analysis and agency as a scholar-practitioner. This transformation has occurred certainly during this study, as the researcher has deepened her appreciation of holistic and multi-frame leadership on academic innovation, reshaping a prior tendency toward leading from Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Structural and Human Resources perspectives. Ponterotto (2005) describes the emergence of the constructivism -interpretivist paradigm as an approach which allows for multiple, equally valid realities which can be captured and described by researchers, but not through quantitative methodologies. According to Ponterotto (2005), reality occurs in our minds; it is not a fixed, external event. In order to capture the essence and meaning of reality, therefore, a researcher must actively engage a participant in deep reflection about reality through dialogue. By necessity, therefore, the research methodology consistent with the philosophical underpinnings of this paradigm is qualitative. In this case, one-to-one interviews were employed with the goal of capturing unique, individualized realities which could be generalized into theories for understanding the “lived experiences” (Ponterotto, 2005, pg. 129) of faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing. Ponterotto (2005) argues that, through reflective thinking and dialogue, the researcher gains agency with regard to the phenomena under examination, in this case, leadership practices which foster innovation as experienced by community college faculty. Consistent with this principle, findings of this investigation will be presented by identifying themes which emerged from data analysis, and utilizing data to support the themes. The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Framework informed the coding scheme, but the researcher remained
open to other themes which emerged. Ultimately, factors which contributed to catalyzing faculty innovation were revealed along with academic leadership strategies which enabled the innovation to take hold and achieve scale in the context of communities of practice.

Qualitative researchers can enhance credibility for themselves and their analyses through thorough, descriptive presentation of decision-making which informs analysis. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2013) and Chenail (2013) make the point that qualitative researchers must be explicit in documenting decisions which inform coding structures and analyses. They suggest that qualitative researchers often overlook this step in presentation which contributes to the impression that qualitative research is less rigorous or credible than quantitative. For this reason, coding notes which explain the coding strategies and describe decisions associated with coding were maintained throughout this study. A rhythm or pattern in presenting findings was employed, consistent with Chenail’s (2013) recommendations, so that readers can understand the decision-making which informed findings in general. The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) theoretical framework was used as a final check against the coding structures to examine potential parallels, but the coding scheme was also developed inductively (Dowling, 2007).

**Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)**

This study employed interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) by examining how community college faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing who have improved student success at scale have experienced academic leadership. IPA seeks to understand how individuals make sense of phenomena, typically relationships and/or processes, in the context of their lived experiences in the world through textual expression of the phenomena’s essence (Creswell, 2013; Larkin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012; van Manen, 1990). Through the process of rich description, IPA gives “voice” to subjects’ lived experience or perceptions of reality.
Lived experience refers to an individual’s basic, pre-awareness existence in life (van Manen, 1990). As such, lived experience can only be captured in after-the-fact reflection, and therefore has a temporal quality (van Manen, 1990). Interpretation of phenomena in this context acknowledges that only a component of a total, lived experience can be appreciated (van Manen, 1990). There is an epistemological focus on rich language and text in the application of IPA methodology (Smith, et al., 2012; van Manen, 1990).

The double hermeneutic. During IPA, the researcher is deeply immersed in the research question and examines the phenomenon from many sides leading to rich, textual descriptions and meaning-making concerning themes, angles, judgments and concepts about the phenomenon in question (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2012). For this reason, the formulation of the research question in this study took on great importance, with every word carefully chosen to ensure the researcher stayed focused on the investigative journey with intentionality (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2012). The accumulation and examination of lived experiences through IPA gathers hermeneutic value when reduced and interpreted as these experiences relate to a particular phenomenon, causing growth in the researcher in the context of studying idiographic detail of the phenomenon (van Manen, 1990; Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2012). In this case, use of the IPA approach required that this researcher examine the particular lived experiences of a small sample of faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing in an effort to make meaning of how these individuals perceived their experiences during the process of bringing innovations to scale. While the researcher began with a bias toward the Structural and Human Resources Frames in leading for instructional innovation as a result of her prior experience in the private sector and as a faculty innovator, the researcher appreciated the importance of mindful leadership which establishes a culture of innovation, and deepened her
own commitment to faculty mentorship and advocacy to empower faculty innovations during the process of innovation. This is consistent with Smith’s et al. (2012) argument that IPA is actually a double hermeneutic process as it engages the researcher in making sense of how individuals make sense of their experiences. Importantly, Smith et al. (2012) emphasize the focus on particular cases of particular individual’s in IPA research which is unique among phenomenological approaches. In the use of IPA, context takes on even greater importance as it is integral to meaning-making since cognition is understood to be influenced by the social and temporal qualities of context, or the nature of the individual’s “being in the world” (Larkin et al., 2011). Given the complex, new challenges facing community colleges in the new millennium, the contextual responsiveness of IPA makes the approach especially valuable in the case of this study. Therefore, the role of this researcher was to understand the phenomenon under investigation, in this case, academic leadership as experienced by community college, English faculty innovators, from the perspective of the individual, research participant.

**The intended outcome of the strategy.** The aim of IPA research, according to van Manen (1990) is to render the essence of lived experience through text-based language. For this reason, findings for this study are presented in the form of textual expressions of themes which utilize anecdotes, phrases, and language patterns to give meaning to the lived experiences of participants. Smith et al. (2012) emphasize that IPA presentations of findings are much more discursive than those found in quantitative studies given the reliance on interpreted, text-based data. Consistent with the recommendations of Smith et al. (2012), data analysis in this study begins with a summary of emergent themes and subordinate themes, represented with a table, and later developed sequentially. Each theme and subtheme is supported with textual data from each respondent’s case, moving from general to particular (Smith, et al., 2012). It is important to
situate the findings of IPA studies within their cultural and historical settings (Larkin et al., 2011). For this reason, contributions of contextual factors are reported as they seem to contribute meaning to experiencing the phenomena of academic leadership for innovative, English faculty. These contextual factors included the presence of top-down versus distributed leadership environments, the state’s political environment, the nature of the relationship between academic administrators and English faculty innovators, and the role of timeframes associated with curriculum reform. Importantly, descriptions of individual’s personal perspectives are emphasized (Dowling, 2007). Also, findings are presented in diagrammatic fashion, as shown in Figure 5.1, in order to offer theory concerning the structural nature of how individuals experience the phenomenon in question (Saldana, 2016; Smith et al., 2012). Through these strategies, IPA enables the researcher to render the lived experience of research subjects.

**Source of this strategy.** IPA research is a relatively new form of inquiry, first described by Jonathan Smith in 1996 in the context of psychology (Smith et al., 2012). IPA has been influenced by Husserl’s work in transcendental phenomenology and philosophy which focused on the nature of experience, the study of things as they are, and which relied on the use of data reduction, or bracketing, to describe themes and essences which are free of suppositions and related to the phenomena (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012). IPA also draws on the hermeneutic phenomenology of Heidegger, who insisted that phenomena need to be understood within context as individuals cannot separate themselves from their own being in the world, or their relatedness to the external world during sense-making (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012). Heidegger advanced Husserl’s descriptive, phenomenological work by contributing an existential quality and ontological orientation to phenomenology, which some argue deepens the interpretive value and changes the concept of bracketing, recognizing
that researchers cannot disassociate from the effects of the dialogic process on their own perceptions (Dowling, 2007). Merleau-Ponty built on the work of Husserl and Heidegger by emphasizing the situated nature of cognition (Dowling, 2007; Smith et al., 2012). In particular, Merleau-Ponty advanced the notion of situated meaning-making in relation to the temporal nature of experience and maintained that sense-making occurs not only within the individual, but through the individual’s intentional, bodied engagement with the external world (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012). Finally, interpretative phenomenology as a research methodology, rather than as a philosophical movement, became known in the United States during the 1990s and incorporates Caelli’s awareness of the influence of culture on perception (Dowling, 2007).

**Appropriateness of strategy.** Because IPA relies heavily on interpretation of data during the reduction process, the opportunity for subjectivity and difficulty in replicating findings has been a criticism of the approach. Some scholars suggest IPA is a methodology useful only in as much as it is used as a stepping stone to more scientific inquiry (Larkin et al., 2011). Debate concerns the level of scientific formality which should be employed in data analysis versus the benefits to the researcher of remaining free to experience the data and perceive, describe, and theorize about the phenomena without undue influence from formalized methodology (Larkin et al., 2011). Post-modernists Varela and Thompson have argued for the importance of allowing the researcher to be fully present in the inductive exploration of data given the aim of understanding how the human mind engages in sense-making regarding phenomena in the context of where the phenomenon is experienced (Larkin et al., 2011). Given this researcher’s role as an academic leader in the community college setting, the value of the
IPA methodology in providing both agency and transformation as it relates to the phenomena under investigation is extremely valuable.

There also has been debate concerning the traditional, descriptive, European approach to phenomenology versus the interpretative, North American approaches emerging in recent years (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2011). Husserl and Heidegger applied traditional phenomenology to the philosophical understanding of the nature of phenomena, without research applications and without contextualizing the phenomena or the individuals experiencing the phenomena within culture, body, or time (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012). In fact, Husserl and Heidegger were critical of incorporating these influences on the description of phenomena due to their own views concerning decreased reliability brought about by accounting for individual differences in time and place (Dowling, 2007). Crotty and Gallagher advanced the use of interpretative phenomenology in the United States in the 1990s for research purposes in an effort to capture the effects of these influences on sense-making and to use phenomenological reduction to generate inspiration and theory (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2011). Dowling (2007) and Smith et al. (2012) report that, among the benefits of IPA identified by Benner is the ability of the researcher to reveal commonalities in culturally grounded meaning from the personal perspective of individuals as expressed in everyday language. Given the challenges within the community college context, the differences between top-down versus distributed leadership environments, and the differing perceptions of timeframe permitted for innovation, the influence of context on faculty perceptions of innovation is considered valuable and pertinent to this study (Kramer et al., 2018; Osterman, 2015; Wilson et al., 2018). For this reason, Dowling’s (2007) approach which utilizes bracketing and reduction of data to allow for interpretations of patterns was employed in this analysis. Smith et al. (2012) suggest that IPA is a
unifying advancement in the field of phenomenology as it draws on the core elements of each of the described movements while making advances in the context of psychology. Through the analysis and interpretation of meaning-making surrounding a given phenomenon, Smith et al. (2012) argue, the cognitive-affective, embodied, and psycho-social aspects of meaning may be revealed uniquely.

As a methodology, IPA can enable a researcher to understand a particular phenomenon more deeply. For this reason, the approach can have invaluable benefits to this researcher because the phenomenon in question is academic leadership as experienced by community college faculty innovators who achieved scale in student success improvements. As a community college academic dean currently, leading to advance instructional innovation is an ongoing, professional goal. Hence, through immersion in the research question, I was able to gain skill and knowledge applicable to my work. In addition, because IPA takes into account the cultural, temporal, and relational aspects of context, the methodology was particularly well-suited to this research question since achieving innovation at scale requires time and takes place within the context of human relationships in the social setting of the community college.

Moustakas (1994) states that IPA enables the researcher to understand more fully the qualitative aspects of the human experience. Using IPA to understand the essence of academic leadership as experienced by faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing generated a deeper, essential understanding of how relationships are sustained over time to achieve scaled innovation in the community college context. Finally, Moustakas (1994) also states that phenomenological writing requires sensitivity and skill, and does not occur at the end of analysis, but rather throughout analysis to aid in and capture reflection. In addition, Moustakas (1994) emphasizes the need for the researcher to not only be a skilled writer, but a good listener. This researcher is
fortunate to have refined writing and listening ability and a highly sensitive nature, particularly as it relates to the use of language. These abilities are derived from my own background in English literature and graduate study and professional experience in the discipline of marketing/communications. For these reasons, the qualitative methodology of IPA was uniquely suited and well-aligned with this research question and the skills of this researcher.

**Data collection.** IPA is a language and text-based methodology which seeks to generate rich descriptions and accurate, vivid representations of human experience (Moustakas, 1994). Given the importance of language and text in IPA methodology, the approach necessitates the use of verbatim, transcript data (Larkin et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2012). In this case, the nine participants were willing to be tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and have responses analyzed and reported, while their identities remained anonymous (Moustakas, 1994). Per the recommendations of Moustakas (1994), an interview schedule was shared with participants in advance so that rich experiences could be generated during the interview, and a mutually agreeable time for the lengthy interview could be established. Research subjects were vested in the quality of the research and the subject of understanding the essence of academic leadership as perceived by faculty innovators, consistent with the guidelines of Moustakas (1994).

The interview, itself, was informal and interactive, with open-ended questions (emphasizing “how” and “what”) and comments used to enable the subjects to describe, evaluate, and analyze their lived experiences concerning academic leadership during sustained innovation (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2012). A relaxed and trusting tone was established at the onset of the interviews through warm-up dialogue concerning background and mutual interest in the phenomenon (Smith et al., 2012). The researcher set-aside preconceived assumptions about the nature of academic leadership and retained flexibility on use of the
questions and comments so as not to disturb the flow of the research participants’ contributions on their lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2012). The goal of the interview was to establish a hermeneutic dialogue in which the interviewee acted as co-researcher as conversation manifested the nature of the subject’s lived experience (Moustakas, 1994). The interview shifted from general to specific via follow-up questions designed to elicit more depth as the interview progressed (Smith et al., 2012). Lengthy interviews of approximately 60 minutes were conducted.

This discussion demonstrates the aim and uniqueness of IPA as a methodology which was well-suited to this research question and the goals and abilities of this researcher. Through analysis of rich descriptions concerning the lived experiences of faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing, the researcher hopes to advance understanding of the leadership strategies which foster faculty innovation during this critical period in the evolution of the community college sector.

**Participants**

In order to implement this IPA study, an accurate description of study participants and sampling technique was required. Establishing these parameters contributes to the integrity of the data and informs limitations of the study.

**Description of Participants**

In keeping with the research question and the need to recruit individuals who have direct experience with the phenomenon, community college English and/or developmental reading and writing faculty in Northeastern states who have innovated in developmental reading and writing
at scale to advance student success were interviewed (Creswell, 2013). Related definitions were previously provided in Chapter 1.

With regard to the demographics of the participants in question, the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) has not updated community college faculty statistics since 2008 and does not offer statistics for community college faculty by discipline. So, demographic guidelines could not be established for sampling purposes within the discipline of English and/or developmental reading and writing. In 2008, NCES reported that male and female faculty were equally represented among community college faculty, who are more likely to hold a Master’s degree rather than a doctorate as highest level of education (NCES, 2008). Among the nine participants in this study, five were female, and four were male. Eight held master’s degrees as their highest level of education. One had completed doctoral coursework and had a dissertation in progress. Only 33 percent of community college faculty hold full-time positions (NCES, 2008). All nine participants were full-time faculty members during the process of innovation, and all but two were tenured. Of the nine, three were department chairs or program coordinators. One participant was a faculty member throughout the process of innovation in developmental reading and writing, from concept to scale, at her institution, and accepted an interim position as an assistant academic dean two months prior to the interview. Her participation in the study was approved by the NEU Institutional Research Board. Though there is a slightly higher percentage of Black or Hispanic faculty in the community college setting, 80 percent of community college faculty still identify as White (NCES, 2008). While there was no demographic targeting of faculty members during recruitment, all participants in this study were White simply as a function of responses received from outreach. Next, sampling techniques will be described.

**Sampling Strategy**
To recruit qualified participants, this study employed purposive, sampling techniques. First, institutions located in the Northeastern United States who had innovated at scale by advancing student success in developmental reading and writing and English Composition I, as defined in this study, were identified through self-reported results found on publicly accessible websites. Institutional websites and those maintained by reform movements such as Complete College America and the Community College of Baltimore’s Accelerated Learning Project were included. A spreadsheet of the websites used to identify each qualifying institution was maintained on an Excel spreadsheet by the researcher on a password protected laptop, and in a password protected Dropbox file. Only the researcher has passwords to the laptop and Dropbox files. Next, email addresses for full-time, English and/or Developmental Reading and Writing faculty members of these qualifying institutions were collected and added to the spreadsheet by visiting institutional websites. In order to qualify individual faculty members as innovators, faculty in English and Developmental Reading and Writing departments from qualifying institutions received an outreach email from the researcher’s Northeastern University email account which had been approved by the Northeastern University Institutional Research Board inviting each individual to participate in a semi-structured, one-to-one interview if he or she had participated in bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing to scale which had impacted student success within the past five years (See Appendix B). In all, 241 faculty members in community colleges in the Northeastern United States were contacted, with ten agreeing to interviews. One interview was deemed invalid by the Northeastern University Institutional Research Board, leaving nine interviews for analysis. This sample size is commensurate with current studies which have used IPA (Denovan & Macaskill, 2013; Larkin et al., 2011; Symeonides & Childs, 2015).
Procedures

To begin the study, application for approval from the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board was sought and received in July, 2018 (Appendix A). Email outreach efforts occurred from July, 2018 to September, 2018, via the researcher’s Northeastern University email address, and using the IRB-approved outreach (Appendix B). Given the traditionally slow response rates of faculty to email outreach during the summer months, some faculty received a second and third follow-up email or phone call. Once a potential participant responded with interest in doing an interview, the researcher responded via email requesting a suitable appointment time and location consistent with the convenience of the interviewee, and attaching the Informed Consent Form (Appendix C). Care was taken not to cajole prospects into participation (Seidman, 2013). Ten interviews were conducted from August, 2018 to September 2018. One interview was eliminated at the request of the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board due to a recruiting error which employed social media. Of the nine interviews used in this study, eight took place in the participant’s campus office and one took place virtually using GoToMeeting. Interviews were semi-structured, in keeping with best practices in IPA research (Smith et al., 2012). Because IPA relies on detail concerning the particular and does not seek to generalize, a small sample size which permitted interviews to be conducted at the faculty member’s place of employment was preferred so that influence of the environment could be directly observed and documented (Creswell, 2013; Smith et al., 2012). As a last resort, one interview was also conducted via video-conference. The format did not seem to compromise richness of the participant’s responses primarily due to the participant’s vested interest in the research topic and gifted language abilities. The Informed Consent Form was reviewed with participants at the onset of each interview, and a signed, Informed Consent Form was obtained
and is stored by the researcher in a locked, fireproof, file cabinet. Permission to record and transcribe was obtained from each participant. Transcriptions were completed by Rev.com. Anonymity of respondents was maintained during the recording, transcription, and reporting of results. Respondents received copies of transcripts within 48 hours of the interview and had up to two weeks to request changes, per Creswell (2013). One respondent requested that filter words (um, ah) be eliminated from the transcript. To ensure consistency in analysis, all transcripts had filter words eliminated. Once transcripts were approved by participants, audio recordings were destroyed by the researcher. Final transcripts were stored on the researcher’s password protected laptop and in a password protected Dropbox file. Only the researcher has access to these passwords. These procedures were conducted to preserve the integrity of the research while respecting rights of interviewees throughout the process.

Data Analysis

There is no single, analytical approach to IPA (Smith, et al, 2012). Rather, the literature suggests the analyst retain flexibility in a truly inductive posture so as to remain open to themes, descriptions, theories, and inspirations which may emerge from the data (Smith et al., 2012). Common processes in IPA involve moving from particular to shared and descriptive to interpretative during the stages of analysis (Smith et al., 2012). Dowling (2007) describes two stages of analysis in IPA methodology. The first is imaginative or free review of the data to lead the researcher to a description of essential structures. Following this phase, interpretative analysis occurs through which the researcher examines the experiential structures of the phenomenon (Dowling, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Smith et al. (2012) describe a four-step process which includes line-by-line analysis, identification of emergent patterns, the development of the researcher’s meaning-making as it relates to the phenomena, and the
development of a structure or gestalt to represent the themes. Researchers can examine etymological sources of words to discern patterns and revitalize meaning, or consider recurring or idiomatic phrases which seem particularly linked to the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994).

In this study, the researcher engaged in three cycles of inductive coding, using Excel spreadsheets to capture and group data into coded categories, while maintaining the transcript line and quote from the related transcript. During the first cycle, emphasis was placed on the particular and descriptive. Process-related, contextual, emotional, values-laden, evaluative, and dramaturgical codes were assigned to data categories (Miles et al. 2014). Analytic memos were used to capture observations about the data throughout the coding process and embedded within each spreadsheet. During the second cycle, phenomenological reduction was employed to derive nuanced themes from rich descriptions (Dowling, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). The concept of reduction, as proposed by Husserl, involves bracketing one’s preconceived notions as they relate to a particular phenomenon, and experiencing the phenomenon through the language and text of individuals in an effort to relive and intuit its essence and themes (Dowling, 2007). During the second and third cycles of coding, data was regrouped into broader categories, and descriptive, interpretative, theoretical, and process codes were assigned with sub codes. Names for these codes were informed by the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership framework, but applied only when warranted. In addition, other codes related to temporal aspects of innovation or contextual aspects of the environment were also applied. New analytic memos were embedded in the second and third round coding spreadsheets. At the conclusion of coding, the analytic memos were gathered onto a single spreadsheet and sorted so that themes could be identified through analytic induction. This process recognized the emergence of themes through examination of textual data, and consistency of themes from particular case to case (Smith et al.,
Themes fell into the realm of temporality, spatiality, causality, and relation to self and others (Moustakas, 1994). Themes also aligned with the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame leadership framework. As the researcher engaged in the process of data reduction, this investigator understood, experienced, and appreciated the essence of the phenomenon of academic innovation in a transformative fashion (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2012).

