ABSTRACT

Title of Document:	WALKING THE LABYRINTH: EXAMINING THE INTERSECTION OF SPIRITUALITY AND LEADERSHIP AMONG SENIOR STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS
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As senior student affairs administrators (SSAAs) seek to lead effectively in higher education, some SSAAs consider spiritual resources to enhance leadership practice. Yet, empirical literature on the intersection of spirituality and leadership in higher education is relatively absent and needs to be deepened and broadened. The purpose of this study was to examine the intersection of spirituality and leadership among SSAAs. Guided by a constructivist epistemology, this grounded theory included the following research questions: (1) what can be learned about how spirituality influences the leadership practices of SSAAs when the intersection of spiritual and leadership development is considered; (2) what are the critical influences on the process by which spirituality informs the leadership practices of SSAAs; (3) how, if at all, do the spiritually-guided leadership practices of the SSAAs in this study influence the organizational environments of their institutions; (4) how, if at all, are

the spiritually-guided and value-laden leadership practices of the SSAAs in this study challenged by the socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to values, spirituality, and religiosity? Data sources included two interviews with a sample of 14 SSAAs. The grounded theory, *Walking the Labyrinth: The Process of Leading with a Spiritual Orientation among Senior Student Affairs Administrators,* emerged from the data analysis.

One core category and four key categories emerged from data analysis. The core category, *leading with a spiritual orientation*, describes the pervasive nature of spirituality within the leadership process, and the relationships between spirituality, values, and leadership, which form a "core" that facilitates congruency in decision-making for spiritually-oriented SSAAs. The first key category, *sustaining a spiritual outlook*, describes how spiritually-oriented SSAAs develop a spiritual outlook on life and apply this outlook to their leadership. The next two key categories describe characteristics of leading with a spiritual orientation: *catalyzing spirituality to maximize leadership capacity* and *prioritizing people in leadership practice.* The last key category, *"managing your identity": navigating the academy's socio-cultural environment* describes the context for the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. This grounded theory has implications for future research and theory development, for SSAAs, and for student affairs practice.

WALKING THE LABYRINTH: EXAMINING THE INTERSECTION OF
SPIRITUALITY AND LEADERSHIP AMONG SENIOR STUDENT AFFAIRS
ADMINISTRATORS

By

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DEDICATION

To the "bookends" of my life,

"Papi y Mami"

José Riera y Luz del Carmen Riera

Thank you for teaching me the value of education and being models for me of pursuing socially just conditions for all students in the learning environment. Thank you for fostering in me the spirit of a lifelong learner and for sacrificing more than I will ever know.

"Daddy's Girls"

Isabella Ciscelia
Analise Maria
Emilia Luna
Anaya Elena

Thank you for serving as my ongoing motivation for completion of this dissertation and for my work as a student affairs and leadership educator, as I work to leave the world in a better place for you. Yet, I know that as you enter adulthood, there will continue to be work that is needed to better this world. It is in that spirit that I pray that all four of you will become women possessing salient identities as children of God and leaders who are empowered to be powerful forces of change in our world for His glory.

And there's a loyalty that's deeper than mere sentiments
And a music higher than the songs that I can sing
The stuff of Earth competes for the allegiance
I owe only to the giver of all good things

So if I stand let me stand on the promise that you will pull me through
And if I can't, let me fall on the grace that first brought me to You
And if I sing let me sing for the joy that has born in me these songs
And if I weep let it be as a man who is longing for his home

"If I Stand"
Rich Mullins

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My seven year doctoral journey was epitomized by the support, encouragement, accountability, and prayers of many in my life. I simply could not have done it on my own. Though my doctoral pursuits possess the image of being my own accomplishment, this is far from the truth. There are so many that helped to get me across the finish line! I have to begin my acknowledgements with highlighting my biggest fan club and most ardent supporters: Kate, Bella, Ana, Mia, and Naya. The most special element of completing my doctorate was doing it side-by-side with my partner and wife, Dr. Kate Riera, who delivered our children and her own dissertation seamlessly while supporting my own journey. I am blessed beyond measure to have had Kate as my partner in the trenches of this experience. And, to the girls, who served as both my motivation and my accountability: With phrases like "dad, are you ever going to finish your dissertation?" uttered at the dinner table, my girls prompted me daily to re-commit to the process and persevere towards the finish line!

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The dissertation journey, specifically, was marked by the support and encouragement of many as well. I would be remiss if I did not begin by acknowledging the participants. It was a goal of mine to spend time speaking to senior student affairs administrators as part of my dissertation. The time you afforded me in this process both humbled me and was very meaningful to me – I will not soon forget this! Beyond giving of your time, I am ever thankful for the investment in the process. You were vulnerable about your spiritual journeys and your leadership triumphs and failures. It was your stories that ultimately made this dissertation what it is.

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institution, Muhlenberg College ('99), the SAHE program at Colorado State University ('01), and my time at Drexel University (2001-2006). Kate and I have been blessed by an incredible circle of friends that have been loyal and steadfast. We also have been fortunate to have found strong church families in Maryland and now in Delaware who have served as prayer warriors and with whom we share strong bonds of Christian community. It is my hope that I am faithful to respond to all that God has given me through this experience and through the people that invested in me, to make my life's work about serving students and creating the best environments for student learning in the institutions where I work.

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CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, two themes endure in the literature as related to leadership among higher education administrators. First, there is an on-going appeal for administrators to lead through the growth and increasing complexity of the academy, willing to apply new, more intricate, and socially just leadership practices in their work. Second, recurrent calls for research that more accurately describes leadership amidst a rapidly changing context of society continue. Higher education and leadership scholars (e.g., Bennis & Nikias, 2009; Rhoades, 2009), as well as public opinion (e.g., Kelderman, 2010; Lederman, 2010), continue to elucidate how higher education is straying from its covenant to serve the public good and to fulfill its unique mission that includes a broader social role for higher education, beyond simply preparing individual graduates (Kezar, Chambers, Burkhardt, & Associates, 2005). Instead, this unique mission and purpose is increasingly replaced with an overemphasis on revenue generation and cost-cutting, competing pressures that risk overshadowing the societal role of higher education (Bennis & Nikias, 2009; Kezar et al., 2005; Rhoades, 2009).

Senior student affairs administrators (SSAAs) have emerged as critical forces in the leadership of higher education institutions (Clement & Rickard, 1992; Dungy & Ellis, 2011; Sandeen, 1991; Sandeen & Barr, 2006). SSAAs have unique roles in that they are both responsible for overseeing co-curricular student learning initiatives and key administrative processes and units that support the student learning agenda on campus (Sandeen, 1991; Young 1996). As the academy grows in complexity, so

do the expectations and responsibilities of the SSAA. The role of the SSAA is distinctive because s/he often acts as a mediator, arbiter, and makes decisions that engage the social conscience of the campus (Dungy & Ellis, 2011; Sandeen, 1991). Outcomes of many of the highly charged social issues that play out between various student groups on campus are often facilitated or influenced by the SSAA.

Imagine, as a SSAA, facing the suspension of a prominent fraternity on campus whose national chapter disagrees with the grounds for dismissal that you articulated. Imagine responding to a racially-charged incident involving a student group who thought it would be comical to host a party where everyone dressed and acted out stereotypes of Mexicans. Chicano students on campus are protesting and as the SSAA, you need to weigh the freedom of expression that the student group possesses alongside the harm done to a marginalized student population on your campus. Imagine working with an evangelical Christian group that denies membership to a gay student due to his sexual orientation. As the SSAA you need to weigh the inclusivity of all student groups on campus alongside respecting the religious values of the Christian group. Imagine needing to decide which program or staff to cut out of your budget after you were informed that state funding was decreased or because the institution was unable to yield the incoming class projected. Imagine needing to consider how the globalization of your campus will interact and change your campus population. What inner resources do SSAAs call upon to endure the demanding and challenging requirements of their work? How do SSAAs withstand the "permanent white water" (Vaill, 1989, p. 2), or ever-changing environment, of the academy? How do values inform the leadership of SSAAs,

particularly in difficult situations? What, if anything, could be gained by considering

the intersection of spirituality and leadership? These are the questions that I sought to

address in this study.

Evolving Leadership

Burns (1978) penned the oft cited words "leadership is one of the most

observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (p. 2). Rost (1991) chided

researchers for focusing on traits and characteristics of leadership at the cost of

understanding more deeply the nature of leadership as a process. He attributed this ill-

focused approach to a reliance on studying leadership through the lens of a positivist

paradigm, where elements of leadership are "…visible and countable, susceptible to

statistical manipulation, accessible in terms of causality probabilities, and usable to

train people in the habits of doing what those in the know may think is the right

thing" (Rost, 1991, p. 3). An imperative for understanding leadership will always

overwhelm the literature because leadership is a socially constructed phenomenon

that evolves concurrently with the many social contexts present within society

(Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007; Yukl, 1994).

Understanding leadership as a process that is inextricably linked to morals,

ethics, and values is an idea that was largely advanced by Burns (1978). His text,

Leadership, spurred on a revolution in the conceptualization and purpose of

leadership. Many influential thinkers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Greenleaf, 1977;

Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005; Palmer, 1990; Vaill, 1989, 1998) contributed

to a re-conceptualization of leadership over the past several decades. Burns (1978)

promoted that leadership conceptualizations tightly held for over a century (i.e., the

industrial paradigm) fall away and encouraged a new paradigm of leadership to emerge, the postindustrial paradigm (Rost, 1991). Yet, despite Rost's (1991) assertions that the postindustrial paradigm is a fresh way of conceptualizing leadership, feminist and multicultural conceptualizations of leadership endured with practices that always included the principal characteristics of postindustrial leadership. Yet, because of how leadership was conceptualized within the industrial paradigm, the voices of women and people of color, in particular, were silenced and seldom acknowledged (Komives & Dugan, 2010).

Through the application of social constructivism, critical, and postmodern research paradigms to the study of leadership (Kezar, Carducci, Contreras-McGavin, 2006), understandings of leadership and leadership practices are shifting in higher education. This shift is gradual: though new paradigms inform how leadership is understood, older paradigms continue to operate alongside these emerging concepts. The application of these paradigms to leadership within higher education has led to new conceptualizations of leadership (i.e., leadership as process centered, collective, and nonhierarchical, focusing on mutual power and influence) and new concepts of leadership that are becoming the focus of research (i.e., ethics or spirituality, collaboration or partnering, empowerment, social change, emotions, globalization, entrepreneurialism, and accountability) (Kezar et al., 2006).