Criteria for Quality Qualitative Research

There are many nuances to the concept of quality in qualitative research. Here, ethical considerations and techniques for ensuring credibility will be discussed. In addition, reflection will be shared concerning the transferability of the findings, the need for maintaining an internal audit throughout the study, and the manner in which the researcher’s positionality could impact analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Observing ethical research practices is not only a moral obligation for researchers but a significant factor in contributing to the overall quality of qualitative research (Tracy, 2010). One of the factors contributing to ethical research is the observation of procedures which are consistent with the ethical treatment of human subjects, which includes preserving subjects’ privacy, maintaining honesty throughout the process, and obtaining informed consent (Tracy, 2010). In this case, ethical principles of research with human subjects were observed by obtaining approval of procedures and the informed consent form from the Institutional Review Board of Northeastern University before data was gathered (Smith et al., 2012). In keeping with NEU’s standards, the informed consent form disclosed research intent and potential uses, practices consistent with ethical research (Tracy, 2010). Seidman (2013) and Tracy (2010)
express the importance of researchers respecting the dignity of research subjects before, during, and after interviewing occurs. In this study, it was important for the researcher to ensure that subjects’ personal and institutional identities were protected at every stage to ensure that no harm resulted to participants from reflection on leadership. In addition, as faculty perceptions were analyzed and reported, it was important to respect perspectives in context, even when negative leadership perceptions or practices were reported. Identity and anonymity of research subjects was protected by removing references to names, institutions, specific departments, and even branded courses from digital and paper transcriptions, notes, analytic memos, and reports throughout the process of analysis and reporting. Instead, subjects were assigned pseudonyms which were maintained throughout the study. Papers related to subjects’ transcripts were kept in a locked file cabinet and in password-protected, electronic files. The researcher also maintained awareness of situational and relational ethics which required reflection on an ongoing basis to ensure the welfare of research participants (Tracy, 2010). For example, the researcher refrained from sharing insights from faculty participants with colleagues in or out of her institution which might suggest the identities of participants or their institutions. In addition, exiting ethics as described by Tracy (2010) were observed to ensure that no harm came to subjects as a result of the study after the researcher exited the sites. For example, the researcher did not disclose her identity as an academic dean or researcher when arriving or exiting community college locations to preserve the anonymity of participants in the study. This was especially important in this case as community college faculty were reflecting upon their perceptions of leaders, some of whom are acquaintances of the researcher, throughout the process of bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing to scale.

**Credibility**
Tracy (2010) defines “credibility” as “the trustworthiness, verisimilitude, and plausibility of the research findings” (p. 842). Credibility of this investigation was ensured by following quality guidelines as recommended by Tracy (2010), Rubin and Rubin (2012), and Seidman (2013). Rubin and Rubin (2012) suggest that credibility is derived by ensuring that participants possess first-hand knowledge of the phenomenon under study. This researcher asked participants to verify the aspects of innovation in developmental reading and writing in which they had direct participation, and the aspects of leadership with which they had direct experience as innovations were brought to scale. In addition, Rubin and Rubin (2012) emphasize the importance of ensuring that participants relate perceptions accurately throughout interviews, rather than describing perceptions in the best possible light. This may be facilitated by the researcher’s phrasing questions to allow participants to answer indirectly on more sensitive topics (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Throughout the interview process, self-reflexivity was employed to ensure that the researcher was not imposing views or influencing the perceptions of the interviewee by asking leading questions or engaging in lengthy responses or judgements in response to the subjects’ responses (Seidman, 2013). The researcher made a practice of periodically listening to audio recordings of interviews throughout the study to monitor the amount of time consumed by the researcher’s contributions. The goal was to ensure that the respondent’s dialogue took the vast majority of time in each interview, with the researcher only contributing a line or two after each of the respondent’s contributions (Seidman, 2013). In addition, as an academic dean, the researcher was conscience of not imposing power dynamics on the faculty member which might influence responses during the interview (Seidman, 2013). For example, the researcher asked subjects how they preferred to be addressed and where they wanted the interviewer to sit before beginning the interview.
Credibility in qualitative research was achieved through thick description, triangulation or crystallization, and multivocality and partiality, as well (Tracy, 2010). In the case of IPA, multi-dimensional themes result through rich descriptions from multiple participants which can be broken down into codes that can be traced by other researchers (Saldana, 2016; Smith et al., 2009). Remaining in an inductive posture throughout the research allowed for the analysis to be refined as evidence mounted throughout the study (Smith et al., 2009). In addition, remaining engaged with participants allowed for member-checking during development of findings which also contributed to credibility (Tracy, 2010). For example, the diagram depicted in Figure 5.1 which represents academic leadership perceptions during the process of bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing to scale was checked with four participants to ensure findings rang true to the faculty members’ experiences. These 20 to 40 minute phone dialogues which occurred four months after the initial interview were helpful in building the credibility of the analysis.

**Transferability**

Quality in qualitative research is also reflected in its transferability for practitioners into related contexts (Tracy, 2010). This occurs when readers intuitively relate findings to their own conditions and apply learning to practice (Tracy, 2010). In IPA, rich descriptions are especially powerful in helping researchers discover themes which have resonance for audiences (Smith et al., 2009). The analyst’s role is to provide a rich, transparent, and transferable account of the phenomena under study so that readers can understand findings as applied to their own contexts and within the extant literature (Smith et al., 2009). The idiographic concern with the particular found in IPA research is beneficial because of its depth in analysis of rich descriptions, and because of the attention given to locating generalizations of particular details to particular cases.
of phenomena and individuals (Smith et al., 2009). In this instance, the careful selection of community college faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing was intended to provide rich descriptions of their meaning-making concerning academic leadership as participants brought innovations to scale. Analysis of rich descriptions yielded multi-dimensional themes concerning the phenomena of academic leadership. It is hoped these themes will intuitively resonate with faculty and academic leaders in the community college setting to contribute to contexts which foster innovation in the future.

**Internal Audit**

In order to ensure the credibility of myself as a researcher and the validity of my study, I recognize the importance of accounting for my personal biases, opinions, feelings, and intuition in the design, implementation, and analysis of my research (Roulston & Shelton, 2015). Throughout the process of developing, implementing, analyzing, and reporting the research and findings, I employed reflexive practices (Roulston & Shelton, 2015) to examine and isolate the impact of my background and biases in order to understand and prevent their impact on my study. In particular, my prior professional experience as a market researcher and strategic planner in the private sector had contributed to a bias toward viewing strategic planning favorably in innovation contexts. This bias could have prevented me from recognizing the presence of other themes in the rich descriptions provided by participants. Continued reflection in the form of analytic memos, review of audio tapes and drafts, and member-checking generated insights about sampling, recruitment, data collection, and researcher role which helped protect the integrity of the research and this researcher. Failing to do so would have risked incomplete and potentially faulty research as bias may have been overextended onto the topic, population, or conclusions, as discussed by Fennell and Arnot (2008). Above all, I set aside preconceived
notions, and followed the evidence to understand the theories which informed my research and the conclusions which can be legitimately drawn from the data.

Self-reflexivity and Transparency

When conducting research, it is important for the researcher to establish her positionality to the subject and topic of study in order to protect the credibility of herself as researcher and the validity of her study (Briscoe, 2005). Borrowing from the example of Parsons (2008), a discussion of positionality can begin with a review of the knowledge which the researcher brings to this research interest. This researcher’s personal background, education, and professional career have informed beliefs of how successful innovation can occur as I have been involved in the development of numerous, successful new product and program launches in both the packaged goods and educational sectors. Briscoe (2005) suggests the dimensions of positionality should include an examination of the researcher’s demographics, ideology, and the discursive position of self relative to the other as featured in the research. In addition, Briscoe (2005) suggests that some researchers choose to represent their own ideologies as the most significant potential bias, depending upon the chosen research interest. Here, this researcher’s positionality will be discussed as it relates to the influences of personal ideology on the research interest in order to establish potential bias and develop strategies for preserving the researcher’s neutral position.

As a white women from a lower middle class background, I was raised in strict, Catholic, home and school environments in which hard work, compliance, and strong performance in school were emphasized. My parents were born in the coal-mining regions of Pennsylvania and we returned there often in my youth. The deep poverty I witnessed in the Irish, strip-mining communities contributed to a lifelong passion for social justice causes, and a rebellious desire to
break norms in order to achieve change. Later in life as a parent of a child with severe autism, immersion in the search for innovative, educational interventions reignited my passion for transformative, educational opportunities accessible to all, along with a willingness to go “off-road” with pedagogy. These experiences eventually led me to the community college system as an adjunct, then full-time faculty member, then department chair, and ultimately as an academic dean in two institutions, where my contributions have focused on innovative programming and pedagogy which increases student success. As an academic dean, I have a strong bias toward advocating for the needs of faculty as I believe these are often aligned with the interests of students. In order to accomplish the goal of this research, which was to discover leadership practices which foster instructional innovation among community college faculty, I needed to stay true to the voices of faculty as expressed through their rich descriptions and follow my analysis where it led, member-checking along the way to ensure accuracy in my findings (Smith, et al.).

The use of IPA as a methodology was particularly appropriate for this study given my educational and professional background. As a graduate of a private, elite college with a Bachelor of Arts in English/Communications, interest in the use and application of language for communication has always been evident. Upon completing an M.S. in Advertising at Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism in an applied, social science program, an interest in innovation was sparked while conducting market research and developing and implementing integrated, marketing and communication strategies for a global advertising agency on new, consumer packaged goods and services. Wonder over the process of market-responsive, successful innovation was born as I participated in navigating new product launches through all stages, from ideation to launch at full scale. This experience would also establish
impatience with the pace of market responsiveness and innovation in the community college sector, which has resulted in this research interest. The focus of IPA on text-based data and the particular has leveraged my own facility with language while tempering a bias toward speed in innovation (Smith et al., 2009). These rich descriptions of achieving innovations at scale in the community college context have generated insights which will strengthen my own ability to apply market-responsive, multi-frame leadership which is sensitive to temporal and contextual conditions so that I may support instructional innovation going forward.

When conducting leadership research, Sinclair (2010) argued that a researcher should acknowledge her place relative to the subjects of her inquiry in order to understand how the “power and vulnerabilities” (p. 447) of her position relative to leadership can contribute to bias. In this case, my research challenged me to interview faculty innovators who are my former peers and current subordinates. I consider myself to be a champion of this group as a former faculty innovator, myself. At the same time, I recognize that faculty may have a different perspective of me as an administrator, and may feel disinclined to share honest, negative perceptions of academic leadership given my position. I endeavored to establish a sense of safety for faculty during my interviews to encourage frankness.

Based on this analysis of my positionality relative to that of my research subjects, it is clear I may experience professional benefits by identifying positive practices or insights in existing academic leadership. Faculty may also view me more favorably as I work within a critical/constructivist paradigm with this research. Alternately, I may experience backlash or professional resentment from existing academic leadership in the event that my investigation identifies deficiencies in practice. As a result of my place as a middle manager in higher
education, I have used caution in order to accurately represent my findings and avoid positive or negative bias in interpretation.

Now, as a Caucasian, affluent woman at the youngest end of the Baby Boom generation, I could have evidenced bias due to my demographic background which could have influenced my interpretation of results if caution was not observed. Kezar and Lester (2010) suggest women may recognize aspects of leadership not observed or practiced by male counterparts, including a tendency by some women toward collectivism and away from hierarchical relationships. I guarded against over interpreting this dynamic in my findings. In addition, Kezar and Lester (2010) urge researchers to avoid essentialism and recognize that leadership views can be constructed through multiple influences, including demographics, culture, gender, and race. For this reason, as I engaged with community college faculty from a variety of backgrounds, I avoided stereotyping my expectations and interpretations of their leadership perceptions. For example, I did not automatically expect that white, male faculty members older than myself would share traditional, hierarchical perspectives on leadership, despite the fact that I have perceived oppression by white, male leaders in this group in past positions.

Limitations

This study was conducted among a focused subgroup of full-time faculty members of community colleges in Northeastern states. Findings may not be representative of regions or community colleges outside of this area. In addition, participation was restricted to English and/or Developmental Reading and Writing faculty members who have successfully innovated in developmental reading and writing within the past five years. In addition, because all respondents had chosen to innovate by creating a model, customized to their institution but based on the Accelerate Learning Program (ALP) first implemented by the Community College of
Baltimore and strongly promoted nationwide, these findings may not be representative of academic innovation processes in other disciplines or drawing from other models in the same discipline. Also, because this study only included Caucasian participants, I cannot assume that my findings are representative of academic leadership perceptions for other racial groups. Given the idiographic focus of IPA research, it is important to recognize that this research reflects some of the lived experiences with academic leadership among English and/or Developmental Reading and Writing faculty innovators in the Northeast community college environment as innovations in developmental reading and writing were brought to scale. There is a focus on particular, rich descriptions of particular individuals which may not be representative of this population as a whole (Smith et al., 2009). In order to maintain the quality of this research, using the findings within their limitations is necessary.

**Conclusion**

Chapter Three provided an overview of the methodology which was employed in this study to address the research question. By reviewing its ideography, data collection, and analysis techniques, IPA was identified as the methodology of choice because of its advantages in exploring faculty perceptions of academic leadership through a focus on rich descriptions and the particular (Smith et al., 2009). Parameters for qualifying participants and engaging in sampling were also shared in preparation for describing strategies which would ensure the quality of this study. Finally, the researcher’s positionality relative to participants and the research question was described to ensure practices were established to acknowledge and manage potential bias in the study. Limitations of the research were also identified to ensure the findings would be used appropriately, also contributing to the quality of this study.
Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

The purpose of this research was to understand how community college English faculty who have innovated in developmental reading and writing at scale to increase student success have perceived academic leadership throughout the process of innovation. Transcripts of nine participants were analyzed using three cycles of coding to capture and group data into themed categories. During the first, inductive cycle, between 40 and 50 descriptive codes were attached per interview to identify participant traits, innovation influences, needs, process points, context, emotions, perceived leadership practices at various stages in the innovation process, faculty activities associated with instructional reform, and perceived student outcomes. The definition used for “process of innovation” as provided in Chapter One provided important, temporal boundaries for the leadership practices under investigation. Analytic memos were used to capture observations about the data throughout the coding. During the second cycle of coding, phenomenological reduction was used to assign approximately 20 broader descriptive, theoretical, interpretative and process codes with subcodes. Names for these codes were derived from key contextual and temporal influences related to the process of innovation as described by faculty. During the third cycle, frames of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership model were used as codes for data, as appropriate and when well-aligned with faculty descriptions of academic leadership practices. Ultimately, three superordinate themes were identified with three to four subordinate themes found within each superordinate theme. These include 1) Catalysts for Innovation, with nested themes of 1.1) National Catalysts, 1.2) State-based Catalysts, 1.3) Institutional Leadership Catalysts, and 1.4) Faculty Department Catalysts; 2) Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four Frame Leadership Framework, with nested themes of 2.1) Structural Frame, 2.2) Human Resources Frame, 2.3) Political Frame, and 2.4) Symbolic
Frame; and 3.0) Community of Practice Formation, with nested themes of 3.1) Assembling the Group, 3.2) Multidisciplinary Expertise, and 3.3) Reimagining the Curriculum.

The participants for this research included eight, full-time faculty members currently employed in community colleges in the Northeastern region of the United States. In addition, a ninth participant was a faculty member throughout the process of innovation in developmental reading and writing, from concept to scale, at her institution, and accepted an interim position as an assistant academic dean two months prior to the interview. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the superordinate and subordinate themes, along with their incidence in the transcripts of the nine respondents. The names listed are not real to protect confidentiality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.1: Superordinate and Subordinate Themes</th>
<th>Jane</th>
<th>Lila</th>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Tom</th>
<th>Nancy</th>
<th>Joanne</th>
<th>Jake</th>
<th>Peg</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Catalysts for Innovation</td>
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<td>1.1 National Catalysts</td>
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<td>1.2 State-based Catalysts</td>
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<td>1.3 Institutional Leadership Catalysts</td>
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<td>1.4 Faculty Department Catalysts</td>
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<td>2.1 Structural Frame</td>
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<td>2.2 Human Resources Frame</td>
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<td>2.3 Political Frame</td>
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<td>2.4 Symbolic Frame</td>
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<td>3.0 CoP Formation to Achieve Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1 Assembling the Group</td>
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<td>3.2 Multidisciplinary Expertise</td>
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<td>3.3 Reimagining Curriculum</td>
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Next, each theme will be developed using evidence from transcripts.

**Catalysts to Innovation**

The superordinate theme of Catalysts to Innovations refers to the participants’ perceptions of internal and external prompts that caused their academic departments to begin the process of innovating in developmental reading and writing to improve student success at scale. This initial stage of the instructional innovation process is significant to the study of academic leadership which supports innovation to the extent that faculty perceived catalysts to innovation within their environment as a result of academic leadership practices. As stated previously, federal and state governments, along with private entities such as the Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation, have pointed to generally poor developmental education outcomes as a significant barrier to student success (Adams & McKusick, 2014; Morris, 2012; Pierce, 2017). For this reason, examining the manner in which successful faculty innovators made meaning of external and internal catalysts in their environment which prompted innovation in developmental reading and writing is important to this study, particularly to the extent that academic leaders were seen as influencing faculty exposure to the catalysts.

Within the Interview Protocol (Appendix D), all participants were asked to describe factors that prompted their effort to innovate in developmental reading and writing in order to improve student success. As demonstrated in Table 4.1, all participants identified the convergence of a set of catalysts that prompted them to take action, and exposure to most of these catalysts was linked to decisions made by academic leaders. In particular, all participants demonstrated the influence of national initiatives such as reform movements, best practices,
conferences, or published, peer-reviewed research as prompts toward instructional innovation in developmental reading and writing. In addition, awareness of statewide legislative and/or educational policy initiatives also catalyzed some departments. Every participant identified demand from senior leadership within his or her institution for developmental education innovation as a strong catalyst to commence this process. One participant described the innovation initiative as originating within his own department. As a whole, these catalysts indicate a convergence of prompts, both external and internal, which had a powerful influence on catalyzing instructional innovation and which were made possible through leadership decision making.

Overall, exploration of how successful faculty innovators make meaning of catalysts to innovation, including national catalysts, state-based catalysts, institutional leadership catalysts, departmental catalysts, and strategic planning catalysts, may be valuable in helping academic leaders understand how to activate the innovation process against strategic initiatives. In this way, the data is used both descriptively and prescriptively to identify themes and their potential implications.

**National Catalysts**

Results of these interviews demonstrate that the national dialogue concerning lack of student success in developmental education in the community college sector had impacted these faculty innovators due to national professional development opportunities prioritized by their academic leaders. As shown in Table 4.1, every participant demonstrated awareness of a range of national initiatives that served, in part, to catalyze the process of innovation in their departments. These initiatives included state-based legislation affecting access to developmental education that attracted national attention, national conferences, new models for developmental
education reform, such as the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) from the Community College of Baltimore, published, peer-reviewed research, and movements such as Achieving the Dream.

For example, the participant describing the most self-directed department, Jake, identified attendance at a national conference as the catalyst for developmental reading and writing reform on his campus. Jake shared, “In 2011, a colleague and I went to the two-year college, English Association Conference in Portland, Maine.” He explained that his colleague had the opportunity to hear Peter Adams, of the Community College of Baltimore, explain the ALP model. Jake described his vivid recollection of the moment as an important turning point, “After this session, my colleague and I met up and I remember she said, ‘We’re having lunch with this man I just met and he’s going to change the way we do things.’ I thought, ‘Okay.’ We had lunch with Peter Adams.” Jake’s statement demonstrates the localized impact which occurred when academic leaders provided access to national conferences that highlighted improved student outcomes in developmental education achieved through ALP, originating with the Community College of Baltimore.