The new research paradigms mentioned above are bringing back moral, ethical, and value-based components to the study of leadership. Though ethics and values are evident in the leadership literature (e.g., Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Greenleaf, 1977; Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005; Palmer, 1990; Vaill, 1989,

1998), Kezar et al. (2006) and Rost (1991) asserted that, for the most part, these concepts have been missing from the empirical research for the majority of the 20th century. Critical theorists and postmodernists, in particular, have exposed the supposedly value-free assumptions of early leadership theories. As a result, "they encourage seeing leadership as a social process that is value laden" (Kezar et al., 2006, p. 72). Hence, allowing for values to be included within the study of leadership becomes a valuable area of inquiry within higher education because more complex considerations of leadership as a socially constructed phenomenon can be examined.

Lindholm and Astin (2006) asserted that the academy encourages division and fragmentation on many levels and there is great risk in disconnecting one's values from one's leadership. Divorcing values from the leadership of higher education administrators can result in competing pressures (e.g., enrollment, overemphasis on revenue-generation, budget constraints, or resource scarcity) to overshadow the unique purposes of higher education in society and resultant harm for students, faculty, and staff (Lindholm & Astin, 2006). One of the ways values can be expressed in leadership is through spirituality (Kezar et al., 2006). Kezar et al. (2006) affirmed that a significant contribution of considering spirituality, within the context of leadership, is the ability "to bring a fuller or more comprehensive view of leadership into prominence that focuses on mind, body, and spirit, which had been important in earlier centuries before a scientific view of leadership" (p. 75). Hence, this dissertation study sought to examine the intersection of spirituality and leadership among senior student affairs administrators.

Through this introduction, I have provided a brief background on the need for leadership and a greater understanding of leadership related to higher education. I explored how spirituality influences the leadership of higher education administrators, specifically SSAAs as the focus of this study. Though I do not define spirituality, faith, and religion the same, for the purpose of this chapter, in particular, I present the context for this study interchanging these terms. As the chapter concludes, I distinguish their meanings for the reader. Within this chapter, I introduce the construct of spirituality; review how leadership and spirituality are described in the literature to this point; and articulate the compelling interest of the study. I conclude the chapter by presenting the research design of this study, including the significant contributions that this study can make within the theoretical and empirical literature base.

Spirituality, Faith, and Religion

Discussions about spirituality, faith, and religion are surfacing in the public sphere in the United States with a renewed sense. Then U.S. Senator, Barack Obama, issued a *Call to Renewal* in June of 2006. Discussing the role of religion in ameliorating social ills, he noted, is pointless until "we tackle head-on the mutual suspicion that sometimes exists between religious America and secular America" (Obama, 2006, para. 3). Though Obama specifically mentions religion, I believe that issues of spirituality and faith also can be polarizing in society and higher education. This statement affirmed the need for issues of spirituality, faith, and religion to be taken seriously as the country and higher education system evolve to engage a pluralistic society (Nash & Scott, 2009).

Spirituality, faith, and religion are increasingly the focus of discussions across difference, discussions once confined to racial, gender, or sexual orientation differences. Religious illiteracy and misunderstanding of issues surrounding faith and spirituality are growing at alarming rates on college campuses. Nash and Scott (2009) asserted that issues of difference across religion, faith, and spirituality are becoming divisive on college campuses. They posited that incorporating religio-spiritual issues into the work of higher education is "the next logical step" (p. 132) in broadening the curriculum of cultural pluralism and diversity education. In short, by silencing the conversation about spirituality, faith, and religion, higher education risks marginalizing students, staff, and faculty for whom this is a core facet of identity. Although historically, religion was integral in the design of higher education (Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2006), more recently, issues of spirituality, faith, and religion are absent from the academy. Tisdell (2003) posited why this is:

> Perhaps the prior silence on the topic of spirituality in areas of academic and professional practice is due …to the ambivalence of many who work in an academic world that has emphasized rationality and scientific method for most of the twentieth century. (p. 25)

As modernist paradigms are challenged by the emergence and development of constructivist, postmodern, and critical research paradigms, higher education is renewing its commitment to engaging issues of spirituality, faith, religion, and values. Love (2000) captured this renewal when he wrote,

> A funny thing happened on the way to a critically deconstructed and postmodern world – spirituality came to college. Actually, it might be more

correct to say that spirituality came back to college…spirituality has re-

emerged as an issue of importance and acceptance on college campuses, in

college classrooms, and on academic research agendas…Faculty and staff of

higher education institutions now have more freedom to explore the role of

such values as faith, hope, and love in the structure and persistence of

communities, in the construction of knowledge, in the understanding of truth,

and in developmental processes and meaning-making of students. (para. 1, 7)

Older modernist research paradigms relied heavily on scientific rationale and, as a

result, marginalized other ways of being and knowing. Thus, new paradigms of

research make it possible for issues of religion and faith to re-enter the conversation

of higher education with a particular emphasis on spirituality. Though spirituality is

conceptually separate from faith and religion, spirituality, as a term, is favored in the

literature because it maintains a distinction from formal religious institutions (Kezar

et al., 2006).

Leadership and Spirituality

Though much of the emphasis on the return of spirituality revolves around the

development of students, the influence of spirituality within the context of leadership

and leadership practices in higher education is also an emerging area of interest.

Scholars explored the connection between spirituality and leadership over the past

two decades within the business and K-12 leadership literature. Higher education is

now turning to this exploration as well. As alluded to by Love (2000) and affirmed by

Kezar et al. (2006), the primary contribution of spirituality to the process of

leadership is understanding the essence of leadership as a value-laden process.

Modern paradigms, which have dominated the ways of being within higher education in the twentieth century, promote leadership practices which are value-free, devoid of the influence of ethics, values, and spirituality. In encouraging a reconceptualization of leadership models within higher education that will address the complexities of the twenty-first century, Astin and Astin (2000) contended "…future leaders will not only need to possess new knowledge and skill, but will also be called upon to display a high level of emotional and spiritual wisdom and maturity" (p. 1). This spiritual wisdom and maturity comes through the need for leaders to engage in introspection and greater self-awareness, which Roberts (2007) affirmed "draws those interested in leadership into finding a way to access purpose and voice for…deeper leadership" (p. 3).

How might leadership be influenced when spirituality is affirmed and leadership is decidedly acknowledged as being value-laden and value-directed? Sergiovanni (1992) understood the failure of leadership as our propensity "to view leadership as behavior rather than action, as something psychological rather than spiritual…we have overemphasized bureaucratic, psychological, and technical-rational authority, seriously neglecting professional and moral authority" (p. 3). The complexity of higher education and the demands placed on SSAAs requires a new and refreshed conceptualization of leadership. In writing about the need for new conceptualizations of leadership in higher education, Parks (2008) summarized,

> The artistry of adaptive leadership in the life of the academic and beyond is much too difficult to cultivate and sustain apart from a robust awareness of the presence of the muse—the presence of spirit…our times invite us to recover

the recognition that leadership and spirituality are intimately woven and that

both are integral to the life and work of higher education. (p. 8)

Despite the connection made between leadership and spirituality by leadership

scholars, little is known about how these two constructs interact and the influence of

spirituality on the leadership of higher education administrators or SSAAs.

Leadership, Spirituality, and the Senior Student Affairs Administrator

This study concerns itself with an exploration of the influence of spirituality

on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. It follows then,

that in conceptualizing this study once I understood the evolution of leadership and

the role of spirituality within leadership, my attention turned to understanding why

exploring these two constructs in the context of student affairs as a profession and

more specifically, the leadership of the SSAA was significant. Ultimately, I

determined that exploring the intersection of leadership and spirituality related to the

leadership practices of SSAAs is of import for three reasons: (1) the ideals, values,

and mission of the student affairs profession; (2) the need to deepen and broaden the

higher education literature that exists in this area; and (3) the need to understand

strategies that SSAAs can employ to deepen their leadership capacity and leverage

inner resources to respond to the complexities of their work. For the purpose of this

study, SSAA refers to student affairs administrators that are at the highest ranks of

student affairs administration, not exclusively *the* senior student affairs officer (see

Definition of Terms at end of chapter for more information).

The student affairs profession emerged in the late nineteenth and early

twentieth century when the distinction between academic and student life issues

became necessary (Rudolph, 1962; Sandeen, 1991). Though initially the work of student affairs was quite simplistic as compared to the complex student affairs organizations that now exist, the delineation between student and academic affairs was a significant one because it established student personnel work as a distinct area of expertise within higher education (Clement & Rickard, 1992). Dalton (2006) noted that the creation of the dean of students was important for two reasons:

(1) It was a practical acknowledgment that the faculty could no longer provide the necessary personal attention to individual student welfare and guidance, and

(2) It symbolized a commitment on the part of American colleges to preserve the long tradition of concern for the holistic development and welfare of students. (pp. 145-146)

Almost immediately, a value on educating students holistically emerged as a fundamental tenet of the student affairs profession. In fact, Dalton (2006) acknowledged that the shift to delineate student affairs on American college campuses "…reflected the ideal that higher education should be an intellectual endeavor that was tied inseparably to the personal development of students as moral, physical, and spiritual beings" (p. 146).

The importance of the value for holistic development in college students was codified in *The Student Personnel Point of View* (American Council on Education [ACE], 1937), a document attributed as being the initial charge of the student affairs educator. The original publication (ACE, 1937) makes the priority of holistic development clear in the opening of the document: "The concept of education is

broadened to include attention to the student's well rounded development physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually, as well as intellectually" (p. 1). The value of holistic development is clear in the broad purview of services and learning opportunities that student affairs encompasses. Some of these include: admissions, registration, and financial aid; student physical and mental health; housing, activities, and student unions; multicultural centers; career services and placement; recreation and intercollegiate athletics; student conduct and campus security; and academic support services to name a few (Sandeen, 1991).