The important influence of access to professional development through national conferences in serving as a catalyst for innovation was seen in Tom’s comments, as well, “Many members of our department, actually every member of our department at one point or another attended the conferences, I think sponsored by NADE (National Association of Developmental Education).” Tom suggested that the NADE conference stimulated his entire department to visit Community College of Baltimore together to learn more about the ALP Model, “And I personally went to Baltimore and learned about the Baltimore model of acceleration, the ALP program, ALP, Accelerated Learning Program. We all went to Baltimore together.” The impact
of first-hand learning opportunities with faculty peers who had implemented the model was
highly persuasive, according to Tom, who explained:

I'm not one who enjoys traveling to conferences. But, I'm so glad I went to Baltimore
and was exposed to all those new ideas, and learned a lot more about acceleration and
spoke to people who've implemented it. They were people who were teaching
acceleration. I mean, the workshop leaders, the workshop facilitators were everyone from
administrators to actual teaching faculty. So there were many different species of
resources of people to talk to.

Investment in higher education journals and related research also seemed to serve as an
external catalyst for some institutions. Jane said, “There was also a lot of material written in a
variety of journals and newsletters and across the country about how developmental education
was failing.” She described research that demonstrated that the “long pipeline” of developmental
classes students were required to take was proving to be “ineffective”.

Beyond national conferences and published research regarding outcomes in
developmental education, leadership choices to participate in national reform movements such as
Achieving the Dream, initiated by the Lumina Foundation in 2004, also stimulated innovation
initiatives on some campuses (Achieving the Dream, 2018). In describing the catalyst for
engagement in developmental education reform on his campus, Mark stated, “Achieving the
Dream and all of that was going on.” Peg also shared that her institution was very aware of
institutional performance data related to developmental education because of the Achieving the
Dream initiative. She said, “I was on Achieving the Dream core team, where we began to look
at that information.” She was able to place her institution’s prioritization of developmental
education reform into a national context, saying, “This is where the state was heading. This is where, nationwide, we're heading.”

The Complete College America nonprofit entity, an organization established in 2009 to address low completion rates among college students via targeted reform strategies such as Guided Pathways to Success, corequisite support for developmental education students, and academic map creation, among others, also was perceived to have significant influence on some participants’ campuses (Complete College American, 2018). Nancy shared her perception of senior academic leadership introducing “Guided Pathways” initiatives on her campus, “I would say though, for the most part, the administration brought Guided Pathways to us and said, ‘This is something we really need to do.’”

Legislation in neighboring states affecting community college developmental education delivery was also a catalyst for institutions who recognized that their own states could be next in mandating educational policy with which institutions might not agree. In fact, Jane said, “Look at what's happened in other states where they're cutting out developmental education completely. So this had to be, and I'm very quick to change when I have to.” Peg’s department was also alarmed at the news of a neighboring state’s legislation pertaining to developmental education, “When the state of Connecticut, in particular said, ‘There will be no more developmental.’ That was just ... that was alarming. They're a similar demographic to our state, and seem to be more liberal. All those things, and we're going, ‘What's going on?’” Clearly, news of legislative initiatives in neighboring states heightened the extent to which faculty perceived pressure to begin the innovation process.

On a national level, it appears that published research concerning poor student outcomes in developmental education contributed to national reform movements such as Achieving the
Dream and Complete College America. Institutional and academic leadership decisions to participate in these movements on individual campuses seems to have influenced faculty awareness and sense of urgency around the need to innovate in developmental reading and writing. In addition, faculty initiative seems to be have been strengthened by access made possible through academic leaders to national and statewide conferences in which best practices were shared and mandated, and developmental education reform legislation in neighboring states was discussed. Some faculty participants seemed impacted particularly by the state of Connecticut passing Public Act 12-40 in 2012, which required public community colleges and state universities to reconfigure delivery of remedial education (ConnSCU, 2018). Faculty exposure to related websites and social media contributed to connectivity and increased the sense of urgency on innovators’ campuses, catalyzing the process of developmental education reform at an institutional level. Next, state-based influences on faculty innovation efforts will be examined.

**State-based Catalysts**

Participants seemed to perceive that in response to national interest in poor, community college completion rates, lawmakers and politicians in their own states were applying varying degrees of pressure to institutional leaders in community colleges to innovate in response. Though none of the participants’ state legislatures actually mandated reform, many faculty seemed to perceive a window of opportunity during which freedom to pursue internally-driven change was permitted. Some participants described the belief that failure to achieve change could result in forced reform.

For example, describing his governor’s community college plan, Mark said, “So…the state as a whole wanted this coreq thing to happen. It could have been imposed from the top
down.” Later, he clarified, “I mean, really, it, it did come from (governor’s name) (vision and goals).” Similarly, Lila noted the convergence of priorities between the Department of Higher Education in her state, her administration, and her department, “I would say that, it kind of all happened, it’s hard to say one or the other, it kind of all came together, it was like in a very kind of nice way. The Department of Higher Ed, was like, ‘We're having this thing, and we're doing this thing.’ And the department's like, ‘Yeah, we're interested in this thing.’ And administration's saying, ‘Great, because we are too.’” Bill also identified the influence of statewide priorities on his dean’s leadership, and the resulting manner in which his department embraced their window of opportunity to innovate:

I think that came from the dean's being pretty tied into what was going on at the statewide level. It kind of helped us make the argument because we could say, ‘Listen. We're just a couple years ahead of the eight ball here. These changes are going to come in one form or another. We want to do it in a way that works for us. So, we're implementing this now. We want to make sure it really works for our school and for our students. And here's the model that we've come up with.’

Nancy also described the direct pressure she perceived her institutional leaders experiencing from the state legislature, “Basically it comes down to getting somewhat of a directive from our legislature about, ‘Okay, these students are not really moving along. You need to figure out a way to help move things more quickly for them so that they do persist and they are successful.’” She later shared the implied threat that she recognized, “I mean in my mind what was maybe left unsaid was, ‘Or we will figure out how to do it for you.’” Nancy shared that no faculty wanted lawmakers “deciding what’s right for our students.” She portrayed implementation of the ALP model as a requirement that was necessary to avoid mandated
interventions from lawmakers. In Nancy’s words, “We implemented the ALP and the writing courses kind of in response to this idea that we're going to be legislated into doing something about this if we don't figure something out.”

Joanne also demonstrated a somewhat cynical perception of external influences on institutional leadership in her description of how performance-based funding incentives in her state directed institutional strategy. She stated:

At that time there was a lot of pressure from the state because of federal funding. One of the big things was getting students to graduate in a certain amount of time. That's still a big concern here in the state. And getting students to graduate. So, it started really coming down to money. The school realized that they would be losing performance-based funding if they didn't get 'X' amount of students to graduate in a certain time frame.

Joanne shared the difficulty she initially experienced in trying to understand the impact of performance-based funding on her institution, and the role of academic leaders in helping her connect the implications to her work in developmental education. She shared, “Initially, I didn't get all the background about the performance based funding. And then I realized what brought that to the forefront…The other deans in developmental ed were explaining how it all connected, and how they were getting a lot of heat from the state.”

Though none of the institutions represented by these participants actually experienced mandated reform from their own state legislatures, the perceived pressure from statewide policy makers on community college developmental education strategy is evident. This influence is significant in the context of examining academic leadership during the process of innovation as the manner in which academic leaders helped faculty make meaning of these external influences
affected faculty motivation and willingness to engage in reform. Next, the perception of academic leaders as a direct catalyst on the innovation process will be examined.

**Institutional Leadership Catalysts**

All participants in these interviews described the desire of senior, institutional leaders, including presidents, vice presidents, provosts, and academic deans, for improvement in students’ developmental education success rates. Participants shared initiatives taken by senior leaders to engage English and/or developmental reading and writing faculty in undertaking the process of change. Excerpts from transcripts demonstrate that faculty had mixed reactions to initiation driven by senior leadership. These reactions were often influenced by faculty perception of administration’s motives, their sense of trust in academic leadership, and the extent to which faculty were able to respond with some sense of freedom and ownership.

Demonstrating receptivity to intervention by senior leadership, Bill, a newer faculty member who was teaching developmental education at the time innovation began on his campus, stated:

Well, I remember maybe a year or two before we began this process, I went to a meeting. The VP and our department chair at that time. And, we looked at the numbers for developmental. And I was teaching Reading at the time, so I was curious about how we were doing and what it looked like. And how we were comparing to other schools. So that for me was the first time it was kind of…a little light went on in my head. Bill then described his perception of administration’s role in identifying the developmental reading and writing student success problem on his campus, and finding options to resolve the issue, “In this case, the problem was the data. And a solution came, in many ways, from the administration.” Bill elaborated on his vice president and dean taking the liberty of inviting
Peter Adams from the Community College of Baltimore to his campus to meet with the entire English department who attended the meeting voluntarily. Bill’s remarks convey an appreciation for his administration’s initiative in bringing Peter Adams to campus:

(After attending a conference) you have a brown bag lunch and you share some of that with people. But it isn't actually that focused. I think it's actually much more focused to say, ‘Hey, we're bringing this person to campus. They're an expert. And they have this model that we think we should consider. Let's all look at it together and then talk about it.’

Bill also demonstrated receptivity to a proven model presented by an expert faculty member from another campus, explaining, “So the guy who started that came and lectured here. And, he gave a big presentation with a ton of data that they'd gathered and it was very convincing.” After a lengthy, technical description of how the ALP Model from the Community College of Baltimore impacts student success, Bill again demonstrated his appreciation for intervention from senior administration, “So that was easy. So basically the model was sort of presented to us as being, ‘Hey, this is what it would look like here. And the president's on board.’ So that also made it easy.” Overall, Bill’s positive reaction to initiatives taken by senior academic leadership on his campus suggests that a productive working relationship can result when institutional leadership serves as catalyst to innovation.

Similarly, Lila demonstrated her positive perception of administration’s initiative in inviting Peter Adams from the Community College of Baltimore to her campus, “Years ago, we had Peter Adams come, and talk to us about ALP, and that was interesting. Baltimore, Community College of Baltimore, who has spearheaded, he was in charge of doing the co-requisite model.” Lila demonstrated that the invitation to an outside speaker on the subject of
developmental education reform was positively received by faculty, “We have had a lot of support in administration.” She also attested to the interest piqued among faculty, “In a way, we were certainly interested.”

Tom also appreciated perceived partnership from senior leadership on his campus who requested that faculty investigate new models for delivery of developmental reading and writing. Tom described a consultation on his campus with Peter Adams from the Community College of Baltimore, who spearheaded ALP. Tom said, “I think some people, maybe in administration, and I can get to that too - we have had a lot of support in administration - had heard about his work and said, ‘You know, you guys might want to listen and hear what he's doing.’”

Describing a more authoritative approach taken by institutional leaders on her campus, Nancy, shared that her dean chose the ALP model before consulting with the English department. Having previously described statewide legislative influences that stimulated her institution to take action, Nancy stated:

One of the key people in this whole thing was our Dean of Learning Resources who saw the Community College of Baltimore County had developed this Accelerated Learning Program, that is corequisite courses for remediation. What that looked like for me was, ‘Hey, we're going to be trying this ALP thing. We're going to have someone come from Community College of Baltimore County, (name) is a consultant, and teach us about the model, give us some best practices.’ She did come several times.

Careful selection of faculty participants for the innovation team by the academic leader in this case seems to have been critical to success. Nancy described her department chair’s selectivity in inviting faculty members with an “open-minded” and “student-centered frame of mind” to participate in the initial working group. She shared, “Well number one, I think because the
department chair picked people who are ... just by nature like to try new things and are open to things like that.” She later added, “I think they chose people who would be willing to at least consider that our students were capable of this.” Finally, she emphasized, “Again, these people were all picked because of their outlook towards our students, towards what they could do and what we thought we could do to improve Dev Ed.” Nancy’s perspective demonstrates the political sensitivity that is necessary when academic leaders take a more directive approach to catalyzing academic innovation. The importance of the academic leader taking quick steps in support of faculty collaboration and innovation is also evident in this case.

Faculty on other campuses were less receptive to initiatives originating from senior leadership, and differences in trust seem to be at the root of the challenges. For example, Jane said, “What the dean had told me and my then two full-time members of my department was that if we did not change this, then the provost would change this.” Jane said, “So it was kind of a threat. It was a threat that we had to make this change. Yeah, because that resonates with me when she said, ‘If you don't change it, he's going to change it for you.’ And he being the provost.”

Other participants also demonstrated discomfort with perceived heavy-handedness and suspect motivation on the part of institutional leadership. For example, Joanne stated bluntly, “So, this ALP came from the top down. That was coming from the dean. She was in charge of selecting the model. We were told what we were going to do.” Joanne attributed financial motivation to leadership, which is seen in these remarks, “So, it started really coming down to money. The school realized that they would be losing performance-based funding if they didn't get 'X' amount of students to graduate in a certain timeframe.” Yet, Joanne’s description of her own orientation toward innovation reveals her fit with the project, “I was open to it. I'm always
open to new things in innovation in teaching. I liked the concept for the student because I felt it could give a student a break.” At the same time, Joanne demonstrated a resigned perception that the only way an academic innovation can come to fruition is when it aligns with the attention of institutional leadership. She stated, “I find the only time things truly happen, unfortunately, and it’s not because of lack of innovation on the faculty side, but the only time things truly start to move is when it comes from administration.” Joanne’s perception suggests academic leaders could catalyze faculty engagement in innovation by highlighting faculty access to resources. Joanne finally stated, “I think a lot of it comes down to money that we might need to go for training, or to have somebody come here and get technology, more computer classrooms, laptops for all faculty members. Things of that nature, which can be a little bit tight here.”

Another example of discomfort expressed by a participant in the face of an institutional mandate for developmental education reform was Peg, who stated, “The administration was saying, ‘Let's do it.’ We were getting the message, ‘We’ve got to do it. We don't have much choice.’” Peg described perceived directives from senior institutional leadership, as well as her academic dean, which left no choice but for the department to engage in the change process. She described her institution’s desire to stay in front of legislators by stating, “It was the academic vice president, the president, everybody is looking at this because we're wanting to not be, again, told we have to make those changes.” She also described pressure applied by her dean, ”You guys need to sit down and figure this out. We need to do this, so figure it out.” Peg provided numerous examples of the stress and internal discomfort she experienced when faced with pressure to change, and to change within an acceleration framework. She shared, “We were being informed, and I would say that as I think about that, because we’ve come a long way from there, that I felt we were being pushed.” As an experienced faculty member with a specialization
in developmental education, she also described her discomfort with acceleration, “There was resistance on my part when I first heard about the particular model we're doing right now.” She continued, “The term, ‘acceleration,’ was threatening, because it ... The worry about letting go of standards, push people through, not really serve them.” Yet, because of the national movement to improve developmental outcomes in combination with pressure from institutional leadership, Peg described her department’s acceptance of responsibility for investigating improvement opportunities, “We need to be able to answer to, ‘How are you responding to that data?’ ‘This is how we're responding.’ So that was our motivation to say, ‘We won't ... do not want to be at the mercy of someone telling us, 'You need to do this and you have to do it now.'"

Overall, these participants describe environments in which senior academic leaders were heavily engaged in leading developmental reading and writing educational reform on their campuses. Some faculty members seemed able to reconcile perceived heavy-handedness, reported in the form of leaders mandating specific instructional models, choosing members of innovation teams, or imposing challenging timeframes with expected student benefits from reform. Others were more receptive to innovation pressures from academic leaders. In these instances, participants seemed to describe their departments’ retention of some decision-making authority for overall instructional reform and trust in their administration’s motivation and expertise on the subject of developmental education reform.

**Faculty Departmental Catalysts**

While six of the participants described faculty departments as collaborating with institutional leadership in prompting the process of innovation, only Jake perceived the innovation originating strictly from within his department. It appears from these interviews that faculty either did not perceive the urgency of the need to innovate in developmental education
until it was brought to their attention by an external or internal catalyst, or conversely, faculty recognized the need for change, but could not access resources until the developmental education issue had captured the attention of senior leadership at their institutions.

For example, Jane said, “We were not aware that it needed to be done at that moment because this was early for my institution. I think we did something about it. I think we were one of the first in the state who changed things.” Nancy described her department’s awareness of poor student outcomes in developmental reading and writing course sequences, “So we did recognize that something had to be done.” She described her department’s efforts to address developmental placement over “several years” by considering “multiple measures” for placing students into courses.

Peg also shared her department’s recognition of challenges with student outcomes, sharing, “As the Department of Developmental Studies, it’s our mandate to try to be examining things. We were looking at this data. We were aware of our own school's data, and we were also aware of the larger movement across the country, where people were looking at this, and looking at what other schools were doing.” At the same time, despite acknowledging awareness of poor student outcomes, Peg shared her department’s resistance to innovation, “There was struggle initially because of some resistance to letting go of the way we'd been doing things in developmental, and worrying about what the changes were.” Peg emphasized her colleagues’ concern with doing harm to students in the process of change, “Going to make it worse for the students, that’s all the kinds of things that were swirling around.”

Conversely, Mark described a “convergence” of influences, both external and internal, which he perceived were successfully leveraged by academic leadership and the English department to begin the process of innovation. He stated, “The coreq innovation could not have
been as successful as it had been if it hadn't been the merging of top down from the state and administrative desire with faculty perception of the usefulness of the innovation.” Later, he stated unequivocally, “We wanted to innovate.” He explained further, “That the thing that was being forced on us was the thing we chose to do anyway is an incredibly happy accident because it actually made sense and it worked.” While Mark described the convergence of influences as a “happy accident”, it appears that data-informed strategy, strong relationships between senior academic leadership and faculty, and participation in the national dialogue were all reflections of an engaged campus that facilitated its own success.

In example of faculty-driven, grass roots reform, Jake described a department that perceived institutional support for developmental education, but was catalyzed to action from within. After attending a national conference in 2011, described previously, in which Jake and his colleague had the opportunity to speak with Peter Adams, Jake described his perception of his colleague’s leadership in stimulating developmental education reform within his institution amid receptive leadership from a President who had previously taught developmental reading and writing:

My colleague and I returned. She had been scheduled to teach two sections of English 101 and a section of our Reading Writing II which is our upper level developmental English class. She went back and registration was starting in a few weeks. She said, ‘I'm going to pilot this in the spring.’… It was fortuitous, I guess, that he (the President) was in charge of the college at the time. He was an early advocate for the program which obviously helped tremendously because as a faculty member you need the buy in from the top, even if it’s coming sort of from the grassroots of the college.
Jake’s description, shared with significant pride, demonstrates a response from institutional leadership to a faculty member’s initiation of a unique reform. In this case, the faculty member’s proposal represented significant cost savings from the ALP model because class size for the developmental course was not reduced, and the cohort of developmental students was distributed across two Composition I courses, “triangulating” the model. According to Jake, “Ours is a different program. There are advantages to ours and I’m sure that Peter (Adams) would say there are disadvantages to ours with the larger class size.” In this case, strong and swift support from academic leadership enabled Jake’s colleague to contribute an additional, cost-effective variation to the existing array of ALP models on the national landscape.

Overall, the participants demonstrate that while most faculty were aware of the need for improvement in developmental education outcomes, grass-roots initiation at the departmental level was an exception and only occurred after faculty received access to national conferences. Swift, supportive responses from academic leaders in the form of access to financial resources and political advocacy were seen by faculty as essential to the innovation effort.

Conclusions

Overall, these faculty innovators perceive that numerous external and internal catalysts ranging from national, to statewide, to institutional, to departmental, contributed to catalyzing the innovation efforts which resulted in scaled improvement in developmental reading and writing student success in their institutions. On a national level, participants described becoming aware of published research that demonstrated the urgent need for reforming developmental educational sequences that created numerous loopholes for students who failed to persist. This awareness was facilitated by decisions made by academic leaders to participate in national reform movements such as Achieving the Dream and Complete College America, and through
faculty participation in related national and statewide conferences which was sponsored by their home institutions.

Academic leaders were astute to the extent that they encouraged faculty participation in the national conversation by financing travel to conferences or even bringing prospective developmental education reform models to their own campuses, such as the ALP Model from the Community College of Baltimore, with associated consultants. It appears that when senior leadership gave faculty the opportunity to own decision-making in at least some aspects of developmental education reform, faculty participated willingly. At the same time, heavy-handed interventions on the part of institutional leadership were perceived as threats with suspect, financial motives. In these contexts, trust was diminished.

The most creative example of innovation occurred on the campus in which faculty perceived themselves as initiating the innovation process on their own campus at an early stage of the national dialogue. The extent to which leadership activities align with the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) leadership framework will be examined next.

**Evidence of Multi-frame Leadership**

The theoretical framework chosen for this interpretative phenomenological analysis was Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Framework. This framework will serve as one of three superordinate themes in this analysis. The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework has been used frequently to analyze leadership trends in the community college sector (Clark & Lindahl, 2014; McArdle, 2013; Sypawka et al., 2010). This analysis provides the opportunity to examine faculty perceptions of academic leadership in the context of bringing an innovation to scale to determine which, if any, of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) leadership frames contributed while leading for instructional innovation in the community
college environment. Here, evidence from participants’ interviews will be shared according to the four frames of the model that will serve as subordinate themes. These frames include the Structural Frame, in which leaders use analytical and design skills to create plans to achieve goals; the Human Resources Frame, in which leaders act as supporters or servants while empowering individuals in their assigned roles; the Political Frame, in which leaders advocate for individuals in an environment of scarce resources; and finally, the Symbolic Frame, in which leaders strive to attach meaning to facts and events in order to provide a shared sense of mission within a chaotic environment (Bolman and Deal, 1991, 2017). Prior leadership studies within the community college sector have suggested that while the Structural and Human Resources Frames are frequently employed by community college senior leaders, the Political and Symbolic Frames are often not leveraged to full effect (Clark & Lindahl, 2014; McArdle, 2013; Sypawka et al., 2010). Given the importance of innovation at this critical junction for the sector, exploring whether and how faculty experience the leadership behaviors falling within the four frames during innovation can be helpful in preparing future leaders.

**Structural Frame**

The Structural Frame was most evident when participants described senior academic leaders who initiated innovation in developmental reading and writing within their institutions to achieve a strategic goal. Faculty were typically unable to identify a specific strategic plan which stimulated the initiative by senior leadership, and, as reviewed previously, these interventions by institutional leaders were met with mixed reactions from faculty departments.

For example, Jane described leadership strategies which fit Bolman and Deal’s (1991 2017) Structural Frame. She described a perceived “threat” in her provost’s insistence on curriculum reform, followed by the imposition of a curriculum leadership role for herself in
which she would lead a team through curricular revision and training. Jane described a period which was “too short” for the purpose. She said, “So my dean at the time said that we needed to create a new course that would move students more quickly into the courses that they would get for credit, for college credit, because the developmental courses offer no college credit.” Jane went on to describe a perceived absence of collaboration with administration concerning the model that should be employed, and the speed with which the innovation should be implemented. She stated, “It came from our provost and we did not have a choice in the matter.” In this instance, the Structural Frame is in evidence as senior academic leaders imposed strategic imperatives on faculty to spur innovation.

Similarly, Joanne described an environment in which institutional leadership recognized the need for change in developmental education, sharing, “So, instead of having the state mandate what we were going to do, we proactively as a school, came up with the concept to fill that problem, to fix that problem.” Joanne shared the decision of her dean to choose the model for faculty, stating, “We had a lot of training through the Community College of Baltimore County. So, this ALP came from the top down.” Once again, senior academic leaders appear to have imposed a strategic initiative on faculty who were charged with innovating in developmental reading and writing delivery.

Like Jane and Joanne, Peg described a highly structured set of leadership influences that mandated innovation in developmental education. As her institution became an Achieving the Dream college, she stated, “It was the academic vice president, the president, everybody's looking at this (developmental education outcomes) because we're wanting to not be, again, told we have to make those changes.” According to Peg, though, that mandate was indeed received from her dean, “Essentially the dean said, ‘This is what you need to do, and you and you need to
work together and make this happen.” This event resulted in Peg’s leading a reluctant, interdisciplinary team of instructors through the process of curriculum revision for corequisite delivery under the ALP model. Clearly, goal-driven, strategic interventions that are associated with the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Structural Frame resulted in specific plans to reform developmental reading and writing in each of these institutions.

At the same time, the perceived heavy-handedness on the part of the highest levels of institutional leadership had implications for how academic deans worked with faculty in executing mandates for innovation. Resentment can be gleaned from Joanne’s tone as she describes the institution’s decision-making process, “That was coming from the dean. She was in charge of selecting the model. We were told what we were gonna do.” In addition, Jane’s words suggest an absence of trust in her experience with academic leadership, “It was foisted right upon us (by the provost). And then it was denied.” Jane described the faculty’s reaction to the mandate, “There was some anger and resentment.” In describing her own, new leadership role, Jane said, “I was asked to be the head of this mini-grant and to be in charge of everything, to pull together a number of people.” In relating the charge she shared with her team, Jane said she explained, “We need to have a mini-group over the summer in which we sit down and plan a new method, a new syllabus.” Jane shared that she was daunted by the prospect of the task and the timeframe her team had to produce the revision, “I think the planning needed to be longer, not just a summer, to change into a six credit course. To change five courses into one. When you do a mini-grant it's got the due date. I feel like it was a work in progress.” Had Jane, Joanne, Peg, and their colleagues not perceived leadership support from their academic deans in keeping with the other three frames in the Bolman and Deal (1991 2017) Four-Frame Leadership model, the innovations at these institution may have been derailed by conflict.
Conversely, other faculty members evidenced perceptions of academic leaders employing the Structural Frame as they shared perceptions of tolerable prodding from institutional leadership to investigate options in developmental education innovation. In these instances, the strategic initiatives from leadership were well received, particularly when combined with data sharing and faculty empowerment. For example, Tom perceived his administration’s data-sharing in an effort to stimulate innovation in developmental education to be a characteristic of transparent, strategic leadership, saying, “Proactive administrators encourage innovation, not just for the sake of innovation, but they are able to explain plainly and with evidence, why this is needed in order for faculty to buy in. Real transparency. Sharing the research.”

Yet, while some faculty were receptive to senior leadership’s initiatives to stimulate innovation, the actions were rarely perceived as a part of an overall strategic plan. Lila said, “But I know administration fairly early on was interested in this and encouraged us to look into it.” As a department chair, she showed little, top-of-mind awareness of strategic plan details, stating when asked directly, “We have a five-year strategic plan and I am not on any of those committees, and I don’t remember. I think in general, there was a general developmental-innovating developmental practices.” Lila also stated that she was unaware of strategic planning informing budget allocation of resources during the process of innovating and achieving scale. Yet, she was aware of senior leadership’s support for development of the ALP model, “We had support from the president.”

Similarly, Bill perceived his administration’s intervention as connected to a strategic planning effort aimed at addressing poor student outcomes in developmental education, but could not elaborate on specific aspects of the strategic plan. Still, Bill shared his confidence in leadership’s clarity, “The administration was pretty clear about what our model would look like.
So that was easy. So basically the model was sort of presented to us as being, ‘Hey, this is what it would look like here, and the president's on board.’ So that also made it easy.”

Bill understood that senior leadership was working in response to data on student outcomes, “I'm assuming our VP and our dean were looking for solutions to the numbers problem just because they were so poor.” Like Lila, Bill did not spontaneously connect the efforts of leadership to an overall, strategic plan, but did acknowledge that vague thought was given to the plan as the department attempted to justify its needs throughout the innovation process, “Well, we definitely thought about the strategic plan. I don't know that we were that much going through the rubric and every little thing, and making sure that we hit all these.”

Nancy also demonstrated awareness of a connection to strategic planning efforts within her institution, but only when prompted, stating, “Our strategic plan definitely addresses completion and persistence. To that end we know that these are things that we need to improve upon to make more students able to get through their program, or transfer or whatever it is they want to do.”

Nancy went on to describe her perceptions of the strategic planning context for the faculty innovators in her institution, “I'd say while it's background for what we're doing in terms of our innovation I think we don't ... The people working on these innovations aren't necessarily like, ‘We have to do this because it's a strategic plan.’”

Mark also evidenced lack of awareness of strategic planning influence, “We did not have a charge toward strategic planning. We did not have anyone at that point saying, "English department, you must do these things."

Taken together, the faculty’s perceptions demonstrate evidence of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Structural Frame in senior leadership’s use of data and directing activities to initiate the innovation process in developmental reading and writing. Yet, these comments also suggest
a lack of awareness among faculty of the larger, planning framework that may have informed the actions of leadership. In lieu of understanding, these participants made meaning of strategic initiatives in ways that contributed to or detracted from goals. This insight demonstrates the importance of the remaining Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) leadership frames as academic leaders strive to deliver on strategic goals through innovation.

**Human Resources Frame**

Faculty participants in this study also described leadership practices that borrow from the Human Resources Frame of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) model, and these practices appear to have been particularly impactful in ensuring faculty efforts reached fruition. The Human Resources Frame calls upon leaders to work as supporters or servants as they empower individuals within their assigned roles (Bolman & Deal, 1991, 2017). The sense of empowerment manifested itself in the reflection by faculty on the importance of academic freedom and ownership of the innovation process.

For example, Mark described the importance of faculty experiencing a sense of empowerment during the innovation process by stating, “If you're being forced to do stuff, you never really buy in completely.” Tom’s message to administrators striving to lead innovation efforts was, “Trust us, we're professionals. We do this all day long.” Tom indicated that he did feel “empowered” by his administration’s approach to stimulating innovation in developmental education, rather than “mandated.” Similarly, Nancy expressed a sense of empowerment given the senior leadership initiative and financial resources that accompanied her institution’s challenge to faculty, “Personally I think the biggest factor was the ability of administration to say, ‘This is something good that we will support and now we're entrusting it to you to implement it.’” Lila described the encouraging culture established by leaders in her institution as
follows, “I think we have administrators who listen to us, who hear us when we want to do something and are very encouraging. Very positive.” Similarly, Tom described the “servant leadership” which characterized the approach employed by his dean:

We had a dean that was so polished, such a great leader, but very attuned to our concerns. This was a dean who could tell from your face and your body language if you had questions or concerns, and would- would elicit that. I felt like I was really being listened to.

In addition, Tom identified his dean’s work ethic and professional credibility as further examples of servant leadership, “Here was just a leader who was willing to do some of the heavy lifting along with us. Oh, she did a tremendous amount of research. She went to the conferences, she read up on everything she could get her hands on, I imagine, with respect to what was out there.” Tom believed his dean’s servant leadership approach earned faculty trust and consensus with regard to innovation in developmental education, sharing, “I think it takes a long time to cultivate that kind of trust. And luckily, we have that. But that's not always the case in all places elsewhere.”

Mark also offered evidence of the Human Resources Frame by describing his dean’s ability to recognize and empower talent, “He (Dean of Humanities) also had a great eye for talent to be able to bring the various people in. I was part of that, but he was really the person who ran that.” Mark shared his perception of the faculty’s ability to act on their first-hand knowledge of students’ needs to drive change, “It could have been something that administrators forced us to do. But for a very long, complex reason, the faculty were in a position to want to do something new if it made sense for our students.”
Jake also described empowering support from institutional leaders during the innovation process. Jake noted that the ALP innovation preceded Achieving the Dream on his campus by one semester, and observed challenges that made support from academic leaders even more valuable, “While the focus was on Achieving the Dream, it seemed like there were levels of bureaucracy. There’s no other term for it with these new committees that were instituted and it was difficult to get things done.” Yet despite the complexity of this environment, Jake felt his administrators recognized and supported faculty in a manner that is consistent with servant leadership:

I think having sensitive administrators who understood that scaling up was a process. I know that there are some colleges where it's gone from pilot to full scale with their accelerated models and I'm not sure that's always been successful. Being allowed by administration to have the space and the pace to do it thoughtfully has been really beneficial to us.

Jake described his president’s and provost’s support of faculty-initiated innovation in development education by sharing, “It was mostly emotional, I guess, support but also just institutional support that we should do this even more than financial or anything else.” More specifically, Jake stated, “I mean our vice president of academic affairs was intimately involved in the entire process.”

The Human Resources Frame was equally prevalent in Lila’s experiences with their dean who seemed to perform as a servant leader who was essential in helping to overcome barriers along the way to achieving scale with innovations. Lila identified responsive problem solving on the part of her dean as critical to her team’s successful process. In describing her dean’s personally calling eligible students in an effort to register them for her first pilot, Lila stated:
He (the dean) wanted it. He believed it. He thought that this was an interesting thing to try, a good thing for the students, and was very interested to see how it worked. So he knew the work I'd put into it, and he did not want to just see it not happen because people were not placed into it.

The support of senior administration members and the engagement from academic deans and provosts seemed to contribute to positive relationships between faculty and academic leaders throughout the period of bringing innovation in developmental reading and writing to scale. Lila described the relationship as follows:

I mean, when I would go to some meetings across the state and hear from other schools. You know, they would talk about struggles between administration and the faculty. That just was not an issue for us. It just didn't happen. So, I would say that was just something we didn't have a problem with because we did have such support.

Similarly, Jane described the emotional support she received from her dean as essential, “It was my dean's support and belief that what we were doing was important, that we had an important population to consider, and that this would ultimately make students more successful. And I suppose that the rates, the retention rates would increase as well.” In fact, Jane even described her dean as her greatest asset in achieving scale on developmental education reform, “Having a supervisor who supports us and believes in what we're doing. Because I have that right now in my dean.” Given the perceived threat Jane shared from her provost, and the resistance she described from faculty tasked with participating in curricular reform, the support Jane perceived from her dean seemed to be particularly valuable during a challenging time. She shared:
I can tell you that the people who taught the reading courses felt that they were giving something up and felt that they had been teaching these courses that enabled a lot of student success. But infusing the writing piece into it brought on a lot of insecurities, because these people had been teaching reading and were trained as reading professors and reading instructors. And they had to learn how to also teach writing.

Jane explained the “fearful” reaction experienced from faculty charged with the reform mandate. “I think it was met with negativity because it was a daunting task to combine both into one course. And for people who had never taught student writing, I had to train them. I had to train them for the next few years to do that.” When asked to describe the most valuable contribution of her dean, Jane’s description epitomizes the employee empowerment Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) characterized within the Human Resources Frame, “Respect. Giving me a lot of support in anything that I want, that I want for my department, for my people.” In particular, Jane, along with many other faculty innovators, emphasized the importance of experiencing freedom in making curricular decisions. She stated, “I guess it was really the freedom also to decide how to train my people. On one hand it's a little overwhelming because it was all on me in terms of what I needed to prepare my department to be able to do.” Jane’s comments seem to indicate that empowerment contributes to building confidence and leadership abilities, thereby preparing future academic leaders for mentoring roles.

Like Jane, Joanne initially described an institution whose perceived heavy-handedness in mandating innovation in developmental education and even choosing the ALP model on behalf of faculty created opportunity for faculty resistance to slow the innovation process. Yet, Joanne was able to identify moments of empowerment that helped faculty overcome initial skepticism. Joanne identified the English department chair’s empowerment when he individually invited
open-minded committee members to participate in development and execution of the initial ALP pilot on her campus. She shared, “(Administration) was right in the fact that they did not choose the faculty themselves. They allowed the department, somebody who knows the faculty members.” Joanne also recognized the faculty’s empowerment to develop curriculum for the ALP model pilot, stating “Administration was right in trusting those decisions and giving us the funding that we needed to get ramped up.”

Peg also described perceived support from administration which is consistent with Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Human Resources Frame, “Continued support and belief from administration. If you don't have administrative buy-in, and even if you have the most incredible task force, you won’t be able to move because you don't have support. It's really important to have people who are willing to go with innovative models.” The sense of empowerment by faculty in these examples, made possible through leadership’s recognition of faculty’s unique role as curriculum developers, seems to have been an essential factor in overcoming resistance that resulted from top-down catalysts to innovation.

Overall, use of leadership practices consistent with the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Human Resources Frame is evident in the perceptions of these faculty innovators. In particular, participants seem to associate faculty empowerment with leadership’s recognition of academic freedom on curricular and pedagogical decision-making. In addition, faculty describe multiple forms of servant leadership as valuable during their innovation process. This support can be expressed as conviction in the value of the project, problem solving in the face of barriers, and engagement in the process of grappling and reflection around associated innovation issues. Importantly, the work of academic deans in the realm of the Human Resources Frame seems to have strong impact on the ability of faculty to overcome initial resentment resulting from strong,
strategic mandates imposed by presidents and provosts. Next, evidence related to the Political frame of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Framework will be assessed.

**Political Frame**

Often not recognized as prominently in prior studies of community college leadership, practices consistent with the Political Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) leadership framework were evident in all interviews within this study and were perceived as essential to the innovation process by participants. Given the instructional innovation context of the study, faculty particularly valued political and financial advocacy that facilitated their work.

First, connecting faculty to resources to accomplish the goal of innovating at scale was an important piece of the success stories shared by these participants. Faculty described receiving compensation for engaging in substantial curricular revision that was sustained over months to years. For example, Lila stated, “When they can, they do find ways of compensating us. We don't have a guarantee. We ultimately were compensated for this.”

Joanne identified the critical importance of resources that supported training and travel for full-time and adjunct faculty to implement the new curriculum, “We had had some training, definitely, before we started teaching, and then we started going to the ALP conference after that, almost every year. Preparation leading to pilot was fantastic. We had so much time dedicated to us.” Joanne also cited the creation of an “ALP Coordinator” position, seen in numerous institutions, as an ongoing financial commitment made by her institution to ensure success of the ALP model through to full roll out.

Like Joanne, Jake also described the need for ongoing financial resources as the ALP innovation on his campus was brought from pilot to scale, “I think we always had to go and ask for money for different things. Again, it was relatively modest in the grand scheme of expense.
But for the training, we needed to make sure we secured money. We needed to make sure we always had support for a coordinator.”

Tom also described the extensive financial resources made available to his team of innovators by institutional leadership. In addition to receiving travel and conference-related funding to visit the Community College of Baltimore and explore the ALP Model, Tom stated:

We were given a stipend for our time in the overall implementation and I think that included the time we'd spent within our meetings, as well as all of the background individual, burning-the-midnight-oil at our own computers, developing syllabi, and coming up with our own materials and reading, and schedules and so forth.

Jane’s discussion of compensation provides further evidence of financial advocacy associated with the Political Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework. She said, “I don't remember if it was our dean or our assistant dean at that point, because they changed things around here, and she suggested it, that I should be compensated and that my people should be compensated. Yes. I have a very supportive dean.”

Nancy stated, “Since we've implemented ALP, the administration has been pretty generous in sending lots of us to the annual conferences to see what other schools are doing.” Nancy shared the increased faculty motivation she perceives as a result of the collaboration which has formed around innovation in developmental reading and writing, “Faculty want to do it. Faculty want to do it so they're asking. Where normally you don't have more than one person going to the same conference they have allowed that, administration has allowed more of that because it's so important.” In the context of developing and bringing innovations to scale, faculty seem to perceive this form of political advocacy on the part of academic leaders as an essential leadership practice.
In addition to advocating for financial compensation of faculty time and travel, participants also shared perceptions of valuable contributions to the innovation process by academic leaders as they facilitated “buy-in” at all institutional levels. Bill described his dean’s mentorship as he prepared faculty to anticipate and respond to objections, stating, “And he (the dean), of course, having been here for a long time, knew what people's objections would be and where the stumbling blocks would be and so on. Which was helpful. By the time we presented, I think we had a pretty airtight case, which was great.”

Jane also reported that advocacy during approval processes in the context of shared governance was a significant political contribution of academic leaders. In the case of developmental reading and writing innovation, she described the daunting effects of academic elitism and the importance of her dean’s guidance and support, stating, “The reading people are the stepchildren of the English department. Because we work with the lowest population at the school, we are overlooked. So therefore, to push something through on our own is very difficult. You need an administrator who carries some weight.” Jane’s description of the political context for faculty instructing in developmental reading and writing at her institution illuminated her perceived political challenges:

The biggest challenge is more feeling like, as a department, our services are not worthy. That I don't know that I feel respected because of the population I work with. There was such a focus on college campuses right now with STEM, and the students who achieve. But as a community college we're supposed to be open to all. And there is very little recognition.

Similarly, Mark emphasized the importance of his dean’s advocacy with senior leadership, “He (Dean of Humanities) also ran a fair amount of effective interference between
the vice president and the boots on the ground English department, as well.” Mark also identified the Dean of Humanities as an effective problem-solver on behalf of the English department as the faculty attempted to bring innovation to scale, “He (Dean of Humanities) was a wonderful advocate for the English department.” In particular, Mark perceived that his dean’s political contribution extended to hiring decisions, saying:

There was one other faculty member who got hired who I think was absolutely critical to that bridging process and making sure that everything happened, and I don't think that the vice president would have chosen that person if that dean hadn't really gotten into her ear and said, ‘This person is remarkable and the rest of the department absolutely want her and you're going to have a mutiny if you do not hire this person.’ So, a little bit of arm twisting and that happened.

Nancy also described the political skills shown by her dean while building buy-in in the face of faculty resistance during the process of implementing the ALP model on her campus. When experiencing “push-back” from English department members not involved in the innovation, Nancy shared her dean’s ability to balance determination with responsiveness to concerns. She stated, “He said, ‘We're piloting this thing. We're going to try it out, a few sections. We're going to see how it goes.’ People seem to respond to that better than, ‘We're just going to go all in.’” Nancy’s statements demonstrate the importance of two-way communication and responsiveness on the part of academic leaders at each stage of the innovation process in order to ensure concepts earn buy-in and opportunities during piloting and moving to scale.