Despite the stated value of focusing on holistic development, some have questioned whether or not student affairs professionals actually do their work through a holistic lens (Dalton, 2006; Woodard, Love, & Komives, 2000). The student affairs profession has also been largely silent on issues of spirituality. Dalton (2006) articulated:

> …student affairs professionals have not been influential advocates for the place of spirituality in the higher education setting. They have often failed to recognize the centrality of spirituality in the identity development of students during the college years and have underestimated the power of students' spiritual quests to help them cope with stress and fragmentation in the college setting. In their desire to avoid the appearance of meddling and moralizing, they have often treated religion and spirituality as primarily private domains and, in so doing, have ignored an aspect of students' lives that is often at the very core of their concerns. (p. 147)

In recent years, conversation and attention has once again shifted to the importance of considering the spiritual nature of students, faculty, and student affairs professionals in higher education. Much of this attention has been re-captured by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute and their national on-going study entitled "Spirituality in Higher Education: A National Study of College Students' Search for Meaning and Purpose." Furthermore, the importance of holistic development has been re-invigorated by the publication of *Learning Reconsidered: A Campus-Wide Focus on the Student Experience* (American College Personnel Association [ACPA] & National Association of Student Personnel Administrators [NASPA], 2004). The report's authors called for a focus on transformative education, encouraged a shift in educational practice, and affirmed the need for holistic development, including a focus on spirituality for students' development and as a result a renewed interest in the spirituality of the student affairs professional.

Senior student affairs administrators are called on repeatedly to play a critical leadership role among American colleges and universities (Clement & Rickard, 1992; Sandeen, 1991; Sandeen & Barr, 2006). Senior student affairs administrators are poised to contribute to the leadership of higher education institutions in meaningful and productive ways. Senior student affairs administrators are prepared to work with the complexities of students, staff, and the broader contextual influences of society on higher education. Their contributions to the leadership of higher education institutions in this way are increasingly relied upon by provosts and presidents. Student affairs, once viewed as peripheral to the mission of higher education, is becoming more central to the core of the institution. U.S. Under Secretary of Education, Martha

Kanter (2010) recently issued this imperative for student affairs administrators to exert influence and leadership within higher education:

> It is time to stop this tinkering and time to start re-thinking student services across the spectrum…The profound transformation of higher education over the last half-century has opened unparalleled opportunities for student affairs staff. Student affairs leaders now have a great opportunity to demonstrate leadership in finding new ways to better support today's college students…It is time for student affairs to take a larger leadership role in preparing students for the world of the 21st century. (pp. 18, 20)

Kanter's words are a reminder of the complexity of the educational charge before institutions of higher education. No longer can it be expected that students will be prepared for post-college life solely by the faculty of higher education institutions. Student affairs educators possess content specific knowledge about the learning and development of students not held by other members of the higher education community, and therefore, play a critical role educating students (ACPA & NASPA, 2004).

Overview of Researcher Positionality

As a first-year student at Muhlenberg College in the late 1990s, I began questioning my own faith and spirituality. Through a confluence of events, I began a journey of faith and spirituality that was like nothing I experienced to that point. As I fell into student leadership roles within subsequent years of my college career, I began experiencing a dissonance between my leadership which was influenced by my spirituality and the ability to acknowledge freely that my leadership practices were

directed by my values, which were borne of my spirituality. This dissonance grew ever wider as I became acculturated into the field of student affairs through my master's program and subsequently practiced as a student affairs educator and leader for a number of years. Emboldened, I began to question mentors, supervisors, and colleagues within the field about this dissonance – the existence of a value-free ethos in higher education despite my observations that my learning environment was indeed value-laden. Was this value-free idea simply a way in which to avoid engaging conversation about issues of religion, faith, and spirituality? My experience, scholarship, and research now tell me otherwise. Higher education is value-laden and not value-free (Chickering et al., 2006).

Spirituality had become silenced in higher education. Though my spirituality led me to complex thinking, away from dualisms, and to an understanding of complex moral positions, the message I received repeatedly was that diversity did not include discussions of religion, faith, and spirituality. Further, I came to understand that one would never want to imply that their leadership of a pluralistic student body was influenced by values or spirituality. I have had many young (and older) student affairs educators confess their spirituality to me behind closed doors, in fear that if they spoke too loudly, their work as a student affairs educator would be devalued.

Throughout these experiences, I identified two ironies. The first irony was that the very catalyst (i.e., spirituality, faith, and religion in my life) that encouraged and deepened my critical thinking around issues of social justice and diversity was seen by others as inhibiting and counter to these ideals, ideals that are deeply valued within the field of student affairs.

The second irony was that in a field that encourages and creates environments to facilitate personal transformation of students, one's own personal transformation related to spirituality was not welcomed in the discussion. Manning (2001) elucidated,

> Student affairs educators often become involved in this variety of educational practice thanks to their own personal transformation as students. Someone affected them deeply, and they now strongly desire to be involved in another's life to the same degree. Discussion concerning soul can remind the student affairs educator that the spiritual journey of transformation, spirit, and intellectual wonder is an everyday occurrence. As educators, we can be reflective so that the spiritual journey is not overlooked amid our zeal for administrative efficiency or disciplinary control. (p. 32)

The problem is simple and yet profoundly complex. Senior student affairs administrators are poised to lead student affairs educators to create campus environments that prepare students to be effective contributors of society upon graduation. These environments are inherently value-laden, because leadership and its practices are inherently value-laden (Astin & Astin, 2000). Against the backdrop of an ever changing society (Allen & Cherrey, 2000; Love & Estanek, 2004), the work of the SSAA demands more complex leadership practices than it once did. Calls for new and improved approaches to student affairs practice abound in the literature and it is the responsibility of the senior student affairs administrator to encourage a response. In short, the senior student affairs administrator is called upon to practice leadership for transformation toward an educational practice that promotes socially

just and more comprehensive learning and development among students (ACPA &

NASPA, 2004; Kanter, 2010). SSAAs turn to their spirituality to draw direction,

hope, and values, which influence their leadership practices. According to Astin

(2004) "there are two important aspects of spirituality – *values* and a sense of

connectedness – that drive leadership for transformation" (p. 5). Beyond elucidating

the value-laden nature of leadership, the intersection of leadership and spirituality is

credited with producing a deeper leadership (Roberts, 2007), a leadership for

transformation.

The Compelling Interest

Though the intersections of leadership and spirituality are well-documented in

the theoretical literature of higher education, deepening and broadening the empirical

research would be valuable for the leadership and higher education literature bases.

Additionally, there are no studies, of which I am aware, that examine the intersection

of spirituality and leadership among SSAAs specifically. Given the unique role of the

SSAA within the academy, as outlined above, the more that is known about how

spirituality influences the leadership of SSAAs in process and practice, the more

future SSAAs can be prepared to reflect on their own spiritual resources and be

empowered use these tools to deepen their leadership. I am hardly the first to think of

this connection (e.g., Walling, 1994) and my suspicion is that there are many SSAAs

for whom this intersection is salient in their leadership practices. As Sergiovanni

(1992) affirmed:

> The bright side of the picture is that in our schools, corporations, and other
>
> institutions a practice is emerging that requires us to redefine the concept of

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leadership. The field is ahead of the theory. As a result, our literature and our

official conversation about leadership do not take enough account of

successful practice. (p. 3)

This study is an attempt to do just that, to capture the process by which spirituality

influences leadership and the resultant leadership practices, which are employed by

spiritually-guided SSAAs.

Purpose of the Study and Research Design

The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory study was to understand

the process by which spirituality influences the leadership practices of senior student

affairs administrators. Through this study I sought to develop a theoretical perspective

on the influence that spirituality has on the leadership practices of senior student

affairs administrators.

Research Questions

Four research questions guided this study:

(1) What can be learned about how spirituality influences the leadership practices
of senior student affairs administrators when the intersection of spiritual and
leadership development is considered?

(2) What are the critical influences on the process by which spirituality informs
the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators?

(3) How, if at all, do the spiritually-guided leadership practices of the senior
student affairs administrators in this study influence the organizational
environments of their institutions?

(4) How, if at all, are the spiritually-guided and value-laden leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study challenged by the socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to values, spirituality, and religiosity?

Research Design

The epistemological assumptions that guided this study are grounded in constructivism. According to Jones, Torres, and Arminio (2006), "constructivism seeks to understand individual social action through interpretation or translation" (p. 18). Knowledge and meaning of individuals are formed through interaction with other individuals, historical contexts, and cultural contexts and is therefore deemed to be socially constructed (Creswell, 2007; Crotty, 1998). Meaning making, in a constructivist design, is inextricably linked to context. Additionally, constructivism recognizes that knowledge is mutually created by the researcher and the researched (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As such, the design of this study placed particular emphasis on valuing the individual stories of each participant. A constructivist approach was appropriate in exploring two socially constructed constructs such as leadership and spirituality, thus enabling me to understand how participants made meaning of these constructs in a multidimensional manner.

I approached this study methodologically by employing grounded theory. Specifically, I used constructivist grounded theory as defined by Charmaz (2000, 2006). This methodology was appropriate given the chosen constructivist epistemological paradigm because "a constructivist approach to grounded theory affirms studying people in their natural settings and redirects qualitative research

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away from positivism" (Charmaz, 2000, p. 510). A growing number of studies are employing grounded theory methodology as a means of understanding leadership (Douglas, 2006; Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005, 2006; Parry, 1999, Reichard, 2005). Data were collected through two semi-structured interviews with each participant. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded. Coding enabled an analytic frame to be constructed, which informed the grounded theory itself. Consistent with constructivist grounded theory, four levels of coding were employed in this study: initial, focused, axial, and theoretical (Charmaz, 2006). These four levels of coding formed the foundation of the emergent grounded theory.