Overall, securing resources for faculty compensation during the process of innovation and providing advocacy during the approval process of curricular reforms appear to be contributions by academic leadership that fit the Political Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991,
2017) Framework during the process of bringing innovations from concept to scale. Given the lighter presence of the Political Frame in prior community college leadership studies, the evidence in this qualitative investigation of innovation practices is a promising sign of enhanced leadership skills contributing to innovation in the community college sector, at least in this context (Clark & Lindahl, 2014; Mcardle, 2013; Sypawka et al., 2010).

**Symbolic Frame**

In contrast to prior leadership studies within the community college context (Clark & Lindahl, 2014; Mcardle, 2013; Sypawka et al., 2010), evidence consistent with the Symbolic Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework was evident in all but one of these interviews. The Symbolic Frame relies on leaders’ ability to give meaning to chaotic environments by focusing individuals on shared mission through rituals, symbols and traditions. In fact, Bolman and Deal (2017) describe leaders as “bricoleurs”, people who use available resources to help construct meaning within their institutions (p. 236). In this study, faculty suggested multiple leadership practices carried symbolic meaning during the process of innovation. In particular, leaders’ willingness to tolerate risk-taking and finance experimentation seemed to be associated with a culture of innovation. In addition, leaders’ use of data served to convey legitimacy and urgency regarding students’ needs. Faculty stipends for innovation work seemed to symbolize the institutions’ perceived appreciation of faculty efforts. Finally, faculty commitment to student success seemed to be a unifying source of motivation within work groups. These participants demonstrate that the leadership practices consistent with the Symbolic Frame had a significant impact on the process of innovation. In addition, there appears to be opportunity for leaders to strengthen the impact of these practices on innovation efforts going forward.
In one of the strongest examples of leadership activities drawing upon the Symbolic frame, Lila described numerous examples of institutional rituals that helped to create shared values, encourage risk, and unify faculty in their pursuit of innovation on her campus. Lila described leadership which clearly encourages risk-taking, stating, “At our school, failure is not the ending (laughs) of anything. It’s just a learning experience, and I think we’ve gotten that from various professional developments, as well. I have been in multiple meetings where administrators have said, ‘Please try things. We like that.’ Like academic affairs. I would say, that's more academic affairs.” Lila also described an environment of informal and spontaneous conversation between faculty and the college president in which encouragement is experienced, “Sometimes it's walking- sometimes it's walking down the hall and you would encounter each other and she (the president) might say, ‘I heard about this thing,’ and we'd have a conversation just off the cuff. Everything that I have ever suggested, no one ever says, ‘No, that's a terrible idea.’” Lila voiced her overall impression of the campus culture by sharing, “And so it's definitely, I think our campus, innovation, I think is highly valued.”

Bill also perceived institutional symbols that contributed to his willingness and ability to innovate, even beginning with the onboarding process. Bill shared, “The school did a really nice job that year in on-boarding us. So there were nine of us hired across the campus. And so we would meet every second Friday afternoon for orientation programming. For a semester.” Bill went on to describe the distinct message he received during his orientation sessions regarding the institution’s desire for new ideas, “And I think that the sort of big point was made that this is a place where we like to work together and it's pretty democratic. And we want to hear your ideas.” Beyond the mere promise of institutional interest in innovation, Bill was able to describe concrete symbols of the institutional commitment to innovation, “So, for example, there's an
incubator grant project thing. So you can apply for grants for any idea that you have that you think is good.” Since two other English faculty members were hired during the same year, Bill perceived that their shared understanding of institutional openness to new ideas contributed to the department’s success with innovation in developmental reading and writing subsequently, saying:

I also came in, I was hired with two other full-time English faculty the same year. So, you know three of us are pretty new. Another full-time, I think, faculty was hired two years before us. So there was a lot of turnover. So, I think that may have made it easier.

You know, there weren't any sort of entrenched power dynamics or things like that.

In addition, Bill described the impact on his own development as a faculty member resulting from this environment, “So if I have a good idea, and I can back up why it's a good idea, it usually happens. So I feel pretty empowered. Of course I'm probably busier now than I should be (laughs) because I keep implementing new ideas.”

Tom described numerous symbolic actions on the part of his provost and dean that conveyed trust and contributed to his perceptions of shared values. Tom stated:

A proactive administrator has to be trustworthy. I think it takes a long time to cultivate that kind of trust. And really listen to faculty concern, because anytime you encourage change, there's going to be a little bit of fear and push back. That's natural. I think being sensitive to that is very important. But also to be genuine and do it for the good of that department, for the good of the institution, for the good of the student population… not for some other reason.

Clearly, Tom perceived shared values rooted in concern for students as the basis of a trusting, productive relationship with administration during his innovation experience. He also stated,
“So there's a real need for it (trust), and we were blessed with very proactive administrators, dean and vice president, who encouraged us.”

Interestingly, another leadership practice that seemed to be perceived as a symbol of institutional support of innovation was the compensation provided to faculty to engage in the work, itself. While connecting faculty to institutional resources is also identified as a leadership practice associated with the Political Frame, the practice also seems to carry symbolic appreciation for faculty effort from academic leaders. For example, Tom described the perceived value of faculty compensation, “We were supported in this. We were given stipends as an incentive, to show that our time is valuable.” Tom further emphasized the symbolic nature of compensating innovation efforts which he perceived as extraordinary, “So, I felt that we were, as faculty members, being well-compensated for the work we were putting in. That extra work of changing everything we had known up to that point.”

Jake also discussed access to financial resources as a symbol of institutional understanding and support of innovation requirements. In his example, Jake emphasized funding for the coordinator position as essential to the scaling up effort, “There was money available for the coordinator position which wasn't a great amount. It was a reduced load for the coordinator as well as I think a modest stipend each semester.” Jake emphasized that the coordinator position was one of the most important factors in achieving scale at his institution, and saw the investment as a symbol of administration’s “sensitivity”, stating, “I think having sensitive administrators who understood that scaling up was a process. I know that there are some colleges where it's gone from pilot to full scale with their accelerated models and I'm not sure that's always been successful. Being allowed by administration to have the space and the pace to do it thoughtfully has been really beneficial to us.” Clearly, Lila, Bill, Mark, and Tom provide rich
examples of institutional cultures and practices consistent with Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Symbolic Frame.

To further underscore the importance of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Symbolic Frame, faculty provided evidence of leadership’s use of data to establish shared values related to pursuit of student success. These strategies appear to have assisted participants with overcoming initial resentment of heavy-handed innovation mandates. For example, Joanne described her willingness to participate in development and execution of the ALP model because of her abiding belief in students’ ability to learn. Referring to workshops lead by her dean, Joanne described her academic dean’s ability to gain faculty commitment to the ALP execution through the use of evidence demonstrating increased student success, “I've gone to a lot of conferences in the beginning just to really understand the concept that these students, they will rise to the occasion just given that extra hour, hour and fifteen minutes, every time you meet.”

Like Joanne, Peg also overcame her initial resistance to engaging in innovation on the basis of her commitment to student success. Her comments emphasize the symbolic use of data by her academic dean to create a sense of urgency and legitimacy for the problem of student progress in developmental education sequences, “The compelling data of what was happening with that particular accelerated model was something I could no longer ignore because when I thought about my students, I said, ‘We can't not try this.’” Later, after teaching her first semester under the new ALP model, Peg shared:

That was a turning point with me, and then literally the first semester, when I got to the end, because I was also still teaching ... We still had standalone, basic writing at that point, and I was thinking, ‘Oh, my gosh. These students right here are finishing up their research papers from Comp 1, and 90% of them are going on, and my other students have
another semester to go to get to this point.’ That's when I began to realize the power of changing the whole course sequence, and shifting that pedagogy so that we could make that happen responsibly.

Nancy’s experience also demonstrates symbolic use of data on the part of her academic dean to build motivation and buy-in among faculty for selection of the ALP model on her campus. Nancy stated, “The dean was leading all of those workshops for us.” She continued, "Looking at the results of other schools made me believe that acceleration would work.”

Similarly, Joanne was only able to overcome her discomfort with the innovation mandate she experienced from her dean by recognizing alignment between the innovation and her own, student-centered values:

Of course, my first reaction is always the student impact. How is this going to impact the students positively and/or negatively? Putting money and funding aside, that was my main focus. We had had some training, definitely, before we started teaching, and then we started going to the ALP conference after that, almost every year. Looking at the results of other schools made me believe that acceleration would work.

Finally, Peg shared a similar, personal transformation upon reviewing data from the Community College of Baltimore regarding student success within their ALP Model. Having been reluctant to consider acceleration prior to review of ALP data, Peg shared:

It's phrased more beautifully, but when I heard that, something ... That was a shift in me, and I said ... Because when you look at the data, and you see, okay, now you have all these students come in, and they ... Instead of starting here and then having to go here, another semester to Comp 1, they're here. At the end of...They're already here at the end of their fall semester.
Tom also depicted the symbolic power of data as he expressed his admiration for the preparation and scholarship of his academic leaders, as can be seen here, “The administrator, whether it's the dean or vice president, would come armed with research to the meetings.” Tom stated, “Proactive administrators encourage innovation, not just for the sake of innovation, but they are able to explain plainly and with evidence, why this is needed in order for faculty to buy in.” Based on the motivating power of faculty’s self-described commitment to student success, it appears there is more opportunity to leverage the power of symbols associated with this idea.

At the same time, participants’ perceptions suggest there is room to increase use of symbolic leadership practices which focus a community on shared values that motivate innovation, particularly as these values relate to student success. For example, Nancy reported:

It's funny, we had a culture conversation yesterday and we talked a lot about this. For any of us it can be easy to forget why we're here. We get so caught up in returning the email and sending the report and whatever and you're like, ‘Wait, what is this all for?’ This is all because we're trying to help our students succeed.

Echoing Nancy’s sentiments, Tom passionately shared the source of his motivation, saying, “We want these students (laughs) to succeed and to fall in love with school again. We all want that, every single one of us. If you don't want that, being a professor of developmental education, is not a good place if you don't want what's best for the student.”

Nancy also identified moments of transformation for developmental students as symbols of achievement in her career in the community college sector:

A satisfying aspect is when you do have those students who come in. Maybe they weren't such strong students in high school and what have you. They're sort of ready to attack their issues. They don't think of themselves always as college students. They're not sure if
this is for them. They're not sure if they're in the right place. To see them get through the semester, get some strategies under their belts so that they can handle their other, their content area work, has been very satisfying for me.

Similarly, Jake also identified the motivational focal point for faculty engaged in the ALP innovation on his campus:

It (what kept us going) was the success of the program, the success of the students and I have to say, too, I think my colleagues would agree with me, this new model of developmental education where you really become, more so than any class ever, a coach and a mentor for students because you're seeing these 18 students in 2 classes 2 times a week.

Jake was reflective in recognizing the long, arduous process of bringing innovations from pilot to scale, and emphasized the unifying power of generating a “transformational” student experience on his group of innovators, “I can't think of anything more tangible than that. That connected us as a group. It was just this shared purpose that we sort of took on.”

These comments demonstrate the efforts made by faculty to keep themselves focused, individually or in groups, on their shared mission of contributing to student success. Noteworthy is the absence of references to academic leadership when referring to this motivation. Academic leaders clearly have opportunity to emphasize shared values related to student success during the process of innovation by creating representative symbols that may serve to motivate and unify their institutional members in pursuing goals.

Overall, these participants demonstrated that clear leadership practices associated with the Symbolic Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework were perceived on almost all campuses. Leadership practices which symbolize willingness to tolerate risk and finance
experimentation in the name of student success appear to strengthen the culture of innovation on community college campuses. In addition, tangible symbols of institutional commitment are perceived in compensating faculty for innovation efforts and in using data to establish shared mission. Yet, there is opportunity to strengthen use of the Symbolic Frame. Student success was clearly a strong factor in motivating faculty to persist through the stages of bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing to scale in the community college environment. These interviews suggest there is opportunity for academic leaders to increase the use of symbols and rituals to motivate and unify faculty toward shared goals.

**Conclusion**

The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership framework served as a helpful lens for capturing and categorizing academic leadership practices perceived by faculty innovators which supported instructional innovation. In particular, six faculty recognized academic leaders utilizing practices associated with all four frames of the model. The remaining three faculty innovators described practices associated with three of the four frames. These frames include the Structural Frame, in which academic leaders were found to employ analytical skills to identify the need for innovation in developmental reading and writing and to set goals for instructional innovation. In addition, faculty described practices consistent with the Human Resources Frame, as academic leaders were described as “servant leaders” who supported faculty in their roles as innovators. Leadership practices associated with the Political Frame were also described by faculty as academic deans advocated for instructional innovation approvals and resources to support faculty training and time for curricular reform. Finally, practices consistent with the Symbolic Frame were also identified as faculty described the use of compensation as an expression of appreciation, and the power of data to convey credibility.
throughout the process of instructional innovation. Next, faculty descriptions of leadership practices which foster strong communities of practice will be shared methods for empowering the center of innovation activity.

**Community of Practice Formation**

Importantly, one of the key benefits of IPA methodology is the opportunity to understand how participants make meaning of phenomena. In this case, faculty participants were able to describe in rich detail perceived benefits of interventions from academic leaders that they believe advanced faculty opportunity to innovate in developmental reading and writing. In particular, faculty described the communities of practice which resulted from leadership initiatives that enabled curricular redesign to occur, thereby increasing student success (Wenger, 2002). An inductive analysis of faculty descriptions associated with leadership practices related to these communities of practice required coding outside of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Framework in order to derive richest value from faculty descriptions on high value academic leadership practices. Faculty descriptions of the arduous process of “reimagining” developmental reading and writing curricula shed insight into the boundaries faculty perceive between academic administrators and faculty that empower reflective, nuanced, and highly specialized curricular innovation. Participants also provided rich descriptions concerning the manner in which academic leaders assembled groups, leveraged multi-disciplinary profiles of participants, and empowered reform. These insights can inform academic leadership practices that support instructional innovation.

**Assembling the Group**
Faculty descriptions of innovation team formation varied across participants and campuses, and seemed to have implications for the nature of faculty engagement with the innovation process and the perceived contribution of the academic dean or department chair to the process. Participants described teams that assembled either voluntarily or by dean or department chair directives. Differences in team assembly seem to be associated with different faculty responses to leadership initiatives during the process of innovation.

For example, Tom demonstrated the grassroots enthusiasm for the opportunity indicative of individuals who perceived their participation to be voluntary. Coming from an environment in which faculty members responded to an overture from senior administration to initiate innovation in developmental reading and writing delivery, Tom stated, “So, I just was onboard and jumped in with both feet, and trusted my team and my chair.” Tom’s ease with the innovation process was also reflected in his perceptions of the time required to achieve change:

The change happened fairly quickly, within a year or two. We went from having no acceleration to having numerous sections of acceleration. I never felt time constraints or pressure. A lot of this happened over the summer. I think the timetable was all very realistic.

Tom’s enthusiasm carried over to his positive perception of all levels of academic leadership during the process of innovation. He welcomed his dean’s active participation in the planning process, “It was several meetings over a semester or two. Facilitated by our academic dean. All of our administrators, our deans, vice president, are really supportive of everything we do with developmental learners.” Tom shared that throughout the process, he never felt “mandated”, and that “trust” was established through data-informed engagement and administrative follow-
through. As a result, Tom described his institution as “unique” and “special” in its ability to foster positive change on behalf of student success.

Similarly, having previously shared her productive partnership with her academic dean, Lila described the spontaneous formation of her department’s community of practice in response to developmental education data-sharing and collegial inquiry initiated by her academic dean. In particular, Lila emphasized the willingness of her colleagues in the English department to grapple with curricular redesign:

I was fortunate to have a department of people who like to talk to each other and work together. We get along and so we can have frank discussions without people getting all upset or anything, and so they were very willing to do this. To meet many times and for a while, not really compensated.

Lila attributed her department’s willingness to engage in innovative activity to youth and a student-centric focus, “We have a fairly young department. Not entirely, but fairly, relatively. I'm not saying everybody. But enough so there's an energy there to try and do stuff.” Lila described the department’s commitment to student success, “We have really nice, giving people (laughs) who want good things for our students. Pretty committed.”

Bill also described the spontaneous and voluntary formation of an innovation team which began with an invitation to examine data together, “You know, and I think the department chair had said, ‘Hey, I'm meeting if anybody wants to come look at numbers.’ So I went.”

Similarly, after her institution identified the need to innovate in developmental education due to legislative mandate, Nancy reported that her working group was formed by a department chair who reached out to “open-minded” faculty. She stated, “The English department chair frankly hand-picked the people he wanted to be involved in this who he thought would be
interested in innovating and so forth.” Nancy stated that student-centric values were also critical to the selection of team members, “These people were all picked because of their outlook towards our students, towards what they could do, and what we thought we could do to improve Dev. Ed.”

Similarly, Joanne described being “tapped” by her department chair to join a faculty innovation team. According to Joanne, the department chair “just explained that they had this new program and more geared towards the student success at that point.” Though she was “cautious” at first, Joanne eventually agreed to participate in an initial working group of five faculty members she perceived as being “open and high energy”. Having previously described a “top down” approach to developmental education innovation in her institution, Joanne believed, “(Administration) was right in the fact that they did not choose the faculty themselves. They allowed the department, somebody who knows the faculty members.”

As described previously, Jane also received a mandate from her provost, who represented the highest level of academic leadership in her institution, to assemble a group of faculty who would prepare and deliver reform in developmental reading and writing within just a few months. Jane’s anxiety-laden description of her group’s formation is also consistent with that of other participants who received mandates. Jane described the overwhelming nature of the task:

We're pulling members of English and Reading together, and saying, ‘We need to change this. We need to have a mini-group over the summer in which we sit down and plan a new method, a new syllabus. Really, a central syllabus, a course description, course objectives so that we can then roll this out in 2013.’
Jane identified the absence of a “reason for change” when the mandate was received and the feeling that her department’s services “were not valued” by the institution. Jane also shared deep resistance from full-time faculty to the process of innovation.

The manner in which these participants made meaning of team formation surrounding academic innovation in developmental reading and writing demonstrates possible associations with faculty needs of academic administrators, particularly deans, depending on whether teams are formed voluntarily or by directive. It appears that members of voluntary teams described the process and conditions surrounding their innovation with greater ease, and sought less facilitation and encouragement from academic deans than did members of teams formed by directives. Conversely, members of innovation teams assembled by directives from the highest levels of academic leadership seemed to rely heavily on their academic deans, particularly, for political and financial advocacy, as they moved through the innovation process.

**Multidisciplinary Expertise**

Another insight which emerged from faculty descriptions of community of practice formation was the recognition by faculty that diverse perspectives were valuable within the CoP in overcoming barriers to reform in the instruction of developmental reading and writing. Faculty also shared that while diversity in opinions was an asset to the process of innovation, it also presented unique challenges for department chairs or program coordinators who were responsible for facilitating dialogue to elicit the strengths of various team members.

For example, Mark described the new thinking made possible in his department by the addition of newer, younger faculty members:

The field of composition has changed a lot in the last 35 years. And sort of the older models that were learned in the 80s and then practiced in the 90s, and then what was
learned in the 90s and then practiced in the early 2000s, there's a pretty substantial change in the way that happened there. So really, the new blood that by age, younger and by disciplinary conventions, younger, brought to re-imagining what we mean when we say composition in the community college context. That changed things a lot.

Mark also commended his department chair for her facilitation of the democratic process within his department, “And she has displayed sort of a natural gift to be able to let us all say what we want to say and have that conversation amongst ourselves and still keep it guided toward the right direction despite the fifteen minute tangents that we like to go off on.” A self-described gatekeeper with seniority on his department’s developmental education innovation team, Mark admitted, “One of the things that I learned in this process was other people have a lot of great ideas, too.” Mark attributed the ability of the newer faculty members to bring unexpected perspectives on learning to his willingness to consider new ideas, “So it really was useful to hear the full explanation from those new faculty members about why they wanted to do what they wanted to do which hadn't really been necessarily the way that I thought about it.” Mark’s ability as a gatekeeper to recognize the opportunity for new theory to inform change in pedagogy and curriculum is a testament to the apparent effectiveness of his department chair’s group facilitation skills.

As a new, younger faculty member, Bill described the value he experienced when the community of practice elicited varied strengths from its members, “My colleague next door, she's a wizard with course outcomes, and just the language just flows out of her perfectly. So, she would take our kind of crude ideas and make them sound good. So, we're actually pretty good at using everybody's strengths in the department.” Bill demonstrated his own ability to
contribute to the innovation team by offering a fresh perspective on corequisite delivery that
derived from his expertise in creative writing:

And just the structure of the class was exciting. Especially to me as a creative writer. You
know, creative writing classes are usually structured like a seminar or a workshop, right?
And so I really liked that idea of teaching fewer students in the classroom that would
have more access to me in, in more of a sort of workshop format. So I think that was also
very exciting to me.

Bill credited his department chair with facilitating the department’s engagement in
developmental education reform, “The department chair was there facilitating, although really,
what we had to get done was the real facilitator. It's like, ‘Alright, we have to come up with
outcomes. So, let's get it done.’”

Lila described the integrating impact on her department of combining developmental
instructors in delivery of the corequisite model with faculty specializing in creative writing,
literature, or composition by stating:

With what we did, going to the coreq model, is that it changed the atmosphere. More of
the people in our department started teaching the coreq. So there, rather than having most
people who didn't teach developmental, and like a few who did, we have more. A lot of
us actually teach it. It's just the coreq model ... So more of us, it's more integral to the
whole department.

Joanne also recognized that faculty with varied backgrounds contributed to the
development of innovative, pedagogical approaches which enhanced the ALP Model’s delivery
on her campus:
Whether it's literature or rhetoric or developmental education, I do think people always want to bring ideas. I always hear my colleagues talking about new lessons that they did or projects that they've done in class and even those that have been teaching for a little while.

Jane and Peg also shared that the mandated innovation in developmental education on their campuses required two, distinct departments, Developmental Reading and Writing, and English, to work collaboratively to form a new approach. Peg shared, “We have an English department that is separate from Developmental Studies, or what we call XXXX, and so we had to work together with the English department, because we were putting two courses together, one developmental course and one English Composition I.” Similarly, Jane described the intricate and co-dependent collaboration between members of the Developmental Reading department and the English department as follows:

I think the people in the reading department felt that they had the ... the English people had the expertise in terms of being able to look at what they wanted covered and what weaknesses they saw in their own students so that we could work on those with our students. For example, summaries, writing summaries was a huge problem in like English Comp, and so that's one thing that we worked on. We also worked on teaching students how to use direct quotes for summaries, so we worked very well cohesively. That was not a problem, but it was really relying on them for the writing expertise that they had, and then offering our own expertise in terms of what skills we wanted to take from our reading courses and infuse into this new model.

Peg indicated that the collaboration was not an easy one, “It was a lot of struggle in those early conversations and work with the task force had their challenges, because we had to work
through some political boundaries, and walls, and history.” The contributions from Jane and Peg demonstrate the importance of group facilitation skills for department chairs, program coordinators, and other faculty leaders of multidisciplinary, innovation teams.

The valuable nature of diverse perspectives in contributing to academic innovation appears to have significant implications for academic leaders, according to these faculty innovators. First, faculty seem to recognize that diverse perspectives are needed to overcome long-held assumptions about curriculum and learning. Second, faculty identify challenges in navigating multidisciplinary teams, suggesting institutions could support academic innovation by providing training in group facilitation for department chairs, program coordinators, and other curriculum leaders.

**Reimagining Curriculum**

Based on these interviews, one of the most influential factors affecting faculty perceptions of academic leadership seemed to be the extent to which faculty experienced a sense of ownership and empowerment throughout the innovation process. Faculty participants emphasized the importance of academic leaders providing support for academic freedom in the context of their communities of practice to ensure that disciplinary experts with diverse perspectives could apply their knowledge to curricular reform. These participants provided rich, technical descriptions of the curricular work that was necessary for faculty to generate completely new curricula that could leverage the corequisite delivery model to achieve successful, accelerated learning. Participants emphasized the importance of leaders understanding the time-consuming and nuanced nature of this work, and providing compensated time to support the ongoing effort.
Nancy referred to the working group as a “faculty learning community” who took on the challenge of developmental education reform. She emphasized that while senior academic leaders were firm in directing the onset of the innovation process and selecting the model, they wisely, in her view, stepped back to allow faculty to execute with freedom, stating:

I think it was their ability to say, ‘We know that you can do this. We're going to give you the support that you need, the training, the professional development, a little bit of cash for coming in on a Friday afternoon to talk in your learning community, whatever. But we're giving this to you.’ Because really once we adopted it, once we had the training really it was the Department. It was all about the Department doing it.

Nancy described academic freedom as a means of ensuring that institutions receive full benefit of faculty expertise and effort:

If it's not theirs they're not really ... I don't think they're really going to take it as far as they could go with it if they don't have the ownership. So I think they need to give the ownership. I think that's the biggest thing. It's like a parent you know? Give them wings. Get them going and then watch them run.

Using the phrase “community of practice” to describe his department’s years-long effort to pursue increased student success through corequisite innovation in developmental education, Mark stated:

We as faculty members were able to collect, in a little community of practice, were able to work together to really embrace and flesh out this national literature about a pedagogical practice in the context of our local geography and what we know works well, ‘for our students.’
Mark described the need to “reimagine” the curriculum with a clear understanding of the new purpose, “Because the entire point of the coreq, the entire point of the additional 090 time is to do what they need to do to successfully complete 101. The point of the old developmental writing was to get ready for 101. The point of the co-rec is to successfully complete 101. That is acceleration.” Importantly, Mark explained the contribution of the community of practice to the willingness of faculty to accept change, “But, you know, community of practice is a term …where it's a good way to get people who are already willing, who are converted, or very willing to be converted, to start to work on a project together.” He continued:

> Often we have a very good reason and often as faculty, if we're forced to articulate that, we come to realize it ourselves and then can double down on it to do it even better. So I think that is really what it's all about, and get us to think deliberately through, intentionally through, what those innovations are to be able to explain why we think they're going to work, and that's going help us to teach them better, and make them work.

Similarly, Tom described the importance of allowing for adaptation of widely used models for campus environments, “I think every college has a responsibility to take best practices but filter them through your unique, complex, indescribable sensibility and culture of your students. Students at your college are not exactly the students at mine.” Again emphasizing the importance of customizing models to the unique conditions on campuses, Tom concluded, “I would say that just because you go to a conference and you hear about some great new idea, it doesn't mean that it's a new tablet from the mountain. Asking the faculty. Making it a collaborative decision, not a mandate.” These examples demonstrate that even when a national model is adopted by an institution, faculty look to academic leaders to support conditions which
allow faculty to deeply examine and customize the model to local experts’ knowledge of student needs and curriculum pathways.

Bill provided a portrait of his department’s democratic and inclusive process within the context of the community of practice:

We would meet as a group. It was kind of like a norming group as a department. And we looked at syllabi from other schools. We looked at some of Peter Adams' stuff. He had samples and things like that. And then we talked about what we wanted for the course. And we would just kind of sit there and hash it out together. Usually someone had a document open, and they'd type stuff, and we'd have it up on the screen. It was a pretty generative process. We sat there together and figured out what we, as a department, wanted to have and what we thought would work best. So we have seven or eight full-time English faculty, and then we would invite adjuncts and sometimes, a few of them would show.

Bill shared faculty insights derived from first-hand student experiences that informed faculty pursuit of corequisite delivery:

So I taught the previous version, the 060, which was just the standalone for credit, developmental writing class. And it just, it was fun, it worked, I think, pretty well. But there was just this kind of heaviness in the classroom. Where it was like, ‘Here we are two afternoons a week. And we have to do this thing that we don't get college credit for. And we just have to prove that we're sort of good enough so that we can move on.’ Which is a lot less exciting that being in a college, credit-granting class with everybody else. And you feel like you're working toward your goals as a writer with extra support.
Conversely, Bill described the presentation of the corequisite delivery model to students and their strikingly different reactions to the opportunity, “So I explain, ‘This class is here to help you succeed. And we believe you can. So you're here for an extra three credits with me to make sure that you do well in the Comp 101. And so I'm here to help you succeed.’ And they're like, ‘Wow, awesome.’” Bill further explained that his working group of faculty peers arrived at this concept for the developmental course paired with English Composition I intentionally, “I think the way we're conceiving of the course is really as a support course. As a place for students to ask questions, to have much more access to me as a professor, to the other professors, and to feel supported.” He continued, “(Course Name) foregrounded this idea of, ‘This is what it looks like to be a practicing writer when you're in college. So, these are the kinds of things that you have to do, and that's what we're going to support in the class.’”

Jane also saw the need to create an entirely new curriculum with a reluctant working group even as her institution pursued innovation at the lowest level of developmental reading and writing, along with the ALP model, describing the task as follows, “What the huge undertaking was, was to create everything in terms of what we felt was important to use, in terms of the different materials, and how much writing there was going to be in the course, what kind of reading would actually transfer into a course like this, and what materials we could use.” Jane identified the significant adjustment which had to be made by developmental reading instructors to the new format, “But infusing the writing piece into it, it brought on a lot of insecurities, because these people had been teaching reading and were trained as reading professors and reading instructors. And they had to learn how to also teach writing.” Jane explained the challenges she faced as a Program Coordinator who was tasked with leading the curricular change, “I think it was met with negativity because it was a daunting task to combine both into
one course. And for people who had never taught student writing, I had to train them. I had to train them for the next few years to do that.” Jane described the backlash she faced as a faculty leader from adjunct faculty who had to make the adjustment, “It was monumental change. It was different materials. It was much more focused on improving student writing than they had before. They never had to do that before.” She emphasized the importance of collaborations with faculty specializing in English composition, and described the time necessary for the undertaking, “It can't be done overnight and you need to be part of the process and support the faculty.”

Peg also saw the corequisite model as demanding a completely new mindset from a group of multidisciplinary faculty who challenged her, as a program coordinator, to facilitate collaboration, “The trend now is to move to teach up, and integrate, and so we all have been really invited into a very different pedagogical space because of that.” Peg provided insight into faculty resistance to change by explaining sources of concerns on student impact, “The term, ‘acceleration,’ was threatening, because it ... The worry about letting go of standards, push people through, not really serve them.” Peg shared that integration demanded elimination of siloed thinking with regard to the teaching of reading and writing:

Even politically here, when I first came, you just couldn't teach reading in a writing class. You couldn't name it that way, because we have this really awesome reading class, so you don't do that in writing. You do writing. In truth, it's almost impossible to ... It's impossible to really separate them. They are integrated by nature.

Peg also described the complexity of rethinking the curriculum associated with the ALP Model on her campus, “It really pushed us to think about ... It's a redesign in course sequencing, and it's
a redesign in pedagogy. It's profound. It's at different levels. How do we accomplish the student outcomes we want?”

Similarly, Joanne emphasized the importance of allowing faculty to customize the developmental class paired with English Composition I within the ALP model in order to achieve the goals of the innovation:

When you teach (the developmental class) one semester and then English Composition I the next semester, it's two separate and distinct courses. The whole goal of ALP is to get those students to succeed in English Comp I. So that (developmental) syllabus is a lot more like scaffolding exercises, or repetition of assignments that you did in the first class, going over it again, or looking at it separately.

These examples demonstrate that program coordinators facing innovation mandates still find themselves assembling communities of practice and leading them, sometimes reluctantly, through the challenging process of setting aside assumptions and reinventing pedagogy and curriculum.

Another interesting aspect of the CoP emerged during Nancy’s interview when she indicated that digital connectivity contributed to the formation of a national CoP around the issue of innovation in developmental education, “Faculty want to do it. Faculty want to do it so they're asking. Where normally you don't have more than one person going to the same conference they have allowed that, administration has allowed more of that because it's so important.” She went on to describe the impact of social media, “What I see happening at the conferences and with social media, it's easy to stay in touch with what schools are doing and ... I would call that a kind of learning community, yeah, definitely.” Nancy described her campus innovation group’s ability to overcome resistance from colleagues through evidence gained from the national CoP,
“We could say, ‘You have no idea.’ Some people, we're talking about this integrated reading and writing course and they're like, ‘That's too much.’ I'm like, ‘This and that community college are doing it in four credits and we're talking about six. So calm down.’” Peg also described the expansion of the community of practice on her campus as her core group of faculty innovators partnered with another college, “We also met with a sister community college who was doing something similar. Different model, but same idea, and we compared notes on how that all worked.”

Overall, these participants demonstrate that faculty perceptions of academic leaders were strongly influenced by the extent to which faculty experienced a sense of empowerment within the context of a CoP in order to customize curricular pathways and pedagogy to local environments. Faculty expressed appreciation for academic leaders who mentored and encouraged leadership from department chairs and program coordinators who were charged with leading the curricular innovation, and who allowed faculty time and space to grapple with the pedagogical issues presented by the challenge. The manner in which these participants made meaning of academic leadership efforts seems to suggest leaders can foster instructional innovation by creating a sense of empowerment for faculty. Recognizing that actual instructional innovation is the domain of faculty and occurs within the context of a CoP, as described by Wenger (2002), seems to be a foundational insight for academic leaders who wish to advance student success through innovation.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis was to investigate perceptions of community college English faculty who increased student success at scale through
innovation in delivery of developmental reading and writing courses in order to understand the faculty’s perceptions of academic leadership during the process of innovation. Nine community college faculty members from institutions in the Northeastern United States who innovated in developmental reading and writing to increase student success at scale were interviewed. Interpretative phenomenological analysis was utilized to understand the manner in which these faculty members made meaning of their experiences with academic leaders throughout the process of innovation, from concept to scale.

These findings suggest faculty perceived leaders as contributing to the innovation process to the extent that leaders leveraged a convergence of external and internal influences which catalyzed innovation processes aligned with strategic goals. Externally, stimulation resulted from faculty exposure to national movements, such as Achieving the Dream, best practices, such as the Community College of Baltimore’s Accelerated Learning Program, and statewide conferences and dialogue, often facilitated by NADE and supported by social media and inter-college partnerships. The extent to which academic leaders created access for faculty to research and the national dialogue on reform needed in developmental reading and writing seemed to create a sense of urgency and willingness among exposed faculty to innovate. In addition, at the state level, academic leaders were perceived as responding to political pressures for reform in developmental education. Internally, academic leaders were perceived as direct catalysts to the innovation process when they urged or mandated reform in developmental reading and writing delivery as a result of strategic plans and/or statewide political influences. Direct influence from academic leaders was received both positively and negatively by faculty, and seemed to be connected to the extent faculty expressed trust in the motivations of leadership. Of particular
importance is the finding that these faculty participants demonstrated little knowledge of strategic planning catalysts on the process of innovation on their campuses.

The manner in which faculty perceptions of academic leadership are aligned with the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) leadership framework was also analyzed to determine the potential value of this framework for preparing academic leaders to lead innovation within the community college sector. Though prior studies fielded among academic leaders have reported leaders’ use of only two of the four frames, Structural and Human Resources, in major leadership efforts on community college campuses, this IPA study demonstrated consistent, perceived use of leadership practices associated with all four frames, Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic, based on perceptions of community college faculty innovators.

Finally, faculty process during pedagogical and curricular reform was examined to explore perceptions of academic leadership during this critical time. Here, the potential for academic leaders to support formation of the “community of practice” emerged. In particular, participants demonstrated that academic leaders can impact innovation by facilitating voluntary formation of groups which represent diverse perspectives. In addition, participants suggest leaders can leverage the strongest contribution from faculty by empowering academic freedom on curricular and pedagogical decision-making, and by allowing adequate time for grappling with nuanced details related to reform. Next, these findings will be discussed within the context of existing community college leadership research to discuss implications for theory, practice, and continued research.
Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications for Practice

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to investigate individual experiences of community college English faculty who increased student success through innovation in delivery of developmental reading and writing courses in order to understand the faculty’s perceptions of academic leadership. The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Framework and Organizational Change Model was used as one lens through which results were analyzed as this framework has had extensive acceptance in the field of educational research and has informed leadership development programs in the community college sector. However, the framework does not appear to have been used to investigate phenomena specifically associated with academic innovation in the community college sector. For this reason, a qualitative study employing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was implemented so that inductive analysis could reveal relevant leadership practices as perceived by faculty. In addition, the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Framework was used as an additional lens through which leadership practices which contribute to innovation could be considered.

According to Ponterotto (2005), in order to explore reality of a “lived experience” as perceived by faculty innovators, for example, a researcher must actively engage a participant in deep reflection about reality through dialogue (Ponterotto, 2005, pg. 129). Toward this end, this study draws upon nine, one-to-one, semi-structured interviews conducted with community college faculty innovators from institutions located in the Northeastern United States who had improved student success at scale by increasing pass rates in English Composition I among students who tested at the developmental level. The goal of this endeavor was to capture unique, individualized realities which could be generalized into theories for understanding the faculty perceptions of academic leadership during the process of bringing innovations in developmental
reading and writing from concept to scale. The transcripts of the nine participants were coded and analyzed, and three superordinate themes were identified, with three to four subordinate themes found within each superordinate theme. These include 1) Catalysts for Innovation, with nested themes of 1.1) National Catalysts, 1.2) State-based Catalysts, 1.3) Institutional Leadership Catalysts, and 1.4) Faculty Department Catalysts; 2) Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four Frame Leadership, with nested themes of 2.1) Structural Frame, 2.2) Human Resources Frame, 2.3) Political Frame, and 2.4) Symbolic Frame; and 3) Community of Practice Formation, with nested themes of 3.1) Assembling the Group, 3.2) Multidisciplinary Expertise, and 3.3) Reimagining the Curriculum. Analysis of these themes led to three key findings which will be discussed next, in the context of related literature and the practice setting.

The key findings are aligned with the themes, addressing research within key contexts related to the process of innovation, as defined in this study. First, findings will be addressed within the context of catalyzing innovation to demonstrate leadership practices perceived by faculty which stimulated the onset of the innovation process. Next, leadership practices which supported innovation once the process was catalyzed will be shared within the context of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership framework. Finally, leadership practices which empowered the innovation hub, in this case, the faculty’s community of practice, will be discussed. Figure 5.1, Academic Leadership Activities which Advance Instructional Innovation, represents these findings in diagrammatic fashion. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of implications for theory, practice, and future research.
Figure 5.1 Model of Academic Leadership Activities which Advance Instructional Innovation

**External**
Senior leaders connect faculty to national reform movements.

**External**
Senior leaders experience national or state-based political and/or financial pressures on community colleges for innovation.

**Catalyzing Academic Innovation**

**Internal**
(Top Down or Collaborative) Senior leaders develop strategic initiatives, communicated to or in partnership with academic departments, and align with resources.

**Internal**
(Bottom Up) Senior leaders respond to faculty initiatives with advocacy and resources to form sustainable communities of practice (CoP) and launch pilots.

**Structural**
Establish mission aligned with student success.
Engage academic departments in review of KPIs to establish strategic priorities requiring innovation.
Align resources with strategic priorities.
Assemble expert, diverse CoP.

**Human Resources**
Empower academic deans to empower CoP with resources and ownership.
Provide leadership development training for deans and chairs.
Build trust.

**Political**
Advocate for human and financial resources to support innovation on behalf of faculty.
Mentor faculty innovators on buy-in processes specific to campus governance and culture.

**Symbolic**
Establish culture which supports innovation mindset.
Build traditions and symbols which align with faculty motivation surrounding student success.
Encourage risk-taking.

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**Supporting Academic Innovation**

**Empowering Innovation Hub - Community of Practice**

- Yield ownership of innovation challenge
- Connect CoP to data, best practices, shared values
- Respect academic freedom to foster reimagining
- Provide resources for curriculum/pedagogical reform
- Provide resources for training & assessment through scaling
- Mentor & support CoP leader through process

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Catalyzing Innovation in the Community College Setting

In this study, innovation which sought to improve student success in developmental reading and writing was catalyzed in multiple ways, according to participants. Academic leaders catalyzed faculty to engage in academic innovation by creating an environment in which faculty experienced a sense of urgency. External and internal catalysts were found to converge in most cases. External catalysts were perceived when faculty were exposed to national or state-based reform movements. When combined with exposure to internal data related to key performance indicators, the process of innovation was initiated by faculty, as represented by Jake, or in collaboration with faculty and academic leaders, as seen in the cases of Lila, Bill, Tom, and Mark. Alternately, faculty were catalyzed to innovate when they received innovation mandates from the highest levels of institutional leadership as a result of external political influences experienced by senior leaders and internal strategic priorities established by these leaders. This dynamic was seen in the cases of Nancy, Jane, Peg, and Joanne.