Definitions of Terms

There are a number of terms that deserve to be defined at the beginning of this dissertation. *Leadership* is the primary construct in this study. There are many definitions in the literature, which is one of the barriers to gaining a full understanding of this process. For the purposes of this study, I looked to a combination of definitions and assumptions about leadership articulated by Astin and Astin (2000) and Rost (1991). At its core, leadership is an intentionally directed and value-laden process concerned with change and derived from mutual influence between the leader and her or his constituents. Astin and Astin (2000) articulated three values that encompass the purposes of leadership:

- To create a supportive environment where people can grow, thrive, and live in peace with one another;
- To promote harmony with nature and thereby provide sustainability for future generations; and

- To create communities of reciprocal care and shared responsibility where

    every person matters and each person's welfare and dignity is respected and

    supported. (p. 11)

Given that this study is about leadership and the participants of the study are

leaders, it is important to define the term leader as well. In the context of this study,

leader will most often refer to the participants of this study, senior student affairs

administrators. Those who were chosen to participate in this study possessed an

identity as a leader. In this way, leader is associated with a position. However, based

on how leadership was conceptualized for this study, it is not an assumption that

because one occupies a given position, she or he is in fact a leader (Astin & Astin,

2000; Rost, 1991). Furthermore, based on the conceptualization of leadership for this

study, leadership is a process accessible to anyone within the organizational structure

of a given college or university (Kezar et al. 2006; Komives et al., 2007).

Although this study is about leadership, the study was designed to explore the

leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. Therefore, it is important

to define how the concept of leadership practices differs from and is related to the

construct of leadership. Leadership practices are a manifestation of one's leadership.

In short, leadership practices are the ways in which leaders implement leadership.

Although the concept of leadership practices differs from leadership, the two concepts

are very closely related as the former is a result of the latter. Therefore, these terms

are used somewhat interchangeably.

Spirituality is another complex construct that involves many definitions.

Broadly, spirituality is defined as the search for meaning and purpose in one's life in

which one is found to value connectedness through community with others (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 2010; Palmer, 2004; Parks, 2000). Spirituality is defined and explored in a more thorough manner in Chapter Two, including a discussion about the terms *faith* and *religion*, as they relate to spirituality. For the purposes of this study, though defining spirituality is important, each participant had the opportunity to articulate her or his own definition of spirituality related to their worldview.

Senior student affairs administrators included administrators who serve at the senior level of student affairs administration on their campus (e.g., vice president, dean of students, associate vice president, assistant vice president, or associate dean of students). Though this list is not exhaustive it gives the reader an idea of the types of positions that participants in this study occupied.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was the potential to expand theoretical perspectives on the influence that spirituality has on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. Little empirical research has been conducted to understand the relationship of spirituality and leadership among higher education administrators and senior student affairs administrators. There are several principle ways in which this study is significant and several populations for whom this study is of interest.

Value-guided Leadership

This study is significant in bringing a fuller understanding of the role of values within the leadership process. As has been noted, a significant contribution of

spirituality to the leadership literature has been questioning the value-free assumption

of leadership. Yet, little empirical research exists that explores the connection of

value-laden leadership, steeped in spirituality, and its connection to leadership

practices. SSAAs lead harried and fragmented lives, which Sandeen (1991) noted

leave little time for reflection and planning. In the midst of this fragmentation and the

many competing values present within higher education one can become

disconnected from the deeply held values which motivate one's work (Lindholm &

Astin, 2006). Of all positions on campus, SSAAs often find themselves as a mediator

(Sandeen, 1991) among a plethora of constituencies in and out of the campus

community. The process of mediation is one that is undoubtedly guided by values.

Significant to Whom?

While this study is most relevant to senior student affairs administrators, it

holds potential significance for a number of populations including senior student

affairs administrators, higher education leadership scholars, and graduate preparation

faculty. It provided a window into the value-laden leadership practices in the context

of this specific leadership post. Higher education leadership scholars may find this

study to be significant as well. As has been noted, little is known about the

intersection of the two constructs being explored within this study. This grounded

theory study provided an emergent theory from which subsequent research can be

executed. Finally, this study's findings have implications for graduate preparation

faculty and those who plan professional development curriculum. Does spirituality

related to the student affairs educator deserve attention within graduate preparation

programs and professional development curriculum? If so, this study may elucidate how this curriculum may be shaped.

Organization of the Dissertation

I review the theoretical and empirical literature related to leadership, spirituality, and senior student affairs administrators in Chapter Two. I conclude Chapter Two by highlighting the call for research concerning spirituality and leadership that is well-documented in the literature. In Chapter Three, I discuss the research design for the study including the epistemological framework, methodology, and methods used for collection and analysis of data. In Chapter Four, I present the findings of the study and the emergent grounded theory. In Chapter Five, I conclude the dissertation by discussing the findings in relation to the research questions and extant literature, as well as discussing the implications the findings have for future research and theory development.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A paucity of empirical research and literature exists connecting the constructs of leadership and spirituality within higher education. However, in recent years higher education scholars are producing more literature as spirituality gains greater attention. This chapter provides a review of the theoretical and empirical literature reflecting the conceptualization of this study and composing the theoretical framework. The purpose of this chapter is to help the reader understand how my thinking on this topic has been guided by previous literature, which led to a purpose statement, research design, and research questions.

The theoretical literature base informing this study is abundant as the two constructs of interest, leadership and spirituality, are explored by many scholars. Because the empirical literature concerning the intersection of spirituality and leadership is sparse among higher education scholarship, I turned to the business and K-12 empirical leadership literature to more fully inform the theoretical framework. Spirituality as an influence on leadership is largely absent from the scholarly literature until the postindustrial paradigm as defined by Rost (1991). Spirituality has emerged as an area of interest in higher education, particularly with the application of critical and postmodern paradigms to the study and practice of leadership (Kezar et al., 2006).

The aim of this study was to develop a theoretical perspective on the role that spirituality plays in influencing the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators by exploring the critical influences on this process and the intersection of leadership and spiritual development. I began by describing leadership practices

and drawing upon the theoretical literature base to explore the evolution of the conceptualization of leadership broadly. I then shift to discuss the evolution of administrative leadership theory, research, and practice within higher education. This section details how the conceptualization of administrative leadership has shifted over the past three decades. Next, the review of the literature addresses the construct of spirituality, broadly and within higher education. Once the two constructs of leadership and spirituality are introduced, I draw upon the empirical literature base and detail how the two constructs are presented together within the literature. This section highlights empirical research executed within the business sector, K-12 arena, and higher education that examines the concepts of spirituality and leadership. The literature review concludes by highlighting gaps in the literature and drawing attention to calls for further research.

Leadership Practices Defined

Before exploring the evolution of leadership broadly and within higher education, it is important to consider a definition of leadership practices. This study, in essence, explores how spirituality influences leadership practices. Though leadership and leadership practices are highly related, these two concepts are also different. Whereas leadership is a process in which individuals engage, leadership practices are the behaviors that manifest as a result of engaging said process.

Leadership theories and models are often associated with accompanying leadership practices that scholars expect would manifest as a result of engaging a given leadership philosophy or approach. For example, in defining relational leadership, Komives et al. (2007) articulated that as a result of approaching leadership

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relationally "we should be and expect others to be purposeful, inclusive, empowering, ethical, and process-oriented" (p. 30). The authors referred to these five concepts as leadership practices. Among one of the most popular set of leadership practices published are those associated with Kouzes and Posner's (2002) *The Leadership Challenge*. Their research of personal-best leadership practices revealed five practices which have been coined the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership. These leadership practices are "model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart" (p. 13) and serve as the basis of their leadership model.

In a grounded theory of 12 primary and secondary educational administrators, Yoder (1998) explored the connection between spirituality and educational administration and identified eight leadership practices as "behaviors they [the participants] engage in because of a commitment to their spiritual beliefs" (p. 236). These eight leadership practices included "listening, reflecting, asking questions, empowering, focusing, renewing, letting go, and caring" (p. 236). There is no universally available list of leadership practices; instead, leadership practices are dependent on one's leadership approach.

Evolution of Conceptualizations of Leadership

The conceptualization of this study began in the leadership literature. After all, this is a study about leadership and educational leadership practices. Administrative leadership practices in higher education have evolved over time, in context and in relation to the broader evolution of leadership theory and research. Hence, in order to understand higher education leadership, it is helpful to possess a

cursory understanding of this evolution as documented in the literature. I will first

share two caveats about this review of the leadership literature. First, as is common in

writings about leadership (Rost, 1991), I begin by stating that this evolution is quite

complex and difficult to capture, even in a thorough literature review. Second,

definitions of leadership are nearly countless in the literature (Northouse, 2007; Rost,

1991). In this literature review, I focus on overlaps in the literature that influenced my

thinking in the design of this study. What does emerge from the literature is a

progression of thought concerning leadership that is categorized best in two distinct

paradigms, the industrial and the postindustrial.

The Industrial Paradigm

The industrial paradigm encompasses leadership theories such as trait,

behavior, situational, and the lesser known, excellence theories (Rost, 1991). These

theories are described by Rost (1991) as structural-functionalist, management-

oriented, personalistic in focusing only on the leader, goal-achievement-dominated,

self-interested and individualistic in outlook among other characteristics. More

broadly, these theories link leadership and management as synonymous constructs

whereas leadership is a product of good management. The terms leader and

leadership are also not distinguished, emphasizing the leader-centric view advocated

by these theories and the prominent place that power and control have within these

theories (Northouse, 2007; Rost, 1991). The theories that define the industrial

paradigm are often presented as distinct, and to some degree they are; however, Rost

(1991) expressed disapproval of authors who present them as such. To a great extent,

all the theories in this paradigm share the aforementioned characteristics and describe similar phenomena in different ways.

The Postindustrial Paradigm

Observing a dramatic paradigmatic shift in societal values (Allen & Cherrey, 2000; Kezar et al., 2006), leadership scholars are seeking new conceptualizations of leadership that will serve the needs of society more effectively. These new conceptualizations are not more of the same, which is often observed of the multiple theories that evolved within the industrial paradigm, but new and different ways of thinking about leadership (Rost, 1991). This movement formally began with Burns' (1978) seminal text, *Leadership* where he expounded on a theory of moral leadership. Though Burns' work was published in 1978, Rost (1991) articulated that old paradigms of leadership continued to be practiced until the 1990s when the postindustrial paradigm of leadership emerged.