Several published studies of innovation in the community college sector address influences contributing to innovation, and leadership practices which contribute to the innovation process (Adams et al., 2013; Ashcraft & Jacobsen, 2017; Auer, 2016; Caton & Mistroner, 2016; Fairbairn, 2017; Flynn, 2011; Joch, 2011; Saunders, 2014). The depiction of internal and external contextual elements catalyzing innovation as shown in Figure 5.1 is consistent with Adams et al. (2013) who also addressed the existence of internal and external contexts affecting community colleges in their proposed Model of Market Responsive Institutions. The model developed by Adams et al. (2013) illustrates how core internal and external forces interact to create market responsiveness capacities within an institution. Integral to the model is a diffused power structure and collaborative strategic planning built on data-informed decision making.
which strives for bottom-up responsiveness to market opportunities. The cases of Lila, Mark, Bill, Tom, and Jake in this study are consistent with bottom-up responsiveness on the part of faculty innovators who are empowered by distributed leadership, equipped with data to engage in inquiry, and connected to external partners in the form of national reform movements, including Complete College American, Achieving the Dream, and the ALP Model, via the Community College of Baltimore. Adams et al. (2013) also emphasized strong relationships with external partners as a means of connecting community colleges to resources which advance strategic initiatives. This finding is consistent with faculty innovators identified above who referred to institutional resources made available to support faculty innovation efforts. In addition, Adams et al. (2013) emphasized synergistic organizational design which leverages shared values, encourages risk taking, and seeks buy-in at all levels of the organization for change initiatives. Lila, Mark, Bill, Tom, and Jake each referenced shared values and the importance of institutional leaders who recognize the need to empower faculty to generate reform within a community of practice.

The influence of external networks on innovation was also identified by Kezar and Gehrke (2017), who revealed the importance of national and regional connectedness via digital networks for Communities of Transformation in a mixed methods study of four undergraduate faculty science, technology, engineering, and mathematics reform communities of practice. They emphasized the importance of sustainability for national reform movements via connected Communities of Transformation in order to achieve scaled innovation. Findings concerning the influence of external reform networks are also confirmed by participants in this study.

The findings of Caton and Mistriner (2016) are also consistent with those found in this study with regard to the existence of internal and external influences which catalyze innovation
in the community college sector. Use of the Model of Market Responsiveness (Adams et al., 2013) was reported by Caton and Mistriner (2016), via the lens of Resource Dependency Theory, while reviewing the example of Niagara Community College. While developing the Culinary Institute for Niagara Community College, Caton and Mistriner (2016) reported that institutional leaders were able to stimulate economic development in an underserved region through synergistic and responsive relationships with community counterparts. Caton and Mistriner (2016) confirmed that internal and external contexts were identified via the Model of Market Responsiveness in this context, as well, to act upon relationships which would stimulate innovative and entrepreneurial initiatives with faculty, and provide resources to fund this activity. Like the participants in this study, Caton and Mistriner (2016) also observed that distributed leadership was a significant advantage in building collaborative initiatives within the institution, and extending to community counterparts, to achieve the mission. A culture demonstrative of its student success mission was also identified as an asset.

While this study and those of Adams et al. (2013) and Caton and Mistriner (2016) share recognition of the convergence of internal and external contextual factors in catalyzing innovation and enabling institutional responsiveness to academic opportunities, this study also demonstrates differences from Adams et al. (2013) and Caton and Mistriner (2016). First, several participants in this study identified the influence of legislative pressures from their home states or surrounding states that catalyzed senior leadership mandates imposed on faculty to commence the academic reform process in developmental reading and writing. In these instances, as evidenced by Nancy, Joanne, Jane, and Peg, leadership structures appeared to be hierarchical rather than distributed, and participants’ responses to the mandates were less than positive. Importantly, however, even in environments in which participants reported the
existence of hierarchical leadership and innovation mandates, institutions still attained innovation goals in developmental reading and writing to improve student success at scale.

This review of the literature demonstrates that this study confirms the studies of Adams et al. (2013) and Caton and Mistriner (2016) in the community college setting with regard to the interplay between internal and external contextual influences on institutional responsiveness to innovation opportunities. Participants in this study also demonstrated an association between distributed, collaborative leadership and faculty responsiveness to innovation opportunities, especially when faculty efforts are supported by resources made possible from externally sourced grants. At the same time, this study diverges from innovation literature in the community college setting by demonstrating that hierarchical leadership environments that mandated innovation also achieved the desired innovation objectives in student success. Next, leadership practices supporting innovation following internal and external catalysts will be discussed as they relate to the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four Frame Leadership Framework.

**Supporting Innovation in the Community College Setting**

Once innovation activity was underway, participants in this study described perceptions of supportive leadership practices consistently aligned with all four frames of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework, including the Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic frames. These findings demonstrate that the Bolman and Deal (2016, 2017) framework is an effective lens for evaluating leadership practices associated with successful instructional innovation outcomes in the community college setting.

In particular, when describing leadership activities which supported innovation once the process had been catalyzed, participants generally described leadership practices associated with
each frame as depicted in Figure 5.1, with nuances specific to particular levels of academic leadership. Within the Structural Frame, as described by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), almost all participants described their institutional leaders, particularly provosts and academic deans, as engaging in the following activities:

- Establishing mission aligned with student success.
- Engaging academic departments in review of key performance indicators (KPIs) to establish strategic priorities requiring innovation.
- Aligning resources with strategic priorities.
- Assembling an expert, diverse, community of practice.

Participants described institutional leaders who shared KPIs relating to poor student outcomes in developmental reading and writing sequences. In addition, participants recognized that institutional resources related to conference travel, training, and compensated time for curricular and pedagogical revision were allocated to enable them to achieve the innovation objectives.

Within the Human Resources Frame as described by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017), this study demonstrated that academic deans were perceived by faculty as highly valuable in achieving innovation which advanced student success. This finding was true whether the innovation was initiated by senior leadership, through a collaborative effort between administration and faculty, or through a grassroots, faculty-initiated effort. In particular, faculty credited senior leadership and academic deans with the following contributions to the innovation effort which draw from the Human Resources Frame:

- Empowering academic deans to empower the Community of Practice with resources and ownership of the innovation.
• Providing mentorship for department chairs or program coordinators as they facilitated diverse viewpoints to achieve consensus and sought approval through college governance.

• Building trust between administration and faculty with regard to student-centered motivations and commitment to supporting the innovation effort long term.

Participants who described innovation efforts which were mandated, especially Jane and Peg, emphasized valuable practices of their academic deans associated with the Human Resources Frame which seemed to encourage and sustain faculty through the stress and conflict associated with the innovation mandate.

While prior studies of leadership in the community college setting have identified the use of leadership practices drawing from the Structural and/or Human Resources Frames, strong evidence supporting use of practices associated with the Political and Symbolic Frames is new to the community college body of literature (Mcardle, 2013). This study demonstrates that faculty perceived leaders demonstrating critical contributions toward the innovation effort which were also aligned with Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Political and Symbolic Frames.

In particular, practices described by all participants which were associated with the Political Frame include:

• Advocating for human and financial resources to support faculty innovation efforts.

• Facilitating buy-in processes specific to campus governance and culture.

Prior studies of community college research described few leadership practices associated with the Symbolic Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) leadership framework (Clark & Lindahl, 2014; Mcardle, 2013; Sypawka, et al., 2010). However, participants in this study identified the use of symbols or rituals which contributed to meaning-making that advanced
innovation. In particular, faculty described leaders who encouraged risk-taking, funded experimentation, represented data as evidence of student need, and utilized compensation as a symbol of appreciation. At the same time, most faculty identified their own practices of reflecting on student transformation during the innovation process in order to energize their motivation for the effort. This study suggests leaders can strengthen practices which draw from the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Symbolic Frame by emphasizing the following:

- Establishing culture, via rituals, traditions, and symbols, which supports an innovation mindset.
- Building traditions and symbols which align with faculty motivation surrounding student success.
- Encouraging risk-taking.

Importantly, findings in this study contrast with those of Mcardle (2013), who evaluated Bolman and Deal’s (1991) Four-Frame Leadership Model in the community college context in a multi-stage, quantitative and qualitative study fielded among presidents, provosts, and their direct reports in community college settings. Mcardle’s (2013) study found that, even when building teams to address innovation challenges, the majority of participants only used single or paired-frame approaches grounded in Human Resources or Structural Frames (Mcardle, 2013). Mcardle’s (2013) study is valuable to this analysis in that it was also a phenomenological study, but drew perceptions from academic leaders, as opposed to faculty. The emphasis on trust when building teams to address innovation efforts did emerge in Mcardle’s (2013) work, as well, demonstrating an area of consistency with this study.

Other studies which evaluated leadership competencies in the community college setting have tended to examine the role of the presidency primarily. Faculty perceptions of important
academic leadership traits within an innovation context as described in this study are in alignment with studies by Hassan et al. (2009) and McNair et al. (2011) which affirmed that a holistic set of competencies are necessary for effective presidential leadership of community colleges. Hassan et al. (2009) quantitatively examined the extent to which board of trustee chairpersons and community college presidents from Florida and New York recognized need for the same leadership competencies in presidents, concluding that both are in agreement about the importance of a broad set. McNair et al. (2011) discussed consistency between community college presidents’ perceptions of their own needed competencies and those identified as important by the AACC for community college presidents. McNair et al. (2011) reported that community college presidents agreed with the broad-based skills recommended by the AACC for presidents, but also argued that it was unlikely for a single individual to possess all competencies. For this reason, McNair et al. (2011) identified the importance of cultivating leadership teams through strong mentorship to ensure that the full set of leadership competencies existed within an institution to achieve innovation goals. In this way, perceptions of faculty innovators as described in this study are also consistent with the findings of McNair et al. (2011).

Prophetically, Sullivan (2001) also theorized that the fourth generation of community college presidents should move away from the more participatory style of leadership characterized by the Human Resources Frame and their presidential predecessors, and move toward a multi-frame approach, with emphasis on the Structural Frame, which Sullivan (2001) believed would enable community colleges to be more nimble and adaptable as demanded by the challenging times. Like faculty participants in this study, Sullivan (2001) emphasized the importance of building trust and establishing a shared, ethical foundation in order to lead anxious institutions through the myriad changes facing community colleges in the 21st century.
The findings in this study also contribute to the literature on innovation leadership in the community college setting by offering a unique perspective on the role of the academic dean during this process. For example, findings in this study demonstrate that academic deans are particularly valued by faculty for their use of competencies associated with the Political Frame while leading innovation efforts. In contrast, in their quantitative study of leadership frames generally exhibited by academic deans, Sypawka et al. (2010) used Bolman and Deal’s (1984) Four-Frame Leadership survey instrument and determined that the Political Frame was rated lowest by academic deans when assessing their general leadership practices. Instead, Sypawka et al. (2010) determined that academic deans report using the Human Resource frame most, followed by the Structural Frame. The contrast in findings between these two studies may be explained in several ways. First, academic deans may be drawing upon the Political Frame more heavily during innovation efforts. Also, self-reported leadership practices by academic deans may not be consistent with perceived leadership practices as reported by faculty. Finally, the time between these two studies may have allowed for academic deans to develop a multi-frame approach in leadership, overall.

Another potential value of this newly completed study to the body of literature on community college innovation leadership is its potential contribution to understanding the department chair/program coordinator role during the process of innovation. No published studies specific to community college department chair/program coordinator leadership practices during the process of innovation were found as of this writing. However, the preferred leadership orientation of college and university academic department chairs was evaluated by Clark and Lindahl (2014) among member colleges and universities of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA). Use of Bolman and Deal’s (1991) Leadership Orientations
Surveys occurred again as department chairs were asked to self-report on their overall leadership practices. Once again, a strong, dominant orientation associated with the Human Resource frame emerged, with the Structural Frame reported as the second of preference among the department chairs (Clark & Lindahl, 2014). The Symbolic Frame was identified third, and the Political Frame was used least, according to department chairs (Clark & Lindahl, 2014). Clark and Lindahl (2014) suggested heavy reliance on the Human Resources Frame and reluctance to engage in practices associated with the Political Frame could have been tied to less experience in leadership. Findings among faculty innovators in this study suggest department chairs/program coordinators are drawing heavily upon the Human Resources Frame as they attempt to navigate teams comprised of diverse viewpoints, which is consistent with the findings of Clark and Lindahl (2014). At the same time, this study contrasts with the findings of Clark and Lindahl (2014) inasmuch as faculty perceive department chairs/program coordinators as utilizing practices from the Political Frame as they seek to achieve buy-in and approval for academic innovations campus-wide.

Overall, this study demonstrated that the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-frame Leadership Framework is an appropriate lens for analysis of faculty perceptions of academic leadership practices during the process of bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing to scale in the community college sector. This study adds to the literature in that it demonstrates that multi-frame leadership is necessary and utilized by academic leaders, with emphasis on all four frames, Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic, as described by Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) during the process of bringing innovations to scale. In particular, this study’s identification of the academic leadership practices associated with the Political and Symbolic Frames is new in the literature. In addition, the study provides nuance as
to the frames drawn upon by academic leaders of various levels at different stages during the process of innovation. Next, the manner in which academic leaders empower faculty innovation through leadership which supports the community of practice (CoP) will be discussed.

**Empowering the Innovation Hub – A Community of Practice**

While leadership practices which empower an innovation hub, in this case, a community of practice as described by Wenger (2002), could be addressed within the context of all other leadership activities associated with the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Framework, the importance participants placed on sharing perceptions of the CoPs value and how that value is enhanced by leadership practices necessitates a dedicated discussion. Participants in this study maintained that actual, academic innovation occurred within a data-informed CoP, highly motivated by commitment to student success and comprised of diverse perspectives, which was empowered by academic leaders to “reimagine” pedagogy and curriculum autonomously. These participants emphasized the importance of academic leaders who understood the need for faculty to own academic innovation within the CoP, who empowered the CoP with sustained time and resources for work on curriculum and pedagogy, and who continued to advocate for resources for training as scale was pursued. Participants also reported on the importance of academic leaders within the CoP, as embodied by department chairs and program coordinators, to leverage the strengths of individual members while navigating diverse viewpoints to achieve innovation.

While much has been theorized and investigated empirically on CoPs in higher education, this discussion focuses on the role of academic leadership in empowering a CoP to achieve innovation at scale, as defined in this study. The discussion demonstrates that these findings contribute to the academic literature in the community college setting as no prior studies focused
on the role of leadership in empowering the community of practice based on the perceptions of faculty innovators.

Numerous researchers and theorists have previously described the importance of teams during the innovation process. In fact, Wenger (2002), first advanced the notion of the CoP as a social learning system with levels of engagement which include belonging, imagining, and aligning, and which results in the creation of new perspectives, patterns, and innovative thinking associated with transformation. Wenger (2002) argued that the CoP’s value is enhanced by leadership within the group which focuses energy toward knowledge-making. Findings in this study demonstrating faculty views on the critical nature of department chairs as group facilitators support Wenger’s (2002) theory. Bolman and Deal (2017) recently emphasized the value of enabling diverse teams to work with a degree of autonomy in order to achieve significant breakthroughs in innovation. This concept is also consistent with findings in this study which emphasize faculty views on the importance of academic freedom and ownership for curricular and pedagogical innovation.

Empirically, findings in this study related to significance of a CoP in achieving innovation are also in alignment with O’Banion et al. (2011) who demonstrated quantitatively that community college innovators were found to work in teams most frequently, and to believe that innovations had greater chance for survival as a result of teamwork. However, O’Banion et al. (2011) did not address the perceptions of faculty innovators concerning academic leadership during the process of innovation in the community college setting. Findings in this study also confirm the work of Sidman-Taveau and Hoffman (2019) who reported that Basic Skills faculty, administrators, student service staff, and students in the Academic Committee for Equity and Success (ACES) at a California community college formed CoPs and employed an inquiry-based
model for professional learning which appeared promising. While Sidman-Taveau and Hoffman (2019) based their research on participant feedback, this feedback did not include reflection on the role of academic leaders in empowering or leading CoPs, a fundamental contrast with this study.

In the university setting, Driskill, Chatham-Carpenter, and McIntyre (2018) recently demonstrated through their case study investigation the importance of developing department chairs who could establish a strong culture for innovation, meaning-making, and ethical practices through social constructionist principles which are consistent with the concept of a CoP. Driskill et al. (2018) also argued that positive and ethical communication practices within the context of a social constructionist learning process create cultures characterized by trust and innovation. These researchers also demonstrated that faculty were more inclined toward the use of data and assessment in their program planning and experienced increased trust within the institution as a result of their improved practices (Driskill, Chatham-Carpenter, & McIntyre, 2018). The findings of Driskill et al. (2018) are consistent with those in this study which emphasize the role of an empowered, data-informed community of practice that is facilitated by a department chair or program coordinator who has had mentorship and support in navigating a motivated group of faculty toward an innovation goal. However, the work of Driskill et al. (2018) occurred within a university setting. There is no compatible study for the community college sector. This enhances the value of findings in this study.

Participants in this study also emphasized the importance of leaders appreciating that members of the CoPs were deeply motivated by their commitment to student success. According to faculty innovators, this motivation enabled the CoPs to persist through a challenging process which required faculty to set aside preexisting assumptions about learning, advance social justice
objectives through shared commitment to student success, and engage in challenging discourse to transform curriculum and pedagogy. Participants valued department chairs/program coordinators who focused on shared values, facilitating groups, and navigating political environments in order to advance innovations. Mentoring of department chair/program coordinators by academic deans to support the CoP was also identified as essential by the department chairs/program coordinators, themselves.

With regard to faculty motivation, these findings are consistent with those of O’Banion et al. (2010), who reported that concern for student learning and/or outcomes was the most powerful motivator for innovation among Community College League of Innovation award winners. Burns (2017) also recognized that community college faculty members are focused intently on students, and suggested that there is opportunity to increase faculty focus to create pedagogical innovation. Burns (2017) identified the opportunity to leverage assessment occasions by encouraging follow-through on teaching and learning insights which contribute to student success. While findings from both of these studies confirm the source of motivation for community college faculty innovators, they do not address motivation source in the context of a CoP with an innovation challenge. By demonstrating the influence of student success motivation on the CoP, findings from this study advance the literature on innovation in the community college sector.

Empowering the innovation hub, in this case, a CoP, emerged as a critical responsibility for academic leaders within this study. Participants wanted to convey their perception that an autonomous community of practice was necessary in order to grapple with the pedagogical and curricular issues necessary to transform student outcomes in developmental reading and writing. Participants emphasized the contribution of senior academic leaders who made data and
resources available to the CoP as they grappled with reform, and of department chairs/program coordinators, often mentored by academic deans, who led diverse CoP members through challenging discourse to achieve the innovation goals. These findings on academic leadership perceptions pertaining to CoPs during the process of achieving scaled innovation in the community college sector are new to the literature.

**Conclusion**

This study sought to investigate perceptions of community college English and developmental reading and writing faculty who increased student success at scale through innovation in delivery of developmental reading and writing courses in order to understand the faculty’s perceptions of academic leadership during the process of innovation. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to investigate individual experiences of community college English faculty who have increased student success at scale to capture lived experiences which could be generalized into theories for understanding the faculty perceptions of academic leadership. The Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four-Frame Leadership Framework and Organizational Change Model was used as one lens through which results could be analyzed. Inductive analysis also generated additional themes related to academic leadership which fosters innovation at various stages of the process as perceived by faculty innovators. This study was based upon nine, one-to-one, semi-structured interviews conducted with community college faculty innovators from institutions located in the Northeastern United States who had improved student success at scale by increasing pass rates in English Composition I among students who tested at the developmental level.
The key findings were addressed within the process of innovation and contexts which include external and internal environments and the existence of a Community of Practice (CoP) in which the actual innovation occurred. Findings are presented diagrammatically in Figure 5.1. With regard to catalyzing innovation, this study confirms the studies of Adams et al. (2013) and Caton and Mistriner (2016) in the community college setting demonstrating an interplay between internal and external contextual influences on stimulating responses to innovation opportunities. Interviews of participants in this study also indicated an association between distributed, collaborative leadership and faculty responsiveness to innovation opportunities, especially when faculty efforts are supported by resources from external sources. At the same time, this study adds to innovation literature related to the community college setting by demonstrating that hierarchical leadership environments that mandated innovation also achieved the desired innovation objectives in student success when accompanied by innovation supports.

Once innovation activity was underway, participants in this study described perceptions of supportive leadership practices which drew consistently from all four frames of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework which was used in this study, including the Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic Frames. Prior studies of community college leadership had identified leadership practices which primarily drew upon only the Structural and Human Resources Frames (Clark & Lindahl, 2014; Mcardle, 2013; Sypawka, et al., 2010). Potential to strengthen institutional culture by leveraging the Symbolic Frame through rituals, symbols, and traditions associated with innovation that advances student success was evident.

Participants described the high value of the CoP, as described by Wenger (2002), and suggested that value of the CoP in an innovation context is enhanced by particular leadership
practices, necessitating a dedicated discussion of findings. Participants in this study maintained that actual, academic innovation occurred within a data-informed CoP, highly motivated by commitment to student success and comprised of diverse perspectives, and empowered by academic leaders to “reimagine” pedagogy and curriculum autonomously. While O’Banion et al. (2011) and Sidman-Taveau and Hoffman (2019) also observed the use of CoPs by faculty in innovation contexts, neither of their studies reported on faculty observations of academic leadership which affect innovation results. Driskill et al. (2018) argued for increased preparation of department chairs to lead faculty departments through innovation efforts with increased access to data and leadership preparation which supports a high functioning CoP, though these findings were restricted to a university setting. O’Banion et al. (2010) and Burns (2017) also observed the association between faculty focused on student success and academic innovation, but their observations did not address academic leadership. Overall, these findings contribute to the literature in offering perceptions of best practices in academic leadership which foster a high-functioning CoP that achieves innovation at scale in the community college setting.