Formal writings about challenging the role and philosophy of the leader began in the 1970s and foregrounded Burns' (1978) text. Greenleaf (1977) began work in 1969 that culminated in the text *Servant Leadership*. His writings influenced the emergence of the postindustrial paradigm because he asserted that leaders were servants first, then made a conscious choice to aspire to lead (Greenleaf, 1977). Greenleaf's (1977) writings were in juxtaposition to the predominant themes of the industrial paradigm that asserted that a leader wanted to lead first because of their position, drive, or desire to have status. Greenleaf's writing began to give a nod to concepts such as morality in leadership, serving the public good, nurturing leaders, and leading with spirit.

Vaill (1989; 1998) introduced the metaphor of managers working in "permanent whitewater" (1989, p.2), which referred to the constant state of change within organizations. Relating leadership to a performing art, Vaill (1989) identified three ways to transform older management and leadership paradigms: "working collectively smarter, working reflectively smarter, and working spiritually smarter" (p. 29). Vaill advanced a leadership and managerial approach that placed people at the center. He introduced the role of "spirituality" and "spirit" as it relates to leadership and management, citing the importance of being connected to our values which will aid leadership among the whitewater of change (Vaill, 1989). He later furthered his writings, distancing leadership from the positivist view of leadership held during the industrial paradigm, advancing "managerial leadership" as a process, not an applied science (Vaill, 1998).

Palmer (1990) was also a prominent voice of defining leadership in the postindustrial paradigm. Based on an address he delivered, a pamphlet, *Leading from Within: Reflections on Spirituality and Leadership* was published with the transcription of his words. He asserted that human awareness, spirit, consciousness, and spirituality are the fundamental factors in creating societal change. He called upon the insights gained from spiritual traditions to inform leadership. Palmer emphasized the need for society to not be victims of the world, but to employ the teachings of spiritual traditions to co-create the world and realize our role in doing so (Palmer, 1990).

The postindustrial paradigm is characterized by leadership theories that are relational, reciprocal, and values-based in nature. Recognized in the late twentieth

century and into the twenty-first century, the postindustrial paradigm encompasses leadership theory that retools the purpose and nature of leadership. Leadership is now characterized as a relational, shared process that is concerned with change (Astin & Astin, 2000; Kezar et al., 2006; Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007; Rost, 1991). A shift from leader-centric theories to a focus on common purpose and collective action is reflected in leadership theory associated with the postindustrial paradigm (Rogers, 2003; Rost, 1991). With a shift away from leader-centric theories, social constructions of leadership within the postindustrial paradigm recognize that leadership is (and has been) non-positional and process-oriented. Leadership is no longer only practiced by those in positions of authority, but available to anyone who is interested in effecting change. Management and leadership become two distinct concepts that are not defined similarly. Leadership as defined by Rost (1991) highlighted four key elements: "(1) a relationship based on influence, (2) leaders and followers develop that relationship, (3) they intend real changes, and (4) they have mutual purposes" (p. 127).

Understanding the paradigmatic shift of leadership as one that occurred primarily for those in dominant social positions is a necessary critique of the literature (Komives & Dugan, 2010). The postindustrial paradigm exposed how leadership was conceptualized and practiced by many historically marginalized populations (e.g., women, people of color; see *feminist and multicultural conceptions of leadership* later in this chapter) all along, yet dynamics of power silenced those leadership approaches from being present in the literature. Whereas some identify the shift in leadership to be a new way of thinking, in actuality this paradigm shift is a new way of socially

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constructing leadership for those who practiced leadership in ways consistent with the industrial paradigm. Hence, for many, the paradigm shift is a only definitional shift of leadership, validating their long-held practices and approaches of leadership (Komives & Dugan, 2010).

A defining characteristic of postindustrial leadership is the central role of ethics within the conceptualization of leadership (Rogers, 2003; Rost, 1991). This emphasis on ethics began with the ideas of Burns (1978) who articulated that change should have a moral purpose. Rost (1991) expounded on this idea and differentiated two distinct concerns regarding ethical leadership: process and content. Process referred to the way in which decisions were made within an organization. Specifically, whether or not the way in which leadership exerts influence was done in an ethical manner. Content referred to the work of the leader (e.g., decisions, policies, and positions) and questions whether the end product of leadership was in itself ethical.

(R)Evolution of the Conceptualizations of Leadership in Higher Education

I opened this review of the literature by describing the broad evolution of leadership theory and practice throughout the greater part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. I included this because it serves as a backdrop to the evolution of administrative leadership practice and theory in higher education, which is the central focus of this study. In this next section, I trace the evolution of administrative leadership practices in higher education over the past several decades, referred to as a "revolution" by Kezar et al. (2006). I illustrate how the shift from the industrial to postindustrial paradigm of leadership as described by Rost (1991) has

played out in the higher education arena. This shift in conceptualizing leadership has

led to the inclusion of spirituality as a construct of interest in regard to leadership

practice and theory, hence giving way for the basis of this study. This revolution in

leadership, according to Kezar (2009) is guided by five interdependent assumptions:

1. Leadership is a *process* not the possession of individuals in positions of
    authority.

2. *Culture and context matter;* leadership is no longer considered a universal or
    objective phenomenon that transcends context.

3. Leadership is a *collaborative and collective* process that involves individuals
    working together across organizational and national boundaries.

4. *Mutual power and influence,* not control and coercion, are the focus of
    revolutionary leadership efforts.

5. The emphasis of revolutionary leadership is *learning, empowerment, and*
    change. (p. 6)

The five interdependent assumptions summarize the basis for the shifting paradigms

of leadership experienced within higher education. In this next section, I explore how

those paradigms have influenced the definition and conceptualization of leadership

within the academy.

Shifting Paradigms of Leadership

Love and Estanek (2004) defined a paradigm as a "system of assumptions

about the nature of reality that is integrated, pervasive, holistic, and internally

consistent…It is from within a paradigm that human beings understand what is real,

what is false, what is possible, and to what they should pay attention" (p. 1). As

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previously described, Rost (1991) uses the nomenclature of industrial and postindustrial paradigm to describe the evolution of leadership. In terms more familiar with higher education scholarship, Kezar et al. (2006) applied three paradigms to the conceptualization of leadership practice and research and which subsequently led to a shift in thinking. They are the social constructivism, critical, and postmodern paradigms. These paradigms more specifically describe the type of reconceived ideas of leadership that Rost (1991) identified within the postindustrial paradigm (Kezar et. al., 2006).

     Social constructivism. The assumptions within the social constructivism paradigm begin to shift from those under the functionalist paradigm. As opposed to seeing leadership as a phenomenon that can be captured and defined with predictable outcomes (i.e., functional paradigm), leadership is understood as a social construction (Kezar, 2002; Kezar et al., 2006; Parry, 1998; Rhoads & Tierney, 1992). As a social construction, context and culture are recognized as having a profound impact on how leadership practices are expressed. Knowledge and meaning of individuals are formed through interaction with other individuals, historical, and cultural contexts and is therefore deemed to be socially constructed (Creswell, 2007; Crotty, 1998). Within a constructivist paradigm, meaning making is inextricably linked to context (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The role of values realizes the largest shift from the functionalist paradigm to the social constructivist paradigm. Leadership is no longer value neutral, but values are seen as changing based on one's perspective, context, culture, or situation (Kezar et al., 2006).

Critical paradigm. The critical paradigm emerges as a means to evaluate differentials in power that exist between those in leadership and those groups that have been historically oppressed in our society. Critical theorists presume that "all thought is mediated by power relations that are social in nature and historically constituted" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 139). Crotty (1998) added "critical inquiry illuminates the relationship between power and culture" (p. 158). Kezar et al. (2006) outlined four characteristics that underlie critical theory as "(a) an examination of power dynamics; (b) the importance of acknowledging that research is not neutral or value free; (c) the need to develop new constructs; and, (d) seeing research as political and a form of activism" (p. 21).

Within critical theory, facts are linked to and cannot be isolated from values (Broido & Manning, 2002; Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994; Tierney & Rhoads, 1994). A key aim of critical theory is emancipatory in nature (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Crotty, 1998). Critical leadership focuses on empowering those historically disenfranchised and underrepresented groups (Dantley, 2006). Values are viewed as a central point for creating social change (Kezar et al., 2006).

Postmodern paradigm. Postmodernism begins to take into account the great complexity that needs to be evaluated in examining any of these leadership paradigms or theories focusing on human construction as well as context. Postmodernism broadens tenets to include the human experience, identity, and the impact of history. Values are recognized, but often questioned because these values serve the interest of the majority group (Kezar et al. 2006). The postmodern paradigm is grounded in the idea that "there are no objective and universal truths, but that particular forms of

knowledge, and the ways of being that they engender, become 'naturalised' in culturally and historically specific ways" (Sullivan, 2003, p. 39). Postmodernism is characterized by multiple voices, a rejection of a singular truth, a view of society that highlights differences and opposites, and a definition of knowledge as "…discovered rather than interpreted, and uncovered rather than constructed (Tierney & Rhoads, 2004, p. 313). In regards to leadership, postmodernists reject the idea of a universal form of leadership, question whether leadership is always good for a community, and caution that leadership is at times used to keep certain people groups marginalized (Kezar et al., 2006).

Each paradigm has a nuanced set of assumptions, purposes of and approaches to research, and limitations. However, three assumptions are shared among these paradigms. First, the three paradigms implore a questioning of generalizable or universal leadership processes. When applying these paradigms to the study of leadership, context becomes a critical factor whereas within older paradigms leadership ideas were applied equally to all contexts or social groups. Next, it follows that these three paradigms view the human experience as being characterized by ambiguity and contradiction. Finally, when applying these paradigms to the study of leadership, values and ethics become central to its conceptualization and redefinition. A clear distinction from older ways of viewing leadership (e.g., industrial and positivist paradigms) is that leadership is recognized as being value laden. Those industrial ways of viewing leadership hold that leadership is value-free or value-neutral and that one's leadership should not be influenced by values or beliefs.

Feminist and multicultural conceptions of leadership. The civil rights and feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s fundamentally changed the conceptualization of leadership (Kezar, 2009). The postindustrial paradigm of leadership as well as the social constructivist, critical, and postmodern paradigms have created opportunities for leadership to be studied and practiced in ways that welcome new conceptualizations. Feminist and multicultural conceptualizations of leadership are among those that have emerged as new areas of study and practice as a result of these shifting paradigms. Researchers delved into questions about differences in leadership practices between gender and across racial and ethnic identities (e.g., Arminio et al, 2000; Astin & Leland, 1991; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Komives, 1991).