**Recommendations for Theory**

With regard to leadership theory in the community college setting, debate has addressed the need for change from hierarchical and bureaucratic models to those which support flexibility and nimble responsiveness to a changing environment. Several theorists have questioned the applicability of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework for the changing higher education setting, given its association with hierarchy, structure, and bureaucracy. Lueddeke (1999) questioned whether the anthropological and sociological influences of the framework, particularly as reflected in the Symbolic Frame, were as pertinent to higher
education in the decades since its inception given the trend toward more corporatized leadership strategies. Taylor & De Lourdes Machado (2006) have questioned whether the emphasis on strategic planning inherent in the Structural Frame of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) leadership framework creates an inflexible condition which prevents adaptability and creative, strategic thinking from occurring during the implementation phases of strategic initiatives. This discussion will address those theoretical questions.

Findings from this study suggest that utilization of a sociological framework for innovation leadership is critical in the higher education setting and is associated with creative problem-solving, particularly when the problem-solving efforts are linked with institutional strategic priorities and matched with resources. This study also revealed the importance of empowering a CoP motivated to improve student success through academic innovation. Participants maintained that actual innovation occurs within the context of a diverse group of faculty, empowered by academic freedom and a desire to improve student outcomes, who grapple with data, pedagogy, and curriculum to reimagine potential solutions. The sociological implications of leading this working group are evident, as are the value of rituals, traditions, and symbols, inherent in Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Symbolic Frame, which can spotlight resulting innovation successes and enhance the culture of innovation within a community college setting.

The importance of sociological principles in higher education organizational behavior is also particularly relevant given the influence of shared governance. Kezar and Eckel (2004) suggested this influence is diminishing given increased use of adjuncts. Findings in this study demonstrate that full-time faculty perceive themselves to be the originators of academic innovations within the context of CoPs. While advancing his theory of CoPs, Wenger (2002)
argued that organizations need to position themselves as social learning systems. Therefore, the sociological considerations for leadership frameworks in the community college setting appear to remain relevant within the context of academic innovation. Bolman and Deal (2017) suggest self-managed teams often produce superior results than those managed hierarchically. This framework appears to allow for the consideration of sociological leadership concepts which contribute to creative, innovative, problem-solving by CoPs.

Findings from this study suggest Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) framework is an appropriate lens for the evaluation of leadership practices at work during the process of bringing innovations to scale in the community college setting. Each frame allows for the isolation and articulation of valuable practices which catalyze, support, and empower academic innovation. There is opportunity to make greater use of the framework through leadership practices which leverage the Symbolic Frame which have the potential to strengthen the culture of innovation, centered on student success, within community college settings. Importantly, this study underlines the value of sociological considerations when leading for innovation given the importance of empowering faculty within a CoP to attain innovation goals. Next, the recommendations for practice from this study will be discussed.

**Recommendations for Practice**

This analysis provides rich opportunities to identify recommendations for improving leadership to achieve academic innovation in the community college sector because only faculty innovators who achieved success at scale were interviewed. As a result, their insights on challenges and best practices are particularly valuable and are shared here.

**Enhance Culture of Innovation**
This analysis demonstrates that academic leaders are perceived as utilizing all four frames of the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework while leading for instructional innovation. However, there is still room to increase impact of the Symbolic Frame when establishing a culture of innovation. Rituals, symbols, and traditions associated with successful innovation, including onboarding, competitive internal grant opportunities, and recognition events, serve to encourage risk-taking and ideation among faculty. In addition, these leadership practices appear to diminish the reluctance and stress associated with leadership initiatives intended to catalyze academic innovation. Based on these findings, it is recommended that senior leaders of community colleges examine the messaging of existing institutional symbols as it relates to innovation, and identify and implement opportunities to increase innovative culture using leadership practices associated with the Symbolic Frame of Bolman and Deal’s (1991, 2017) Leadership Framework comprehensively. For example, highlights of innovation impacts in the institution’s history can be incorporated as central features of its identity or brand. Innovators can be held up as exemplars within the institution and receive recognition through frequent events, ceremonies, or rituals. Tales of innovation achievements can be incorporated into onboarding activities. Metaphors representing the institution as an engine of innovation in higher education can be incorporated into its vision and language. In this way, the likelihood of academic innovation being initiated and maintained internally could be enhanced.

**Increase Data-Informed Decision Making**

The value of data in catalyzing innovation and symbolizing shared values was evident throughout this study. Institutional leaders and faculty, together or separately, where influenced to consider academic innovation efforts in developmental reading and writing as a result of
national statistics on poor student persistence in developmental education sequences, and on the basis of their own institutional results. Participants in this study emphasized the persuasiveness of data related to student outcomes when identifying factors which facilitated “buy-in” on the need for institutional reform of developmental reading and writing, and in selection of the ALP model from the Community College of Baltimore. Even the most reluctant faculty members who received innovation mandates were persuaded eventually that their reform efforts had positively impacted students based on data related to student outcomes. These findings suggest institutional leadership should make efforts to connect faculty to national indicators of student success by discipline and student subset, and should share data on key performance indicators within the institution widely.

Utilize Distributed Leadership Models to Engage Faculty in Identifying Strategic Priorities

Faculty within this study were unaware or only vaguely aware of institutional strategic planning efforts which connected to senior leaders’ desire for innovation in developmental reading and writing to occur. This was true for department chairs and program coordinators, as well as other faculty members. Given the importance of data as a persuasive tool in catalyzing faculty to recognize the need for innovation, and given the need for resources to ensure that the efforts of CoPs realize desired outcomes, these findings suggest that engaging faculty in the process of establishing strategic priorities represents a valuable opportunity to advance instructional innovation. In particular, strategic planning efforts which engage department chairs via academic deans in identifying strategic priorities, thereby strengthening this critical partnership, can enhance departments’ recognition of needed academic innovations.

Connect Faculty to External Innovation Influencers, but Allow Internal Customization
The impact of The Community College of Baltimore’s successful ALP model is reflected throughout the interviews of these participants. Through national and regional conferences, or even invitations extended by senior leadership to individual institutions, faculty leaders from Community College of Baltimore were viewed as highly credible peers and counselors by faculty innovators in this study. Clearly, an objective, external, faculty peer and expert who had successfully solved the student success challenge facing each academic department, and who could prove the case with data while providing training to peer institutions was a welcome force in virtually every institution in this study. Exposure to this external innovation served to both catalyze grassroots innovation efforts in academic departments, and guide those which were mandated by institutional leadership.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that although the ALP model was offered as a sample innovation, no two institutions in this study executed the model in the same way. Each CoP began with a different, preexisting curriculum and a set of assumptions which informed their beliefs about student learning. Each CoP needed to redefine their assumptions about localized student learning and rebuild their curriculum and pedagogy accordingly. All participants described a time-consuming process of grappling which resulted in vastly improved teaching and learning. As a result of this study, academic leaders are encouraged to provide wide exposure to external faculty achieving innovations in high priority areas for the institution, and allow internal faculty the opportunity to customize the innovation for the institution’s students and context.

**Empower Formation and Sustainability of CoPs**

This study is significant in demonstrating the importance of a vibrant community of practice as described by Wenger (2002) in taking on the challenge of academic innovation.
Within these CoPs, diverse viewpoints came together, challenging each other’s assumptions about student learning, academic silos, and pedagogy, and gradually coming to new realizations about students’ potential for learning. Institutional leaders are encouraged to foster the formation of CoPs by providing access to time, space, and financial resources which allow this important process of social learning to occur. In addition, institutions are encouraged to provide training which fosters best practices in conducting work within a CoP so that members and leaders of CoPs can generate value when given the opportunity. This is especially important for department chairs and program coordinators.

**Foster Strong Partnerships between Academic Deans and Department Chairs/Program Coordinators for Leading Innovation Efforts**

Whether individuals faced an innovation mandate or initiated grass-roots innovation, participants recognized the important contributions of an academic dean who worked closely with a department chair or program coordinator to facilitate the innovation effort. While connecting the CoP to resources and time or trouble-shooting operational difficulties were deemed valuable contributions from the academic dean, these participants also emphasized the importance of the academic dean’s encouragement, mentorship through governance and approval, and shared values in pursuing improved student success. The relationship described between academic deans and department chairs or program coordinators in these interviews was affective and powerfully motivating, especially when the challenges of conflict and resistance to change threatened to diminish the energy of the CoP leaders. Based on these findings, community colleges are encouraged to recognize the critical role of academic deans as advocates for academic units taking on innovation challenges, especially when the challenge is a mandate. The importance of the deans’ credibility in maintaining commitments to faculty, providing
resources, and sharing credible, institutional data and information is vitally important to a mutually productive relationship with a CoP charged with innovation. Based on perceptions of these faculty innovators, when a trusting and mutually respectful relationship between academic deans and CoPs is established and sustained, the potential for a CoP to achieve innovation at scale is strengthened.

**Limitations of the Study**

As with any form of research, it is important to use these findings with an understanding of the study’s limitations. The following limitations apply to this study:

- This study was conducted among Northeast community colleges who had innovated at scale in developmental reading and writing. Interviews among nine, Caucasian faculty members formed the basis of the findings. These findings may not apply to other sectors or demographic groups in higher education, or other regions within the community college system.

- All faculty interviewed had utilized a corequisite developmental reading and writing delivery model as a basis for their innovation at a time in which corequisite delivery was receiving nationwide attention. The national exposure of corequisite delivery models and the homogeneity in innovation approach may have biased the findings.

- National and institutional data highlighting poor student outcomes in developmental education sequences were a strong contextual factor in motivating instructional innovation. These conditions may not be found in other disciplines.

- All interviews were conducted among faculty identifying as belonging to the disciplines of English or Developmental Reading and Writing. Innovation practices
associated with individuals of this background, including creativity and willingness and ability to “reimagine”, may not be representative of faculty from other disciplines.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

There are no studies in the literature which examine faculty perceptions of academic leadership that fosters instructional innovation in the community college context. Those studies which do investigate community college leadership tend to focus on general practices of presidential leadership as opposed to effective methods to lead for instructional innovation. These findings offer qualitative data on faculty perceptions of academic leadership during the process of bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing which increased student success at scale over the past five years. Based on conclusions of this study and recommendations for practice, future research could examine senior and mid-level leaders’ perceptions of academic leadership during the process of innovation in the community college sector as they relate to developmental reading and writing reform, or another subject area demanding widespread reform in the sector, such as developmental math reform. In addition, studies could investigate perceptions of academic leadership by role, as this study suggested a significant difference between leadership practices of highest level administrators and those of academic deans in advancing innovation objectives. In addition, perceptions of academic leadership from both academic leaders and faculty innovators could be examined quantitatively in order to replicate findings in this study, and quantitatively using the Bolman and Deal (1991, 2017) Four Frame Leadership survey instrument. This data could also be analyzed using another theoretical framework, such as the Change Macro Framework (Kezar, 2014). The same research
strategies and populations could be examined in four-year higher education settings to determine whether there are differences or similarities. Finally, leadership perceptions of members and leaders of CoPs that have achieved desired innovation objectives in the community college context could be explored qualitatively and quantitatively to understand how to leverage the potential for innovation within this social learning context.
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Appendices
NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION

Date: July 2, 2018
IRB #: CPS18-06-07

Principal Investigator(s): Ricardo Valdez
Kathleen M. Vranos

Department: Doctor of Education Program
College of Professional Studies

Address: 20 Belvidere
Northeastern University

Title of Project: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of How
Community College Faculty Innovators in Developmental
Reading and Writing Experience Academic Leadership

Participating Sites: N/A

DHHS Review Category: Expedited #6, #7

Informed Consents: One (1) signed consent form

Monitoring Interval: 12 months

APPROVAL EXPIRATION DATE: JULY 1, 2019

Investigator’s Responsibilities:
1. The informed consent form bearing the IRB approval stamp must be used when
recruiting participants into the study.
2. The investigator must notify IRB immediately of unexpected adverse reactions, or new
information that may alter our perception of the benefit-risk ratio.
3. Study procedures and files are subject to audit any time.
4. Any modifications of the protocol or the informed consent as the study progresses must
be reviewed and approved by this committee prior to being instituted.
5. Continuing Review Approval for the proposal should be requested at least one month
prior to the expiration date above.
6. This approval applies to the protection of human subjects only. It does not apply to any
other university approvals that may be necessary.

C. Randall Colvin, Ph.D., Chair
Northeastern University Institutional Review Board

Nad C. Regina, Director
Human Subject Research Protection

Northeastern University FWA #4630
Appendix B
Email Outreach

Dear English faculty member (individual names were used):

As you know, the community college sector is facing unprecedented pressures in to advance student success while experiencing financial pressures. As a doctoral candidate in the Ed.D. program at Northeastern University in Higher Education Administration, I am interested in understanding the experience of faculty members who impact student success through innovations in development education. Currently, I am seeking participants for a study of faculty perceptions of academic leadership during the process of bringing innovations in developmental reading and writing to scale which impact student success. If you meet either of the following criteria, I would be appreciative of the opportunity to interview you for this study. Within the past five years, have you:

- Developed and implemented a change in pedagogy or instructional delivery which has resulted in an increase in the percentage of students who complete a college-level English composition course with a “D” grade or higher compared to the percentage who drop, fail, or withdraw, or

- Developed and implemented a change which results in a shorter length of time for students in the developmental reading and writing sequence while maintaining the percentage of students who pass with a grade of “D” or higher?

If you meet either of these criteria, a one-hour interview is requested which will be scheduled at a time and location consistent with your preference. Permission will be sought to record the interview, and a transcript will be provided for your approval. Your identity will remain anonymous during the study and in reporting of all findings.

The purpose of this research is to identify leadership strategies which advance faculty innovation which contributes to student success in the community college sector. There are no direct benefits for participants. However, potential benefits for others may include improved leadership preparation of academic leaders for supporting faculty innovation. Participants may indirectly experience the benefit of improved leadership preparation among academic leaders in the community college sector, or they may take part in improved leadership preparation, themselves, in the future.

If you are willing to grant an interview, please reply to this email outreach in the affirmative. You will then receive an informed consent form for your review and signature, and will be contacted to arrange a convenient time and place for the interview.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kathleen M. Vranos
Northeastern University
Ed.D. candidate
Appendix C

Signed Informed Consent Document

Northeastern University, Department

Name of Investigator(s): Ricardo Valdez, Ph.D. – Principal Investigator; Kathleen M. Vranos, Student Investigator

Title of Project: AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF HOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY INNOVATORS IN DEVELOPMENTAL READING AND WRITING PERCEIVE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study
We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, but the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions that you have. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?
You are being asked to participate in this research study because you are a full-time, community college faculty member who has innovated in developmental reading and writing at scale.

Why is this research study being done?
This study is being conducted in order to explore community college faculty perceptions of academic leadership during times of innovation so that leadership preparation programs can be improved.

What will I be asked to do?
If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to participate in a 60 minute, 1:1 interview with the researcher. Your anonymity and that of your institution will be preserved during the interview and throughout the study. You will be asked a series of questions about your experience with bringing your innovation in developmental reading and writing to scale. With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped so that a transcription can be made. The transcription will be sent to you for review of accuracy. You will be asked to return any changes within two weeks. Once the transcript has received your approval, the audio recording will be destroyed within a week.

Where will this take place and how much of my time will it take?
You will be interviewed in your place of employment or via video-conference in a time and place which is convenient for you. The interview will take about one hour. Within two weeks, you will receive a transcript of the interview via email for review of accuracy. You are asked to provide any necessary changes via email within two weeks of receiving the transcript.
Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?
Your anonymity and that of your institution will be preserved during the interview, within the transcript, and throughout the study. There are no anticipated risks to you as a participant.

Will I benefit by being in this research?
As a participant, there will be no immediate benefits to you as a participant in the study. However, in the long range, you may benefit from the information learned from this study by experiencing improved leadership practices which foster faculty innovation, or by participating in improved leadership preparation programs which foster faculty innovation.

Who will see the information about me?
Your part in this study will be confidential. Only the researchers on this study will see the information about you. No reports or publications will use information that can identify you in any way or any individual as being of this project. Once you have approved the transcription of the interview, the audio tape of the interview will be destroyed. Your name and your institution’s name will not appear on any transcript. A numeric code will be used to differentiate study participants and their transcriptions from each other. Transcripts will be analyzed or “coded” into data which will be sorted into themes related to the study question. Codes related to your name or your institution’s name will not be used. Data will be maintained using coding software such as MAXQDA 18 and in paper files which will be maintained in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home office. In rare instances, authorized people may request to see research information about you and other people in this study. This is done only to be sure that the research is done properly. We would only permit people who are authorized by organizations such as the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board to review files.

What will happen if I suffer any harm from this research?
No research-related injuries are expected as a result of participation in this study. No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of my participation in this research.

Can I stop my participation in this study?
Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may quit at any time. If you do not participate or if you decide to quit, you will not lose any rights, benefits, or services that you would otherwise have as a community college faculty member. Who can I contact if I have questions or problems?
If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Kathleen M. Vranos, the person mainly responsible for the research. You can also contact Ricardo Valdez, Ph.D., the Principal Investigator.

Who can I contact about my rights as a participant?
If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, Mail Stop: 560-177, 360 Huntington Avenue, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617.373.4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

Will I be paid for my participation?
No compensation will be provided for participation in this study.

Will it cost me anything to participate?
You will not incur any costs as a result of participating in this study.
I agree to take part in this research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of person [parent] agreeing to take part</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>________________________________________________</td>
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Printed name of person above

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Signature of person who explained the study to the participant above and obtained consent</th>
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Printed name of person above
Appendix D

Interview Protocol Form

Institution: ________________________________________________________________

Interviewee (Title and Name): ______________________________________________

Interviewer: ______ Kathleen M. Vranos _______________________________________

RESEARCH QUESTION: How do community college English faculty members who have innovated at scale in developmental reading and writing to improve student success perceive academic leadership during the process of bringing innovations to scale?

Part I:

Introductory Session Objectives (5-7 minutes): Build rapport, describe the study, answer any questions (under typical circumstances an informed consent form would be reviewed and signed here).

Introductory Protocol

You have been selected to speak with me today because you have been identified as a faculty innovator who contributed to student success at scale in developmental reading and writing at some point during the past five years. As such, your perceptions of the processes involved with bringing innovations to scale may benefit other faculty members and students in the future.

My research project focuses on understanding how community college English faculty innovators in developmental reading and writing perceived academic leadership as innovations were brought to scale. Through this study, I hope to gain more insight into leadership strategies which affect faculty innovation. Hopefully this will allow us to identify ways in which we can advance academic success for students in the community college sector more readily.

Because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? [if yes, thank the participant, let them know you may ask the question again as you start recording, and then turn on the recording equipment]. I will also be taking written notes. I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes which will be destroyed after they are transcribed.
To ensure that your rights are protected now and throughout this study, I would like to review this Consent Form with you and answer any questions you may have. We will begin the interview only if you consent and sign the document. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) I do not intend to inflict any harm. Do you have any questions about the interview process or how your data will be used?

This interview should last about 60 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that I would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning. Do you have any questions at this time?

Part II: Interviewee Background (5-10 minutes)

Objective: To establish rapport and obtain the story of in the participants’ general with the research topic. This section should be brief as it is not the focus of the study.

A. Interviewee Background

1) First, tell me how you came to pursue a career in higher education.

2) Please share how you came to be a faculty member within this institution.

3) Next, describe your role within the institution.

Part 2:

One of the things I am interested in learning about is factors which contribute to faculty innovation which advances student success. I would like to hear about your perspective/experience in innovating in developmental reading and writing in your own words. To do this, I am going to ask you some questions about the key experiences you encountered. If you mention other people, please do not mention names. You can say that you are giving the person a pseudonym.

1. Please describe your innovation in developmental reading and writing. (Probe for when launched, whether this was a repeated effort or one-time program).

2. How would you describe the impact this innovation has had on students’ academic success? (Probe for hard and soft impacts, short term and long term outcomes, and tracking mechanisms, if any).

3. What factors stimulated your effort to develop this innovation (Probe for motivation, student problem recognition, internal environmental influences, external environmental influences, role of leadership, if any).

4. How did you develop and pursue the concept within your institution?

5. Describe the factors or influences which facilitated your progress.
6. Describe the factors or influences which impeded your progress, and how you responded to these factors or influences.
7. How would you describe the most important contributor to your ability to innovate to advance student success?
8. How has your innovation affected your role as a faculty member?

Ask participant if they have any questions and thank them for their participation.