Advances in understanding leadership practices of women is steeped in an increasing literature base on women's identity and development (e.g., Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Chin, Lott, Rice, & Sanchez-Hucles, 2007; Gilligan, 1982; Jones, 1997; Jordan, 2005; Josselson, 1996). Many researchers evaluated differences in leadership across gender. In one of the earlier studies present in the student affairs leadership literature, Komives (1991) explored transactional and transformational leadership characteristics among male and female hall directors using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form. The findings of this study revealed that further research across gender was needed. Women's relational styles correlated to their transformational leadership, yet men did not correlate relational styles with transformational leadership, instead correlated power direct styles with their transformational leadership.

In the same year, Astin and Leland (1991) published a pioneering study on

women and social change related to the women's movement. By studying a cross-

generational sample of women who were involved in the women's movement, Astin

and Leland (1991) uncovered that leadership was both positional and non-positional,

imperative to social change, and dependent on outcomes and processes. Qualities

such as empowerment, the challenging of patriarchal systems, person-centered

approaches, mentorship, collectivism, sustainability of a movement, and shared

power were discussed as ways in which women viewed the role of leadership

throughout the women's movement. Researchers since (e.g., Dugan, 2006; Gergen,

2005; Romano, 1996; Stephens, 2003) concluded that leadership practices employed

by women are more consistent with postindustrial paradigms (e.g., shared leadership

practices, a focus on relationship building, process orientation, ethic of care, leader as

facilitator) and emphasized the role of mentorship and role-modeling in leadership

development for women.

Research on leadership regarding people of color has lead to calls for specific

leadership development training programs for higher education administrators of

color (McCurtis, Jackson, & O'Callaghan, 2009). This assertion is based in research

that has concluded that leadership is conceptualized differently for those of color than

their White counterparts. In a phenomenological study of students of color, Arminio

et al. (2000) identified a number of themes that affirmed this difference. For the

participants in this study, leadership was viewed from a collective lens that

emphasized a group orientation and a sense of responsibility for the community as a

priority. The participants often disassociated with a self-identity as a "leader." In

short, leader often connoted images of oppression for their own racial and/or ethnic communities. Kezar and Moriarty (2000) found that students of color viewed activities not always associated with leadership development (e.g., community service, non-positional involvement in student organizations) as significant for their own leadership development.

More broadly, the literature on multicultural conceptualizations of leadership highlights that social identity does influence one's view of leadership (Komives et al., 2007; Northouse, 2007). Northouse (2007) discussed the concept of ethnocentric leadership as the tendency to engage in leadership from one's cultural frame often excluding other cultural approaches and valuing one's culture approach over another's. Northouse discussed six global leadership behaviors (i.e., charismatic/value-based leadership, team-oriented leadership, participative leadership, human-oriented leadership, autonomous leadership, self-protective leadership) and compared them among global orientations of leadership. Because of the collectivist orientation of many communities of color, leadership orientations among people of color often align with postindustrial paradigms of leadership.

The "L" Word

Bensimon, Neumann, and Birnbaum (1989) authored a monograph entitled *Making Sense of Administrative Leadership: The "L" Word in Higher Education,* which captured the essence of higher education leadership at the time of publication. The leadership practices and theories described in this text are consistent with the thinking of the industrial paradigm. Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006) revisited this very subject in a monograph entitled *Rethinking the "L" Word in*

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Higher Education: The Revolution of Research on Leadership. The fact that these two monographs were published less than two decades apart highlights the dramatic shift that occurred in the conceptualization of leadership research, theory, and practice during this time. I have included a comparison of the key themes from these two monographs because it serves as a useful tool to understand the epitome of the recent paradigmatic shift in the understanding of leadership within higher education.

A consistent thematic difference between the two texts is highlighted in the definition of leader. Bensimon et al. (1989) stated: "Research and commentaries on the presidency suggest that presidents tend to accept a traditional and directive view when they define their leadership role…" (p. iv). Though other academic officers are mentioned in brief, Bensimon et al. (1989) largely defined leaders in higher education as the presidents of colleges and universities. They note themselves that this is a serious deficiency and more recognition of other leaders on campus is necessary. Kezar et al. (2006) clearly broadened their definition in their introduction: "No longer is the college president considered the sole leader on campus or the campus hierarchy the place to look for change agents" (p. xi). Kezar et al. (2006) further expanded the definition of leadership: "Leadership has moved from being leader centered, individualistic, hierarchical, focused on universal characteristics, and emphasizing power over followers to a new vision in which leadership is process centered, collective, context bound, nonhierarchical, and focused on mutual power and influence" (p. ix).

Kezar et al. (2006) provided insight into the complexity of higher education organizations through a new lens. This lens allowed one to view the organizational

and administrative structure of an institution as an interconnected, interdependent web of numerous sub-organizations. Influenced by new views, such as transformational leadership, and emerging theories, (e.g., chaos and complexity theories, social and cultural theories, contingency theories and relational or team-based theories of leadership), it is evident that complex higher education institutions will thrive only when individuals on all levels of the organization practice leadership.

Whereas independence "at the top" was previously emphasized, interdependence among leaders and constituents is vital today. A good leader, once defined as someone who kept their distance from the community they served, on today's campus must be involved and willing to share power in order to necessarily progress. For many years, management was identified as the motivation for leadership as is consistent with the industrial paradigm's conceptualization of leadership; today leadership aims to invoke change (Riera, 2008). Whereas vision was at one time the responsibility of the president, this too has shifted to involve many constituents, both inside and outside the campus community (Riera, 2008).

Though there are inferences to morality and transformational leadership by Bensimon et al. (1989), the state of leadership, at time of publication, is described as accomplishing effective management of higher education institutions. Kezar et al. (2006) defined the approach of leadership they defined is a departure from management: "Task orientation is no longer seen as more important than developing relationships and being a strong communicator. Effective leadership is a combination of relational and task skills…leaders who foster learning can create change" (p. xi).

The differences in approach among the two texts are helpful in understanding how leadership has evolved within higher education in the past two decades. As various emerging paradigms (e.g., critical, postmodern) have been applied to the study and practice of leadership, new conceptualizations of leadership have emerged and are used to inform practice. One such conceptualization is that of the role of ethics and spirituality in leadership. The influences of scientific views of leadership are being challenged by the introduction of spirituality and ethics into the conversation of leadership.

Spirituality Enters the Leadership Conversation

Spirituality has been broadly woven into the leadership literature and informed a number of leadership approaches, including authentic leadership, ethical leadership, values-driven leadership, servant leadership, and moral leadership (Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005; Greenleaf, 1977; Maxwell, 2002; Palmer, 1990; Ritscher, 1998; Vaill, 1989, 1998). How does spirituality appear in the higher education leadership today? This section outlines how spirituality entered into the conversation of leadership. setting the ground for contrasting technical and adaptive approaches to leadership, Heifetz (1994) captured the essence of leadership as it relates to values:

> The exercise and even the study of leadership stirs feeling because leadership engages our values. Indeed, the term itself is value-laden. When we call for leadership in our organizations and politics, we call for something we prize…Yet the way we talk about leadership betrays confusion. On one hand, we use the word to denote people and actions of merit…On the other hand, we

insist that the word leadership is value-free…We cannot continue to have it both ways. (p. 13)

Superimposed upon the many evolutions of defining leadership that are occurring within higher education, leadership scholars are beginning to call more frequently for grounding leadership within moral and ethical convictions. Beginning with Burns' (1978) *Leadership*, scholars questioned the essentials that need to be included in the discussion and discovery of leadership. Burns (1978) illuminated the dynamic of moral leadership: "Moral leadership emerges from, and always returns to, the fundamental wants and needs, aspirations, and values of the followers. I mean the kind of leadership that can produce social change that will satisfy followers' authentic needs" (p. 4).

Kezar et al. (2006) defined ethical leadership as "an attempt to act from the principles, beliefs, assumptions, and values embedded in the leader's espoused system of ethics. It is often associated with character, authenticity, and credibility in the leadership literature" (p. 73). In addition to traditional concepts of moral and ethical leadership, spirituality has begun to emerge as a distinct facet of leadership yet closely tied to ethical leadership. A growing base of literature connects and highlights the need for congruence among leaders' actions and philosophies. In the context of leadership, Kezar et al. (2006) defined spirituality as the "more metaphysically based notions of ethical conduct" (p. 74). Kezar et al. (2006) also identified ethics and spirituality as areas that need more study within the realm of leadership pertaining to higher education.

The concept of ethics and spirituality is increasingly occupying space within the leadership and higher education literature. When identifying the key tasks of leadership, Locke (2003) identified core values as number two on a list of eight. He described this in further detail as: "deciding what the company will stand for including its basic moral principles (e.g., honesty)…Shared values are also important in business organizations, but it is critical that the values that are shared be the right ones" (p. 276). Allen and Cherrey (2000) encouraged that one "spend time articulating individual and institutional core values" (p. 97). Birnbaum (1992) found that presidents who articulated strong values were considered more effective. Additionally, effective presidents were characterized as having a moral foundation that helped them maintain balance in the midst of persistent issues (Kezar et al., 2006).

Kezar et al. (2006) noted that creating ethical environments was important as well. A suggestion of developing an ethos on ethics is explained:

> Typically, an ethical tone is not set by top leadership; the authors believe this missing tone affects leadership throughout the campus, which is missing an ethical dimension…ethics are so important that they cannot be left up to individuals but must be integrated into the fabric of the institution—its structure, culture, and value system. (p. 138)

The call for moral leadership goes beyond ethical environments to examining the role that higher education plays in society. In describing presidential leadership for the public good, Gilliland (2005) identified vision and values as her two most significant presidential leadership principles. She stated that "while vision inspires

people to act, values are just as important in inspiring discussion about how to act" (p. 312). Her candid presentation reveals how difficult congruence in leadership can be: "The domain of leading for the public good that we will struggle the most with is alignment of management practices, vision, and behaviors with the values" (p. 312).

Kezar et al. (2006) suggested that ethics, values, and spirituality need to be incorporated into new paradigms of leadership research and practice. A response to the shifting contexts of society (Allen & Cherry, 2000) is the consideration of spirituality and leadership as related constructs. Klenke (2008) merged both of these ideas when she highlighted that spirituality is entering the conversation of leadership in response to a larger context, today's sociopolitical and economic climate, requiring leaders to be characterized by "adaptability, understanding of context, creativity, and tolerance for ambiguity and change" (p. 32). As this literature review progresses, I will first introduce the concept of spirituality, a complex and central construct in this study. Then, I will introduce empirical literature that documents research that has been completed to date that includes these two constructs, leadership and spirituality.

Spirituality Conceptualized

Spirituality as a construct is no less complex than the construct of leadership. And as noted above in defining leadership, the literature provides countless definitions. To make matters more complicated, there are a number of terms (e.g., soul, spirituality, spiritual, spirit-centered, spiritual development, religiosity, faith, religion) used interchangeably by some authors but given exclusive and distinct definitions by others. In this next section, I provide a number of definitions of spirituality, highlighting the primary tensions noticed in the literature concerning the

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defining of spirituality. First, I review the interchangeable use of spirituality and spiritual development. Next, the tension between the terms spirituality and religion in the literature is elucidated. Thirdly, common elements among all the presented definitions are synthesized. Finally, I present an emergent definition of spirituality within higher education as a search for meaning and purpose.

Higher education related literature has aided me most in conceptualizing the construct of spirituality, as the context for this study is higher education. Even within higher education, various definitions of this construct exist highlighting the definitional difficulty that exists with this construct (Chickering et. al, 2006; Dalton, 2001; Nash, 2001; Nash & Scott, 2009; Palmer, 2000; Parks, 2000, Tisdell, 2003). Kezar (2009) affirmed the broader challenge of engaging in conversations and scholarly inquiry about ethics and spirituality as compared to other facets of leadership development "…because [with ethics and spirituality] there are no ready-made answers and they usually require much longer development than teaching steps and vision creation" (p. 20).

Spirituality and Spiritual Development

In a theoretical article, Love and Talbot (1999) based their definition of spirituality on three assumptions: "(a) the quest for spiritual development is an innate aspect of human development; (b) spiritual development and spirituality are interchangeable concepts; and, (c) openness is a prerequisite to spiritual development" (p. 364). Upon these three assumptions, Love and Talbot (1999) offered five propositions that form their definition of spirituality/spiritual development (terms they use interchangeably):

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1. Spiritual development involves an internal process of seeking personal authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness as an aspect of identity development.

2. Spiritual development involves the process of continually transcending one's current locus of centricity.

3. Spiritual development involves developing a greater connectedness to self and other through relationships and union with community.

4. Spiritual development involves deriving meaning, purpose, and direction in one's life.

5. Spiritual development involves an increasing openness to exploring a relationship with an intangible and pervasive power or essence that exists beyond human knowing. (pp. 364-367)

This definition was a natural starting point for the conceptualization of spirituality in this study because it is the first, most cited, and most comprehensive definition of spirituality in student affairs literature (Estanek, 2006). Tisdell (2003) presented a definition of spirituality based on several qualitative studies that have similar themes as that of Love and Talbot's (1999) definition. Tisdell's (2003) understanding of spirituality is presented as seven assumptions about the nature of spirituality:

1. Spirituality and religion are not the same, but for many people they are interrelated.

2. Spirituality is about an awareness and honoring of wholeness and interconnectedness of all things through the mystery of what many I

interviewed referred to as the Life-force, God, higher power, higher self, cosmic energy, Buddha nature, or Great Spirit.

3. Spirituality is fundamentally about meaning-making.

4. Spirituality is always present (though often unacknowledged in the learning environment).

5. Spiritual development constitutes moving toward greater authenticity or to a more authentic self.

6. Spirituality is about how people construct knowledge through largely unconscious and symbolic processes, often made more concrete in art forms such as music, art, image, symbol, and ritual which are manifested culturally.

7. Spiritual experiences most often happen by surprise. (pp. 28-29)

One of the key similarities in the definitions of Love and Talbot (1999) and Tisdell (2003) is the interchangeable use and assumption of the concepts of spirituality and spiritual development and the emphasis on meaning making. Embedding the definition of spirituality within the framework of student development some view as beneficial (Estanek, 2006) and consistent with the way spirituality and faith are conceptualized developmentally by other scholars (e.g., Fowler, 1981; Parks, 2000); however, the connection between student development and spirituality is not reflected in every definition or description of spirituality.

Spirituality and Religion

Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm (2006) used Teasdale's (1999) description of spirituality as the orienting definition of spirituality in their text *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education.* Teasdale (1999) wrote:

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Being religious connotes belonging to and practicing a religious tradition.

Being spiritual suggests a personal commitment to a process of inner

development that engages us in our totality. Religion, of course, is one way

many people are spiritual. Often, when authentic faith embodies an

individual's spirituality the religious and the spiritual will coincide. Still, not

every religious person is spiritual (although they ought to be) and not every

spiritual person is religious. Spirituality is a way of life that affects and

includes every moment of existence. It is at once a contemplative attitude, a

disposition to a life of depth, and the search for ultimate meaning, direction,

and belonging. The spiritual person is committed to growth as an essential

ongoing life goal. To be spiritual requires us to stand on our own two feet

while being nurtured and supported by our tradition, if we are fortunate

enough to have one. (pp. 17-18)

Another theme in the literature on spirituality, also reflected in Teasdale's (1999)

definition, is the separation of the concepts spirituality and religion. Nash (2001)

challenged this dichotomization when he concluded that "the words religion and

spirituality are interchangeable parts of the same experience" (p. 18) because

students' meaning making is facilitated through use of their heads (i.e., religion) and

hearts (i.e., spirituality). Nash's assertion is reinforced by findings from Estanek's

(2006) constructivist narrative analysis on the definitions of spirituality within higher

education publications: "Spirituality and religion are united in practice for many even

if the concepts are defined separately" (p. 278). Estanek (2006), however, advocated

that the definition of spirituality not include religion because "given the American

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culture of separation of church and state it is useful to have a working definition of spirituality without reference to God or religion" (p. 278).

Common Elements among Definitions of Spirituality

Despite the many definitions of spirituality that exist, a number of commonalities emerge. Estanek (2006) noted general commonalities including that "(a) spirituality is both deeply individual and communal; (b) that there is some sort of power beyond human existence; and, (c) that humans develop in trying to make sense (meaning-making) of their existence in light of this power" (p. 274). Seeking authenticity and wholeness are also commonalities observed among the diverse array of definitions of spirituality (HERI, 2010; Palmer, 2004)

Estanek's (2006) narrative analysis unearthed a broader set of "common non-redundant themes that identify the parameters of the understanding of spirituality" (p. 272). These five common themes include:

(a) Spirituality defined as spiritual development

(b) Spirituality used as critique

(c) Spirituality understood as an empty container for individual meaning

(d) Spirituality understood as common ground or 'field'

(e) Spirituality as quasi-religion. (p. 272)

Common themes observed in this review of the literature include: the interchangeable nature of the terms *spirituality* and *spiritual development*; spirituality as a journey of meaning-making; the tension between spirituality and religion within higher education; and spirituality as a means to be congruent or authentic.

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Spirituality in Higher Education as a Search for Meaning and Purpose

Within the first decade of the twenty-first century, spirituality is defined, described, and conceptualized as a human experience; a journey of meaning-making; a search for meaning and purpose; and values, which have become an integral part of spirituality (HERI; Palmer, 2004; Parks, 2000). Estanek (2006) identified this new literature on spirituality as a new discourse. She argued that because how one defines spirituality shapes the experience of spirituality, it is critical to understand what influences this new discourse. In highlighting the idea of living with integrity, Palmer (2004) referred to the search for a "hidden wholeness" or a "journey toward an undivided life" (p. 2), that is, living one's life in accordance with one's values. Parks (2000) described spirituality in this way:

> This turn to a recognition of spirituality and an acknowledgment of soul is rooted in a longing for ways of speaking of the human experience of depth, meaning, mystery, moral purpose, transcendence, wholeness, intuition, vulnerability, tenderness, courage, the capacity of love, and the apprehension of spirit (or Spirit) as the animating essence at the core of life. In a society and an academy grown weary and restless with hardening definitions of who and what counts in determining what matters—what we will invest our lives in and how we will name that investment—there is a desire to break through into a more spacious and nourishing conception of the common life we all share. (p. 16)

The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) launched a national,

longitudinal study focused on the rising numbers of college students who are actively

using the college experience as an opportunity to search for meaning and purpose

within their lives. The HERI research team developed this definition of spirituality

based on findings:

> It involves an active quest for answers to life's "big questions" (Spiritual
>
> Quest), a global worldview that transcends ethnocentrism and egocentrism
>
> (Ecumenical Worldview), a sense of caring and compassion for others (Ethic
>
> of Caring) coupled with a lifestyle that includes service to others (Charitable
>
> Involvement), and a capacity to maintain one's sense of calm and
>
> centeredness, especially in times of stress (Equanimity). (HERI, 2010,
>
> Defining Spirituality section, para. 1)

Reinforcing some of the same themes noted in Parks' (2000) and HERI's

(2010) definitions, Chickering et al., (2006) made some synthesizing observations

about their own review of definitions of spirituality in their text, *Encouraging

Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education.* They commented on the

connection of spirituality, values, integrity, and a search for meaning and purpose:

"These definitions of spirituality and authenticity imply that these domains intimately

interact with other major vectors of human development: integrity, identity, autonomy

and interdependence, meaning and purpose" (p. 9). The important point in terms of

the conceptualization of the present study is that spirituality is not seen as a

unidimensional construct but instead as multidimensional.

Leadership and Spirituality

Where do the constructs of spirituality and leadership come together in the literature, particularly in relation to higher education and student affairs? A number of authors have attempted to capture how the two constructs relate to each other. In the *Encyclopedia of Leadership* (Harter, 2004) the connection of spirituality to leadership is captured as such:

> Leadership *implies* spirituality. Leadership, like spirituality, is a relationship grounded in a purpose, and that purpose reflects the aspirational character of its participants...Spirit inspires leaders to realize vision and permits them to inspire followers to do the same. In this way, leaders experience spirit within themselves and evoke spirit in others. (1478)

In Harter's (2004) definition, there is a strong connection made between leadership and spirituality, implying that leadership and spirituality share common roots.

Palmer (2000) conceptualized the connection between spirituality and leadership through describing the shadows of those who lead as a metaphor to the influence leaders have. Palmer's (2000) key view is exposed when he wrote "Leaders need not only the technical skills to manage the external world but also the spiritual skills to journey inward toward the source of both shadow and light" (p. 79). Palmer (2000) contended that spirituality, which "take[s] us inward and downward toward the hardest realities of our lives" (p. 80), facilitates a process of understanding the root of shadows that leaders sometimes cast. These shadows often cause a leader to blame constituents for problems and potentially lead to oppression rather than liberation through leadership.

Looking inward continues to be critical in executing effective leadership for it is from the inward self-examination that leaders grow and develop. This is reflected in the words of Komives et al. (2007) when they wrote "Leadership effectiveness begins with self-awareness and self-understanding and grows to an understanding of others" (p. 5). Nash and Scott (2009) identified the need for this practice within higher education administrators, "when looking inward, we begin a search…Connecting the heart with the intellect, the spiritual with the material, makes the learner more whole and the leader more complete…" (p. 133).

There is, however, resistance to the idea of examining the intersection of spirituality and leadership. Harter (2004) cited several objections to studying the two constructs together. Concern exists that opening a conversation of spirituality within leadership opens the door for mystic and superstition (e.g., magic, miracles, mystery, mythology) to enter an academic discipline. Harter (2004) cited that the integration of spirituality in the conversation of leadership theory and practice takes leadership outside of study within scientific boundaries in direct opposition with the Enlightenment. Concern also exists over cheapening the term spirituality, meaning some try to use the term without referring to a divine or transcendent realm, however, this implication does exist. In the same vein, because spirituality has so many definitions, there is concern that spirituality has become a placeholder for any imaginable personal belief. In this way, there is no possible way to study spirituality consistently. Finally, the last objection cited is that spirituality is a personal matter and should not enter into the public discussion (Harter, 2004).

The constructs of spirituality and leadership do emerge in the literature as interacting and influencing each other. The next portion of this literature review will highlight some of the specific ways in which these two constructs have been presented and studied within the business arena, K-12 sector, and finally higher education.

Leadership and Spirituality in Business

The corporate world and the business sector are at the forefront of linking spirituality and leadership. Popularized texts like *Leading with Soul* (Bolman & Deal, 1995, 2001), *God is my CEO* (Julian, 2001), and *Capturing the Heart of Leadership* (Fairholm, 1997) have boomed in publication over the last two decades. Spirituality and leadership in the context of the business world often refer to organizational efficiency, organizational health, compassion in leadership, positive workplaces, the inner work of leaders, and dynamic organizations (Benefiel, 2005; Conger & Associates, 1994; Fairholm, 1997; Harter, 2004). In the last decade, in particular, a key emphasis on spirituality and leadership within business ushered in a focus on ethical and responsible leadership (Benefiel, 2005; Gardner, 2007; Giacalone, Jurkiewicz, & Dunn, 2005; Maak & Pless, 2006). In the business literature, a number of definitions for spirituality exist. However, one distinction that is drawn repeatedly is between what is meant by spirit versus soul (Benefiel, 2005; Harter, 2004). Spirituality or spirit is referred to as engagement with oneself or with one's work. Soul is how the spirit or one's spirituality manifests itself within one's workplace or one's leadership (Benefiel, 2005; Harter, 2004).

When spirituality is discussed in the business context, it is often discussed on two levels: individual and corporate. That is, an individual leader needs to tend to her or his spirituality and an organization also needs to tend to its corporate spirituality (Benfiel, 2005; Conger & Associates, 1994). Examples of spirituality operating on these two levels include spiritual discernment on an individual level as a leader (e.g., what should I do in this situation?) or corporate discernment as an organization (e.g., in what direction should we go?). Products of spirituality infused leadership might be individual transformation for a leader or organizational transformation for a corporation (Benefiel, 2005; Conger & Associates, 2004; Fairholm, 1997). As an individual, spiritual practices may take place in and out of the workplace, for instance, fostering spiritual community in and out of the workplace. As an organization, Benefiel (2005) suggested spiritual practices may include reflecting the importance of soul in official organizational documents, hiring for congruence with mission, devoting time to nurturing the organizational soul, dedicating personnel for these types of tasks, and creating processes that nurture the soul. Organizational connections that have been made in reference to spirituality and leadership include organizational innovation, organizational learning, and organizational change efforts (Klenke, 2003). As much of the research supports, Klenke (2003) noted that "spirituality at work has appeared, in part, because people want to feel connected to their work and believe that that is more important than the value of a paycheck" (p. 57). Spirituality can play a prominent role on both the individual and organizational level. Next, I review two key concepts in the business-related literature, workplace spirituality, and a theory of spiritual leadership from the discipline of business.

Workplace spirituality. A common concept and term used in the business literature is workplace spirituality (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008). This term is often used interchangeably in the business literature along with terms such as "organizational spirituality," "spirituality in the workplace," "spirit at work," and "spirituality in business." Workplace spirituality is defined by Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003):

> Workplace spirituality is a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provided feelings of completeness and joy. (p. 13)

There are two approaches to workplace spirituality: exploratory and consequential. Exploratory frameworks "mainly aim at relating workplace spirituality to certain theoretical/philosophical models, cultural/religious traditions and scientific paradigms," whereas, consequential models give "priority…to the prospected positive outcomes that spirituality in the workplace might have both at the organizational and the individual level" (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008, p. 579). These frameworks have implications for how spirituality is understood within the corporate sector.

An outspoken advocate of workplace spirituality is Hicks (2003). He proposed a theoretical model of workplace spirituality entitled respectful pluralism. Gotsis and Kortezi (2008) regard this model as the most comprehensive and well-defined model of workplace spirituality in the literature. Hicks (2003) promoted workplaces that encourage religious and spiritual expression. He asserted that an employee is a human person who should be able to bring their whole self to the organization, not a fragmented self. Core to the theoretical model are the concepts of dignity, equality,

inclusion, and justice. Through his model, he "provides…a working framework for applying spirituality in management and leadership practices and process…" (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008, p. 586). Hicks' (2003) respectful pluralism model dovetails with the goals of workplace spirituality as defined above.

Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. Among the most prominent theories of spiritual leadership in the business realm is that of Fry (2003). Using Senge's (1990) concept of a learning organization, Fry (2003) asserted that "spiritual leadership is necessary for the transformation to and continued success of learning organizations" (p. 717). Through the synthesis of many leadership and spirituality theories, Fry (2003) created a causal model of spiritual leadership. Fry (2003) defined spiritual leadership as "comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership" (pp. 694-695). He asserted that old paradigms of management and leadership emphasized extrinsic motivation through fear; hence there was no need for spiritual survival because one's intrinsic motivation was not taken into account as a part of their work. Fry (2003) contended that spiritual leadership entails two facets:

1. Creating a vision wherein organization members experience a sense of calling in that their life has meaning and makes a difference;

2. Establishing a social/organizational culture, based on altruistic love, whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others, thereby producing a sense of membership, and feeling understood and appreciated. (p. 695)

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More recently Fry and Slocum (2008) have written about operationalizing spiritual leadership in order to maximize the triple bottom line, known commonly in the business world as: "people, planet, profit" (p. 86).

The thinking behind the spirituality and leadership movement in the corporate world has served to aid in conceptualizing this study. One critique I would note of this literature base is that much of it is still steeped in management terms and not leadership terms. In Fry's (2003) model for instance, the outcomes are primarily organizational outcomes – profit, economic sustainability, and sales growth. Though social responsibility is cited as a purpose for spiritual leadership, social responsibility is not always represented in organizational outcomes; instead, social responsibility is leveraged as a way to affect public opinion about a given organization and facilitate more corporate success, a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. Another critique is that the literature base is principally conceptual and not empirical. Nonetheless, what is helpful about this literature base is that there is evidence that the recognition of spirituality within leaders is important to consider.

Spirituality in K-12 Educational Leadership

Compared with higher education, significant scholarship is present within the K-12 sector on spirituality in educational leadership within the last two decades. Inspired by educators and philosophers such as Cornel West (i.e., prophetic spirituality reconceptualized as principled, pragmatic, and purposive leadership) and Paulo Freire (i.e., liberation theology), calls for integrating spirituality in educational leadership are recurring (Dantley, 2003, 2005, 2006; Woods & Woods, 2008). Hoyle (2002) wrote about preparing spiritual school leaders, presenting a spiritually-based

curriculum to "teach the spiritual side of leadership" (p. 36) for professors of

educational administration. In 2008, Corwin Press, the Hope Foundation, and the

American Association of School Administrators published a monograph entitled

Spirituality in Educational Leadership (Houston, Blankstein, & Cole), which served

as one monograph within an eight-part series entitled *The Soul of Educational*

Leadership. Though there are some similarities to the way in which spirituality and

leadership are connected in the business literature, the tone and tenor of how

spirituality and leadership are conceptualized are different among the educational

leadership literature, as evidenced in the words of Houston (2008):

> I have pointed out that our role as leaders [superintendents/principals] bears a
>
> much closer connection to that of ministers than it does to CEOs. Our
>
> authority comes not from our position, but from the moral authority we are
>
> entrusted to carry as we build a future through the children of our community.
>
> We get our work done, not through mandate and fiat, but by gathering folks
>
> together and persuading them to do what is right. To carry out this task
>
> requires a higher connection than that of the direct line to the state department
>
> of education or the president of the school board. (p. 11)

Houston's (2008) words are a challenge for K-12 administrators to consider their

motivation for their work as educators and leaders, to encourage them to do their

work in the context of community, and to exhort them to appeal to a higher power.

Leadership practices are shifting in the K-12 sector and educational leaders

are called upon to bring wholeness to their leadership. The scientific management

leadership practices (Dantley, 2005) that epitomized the modernist paradigm of

thinking are no longer sufficient to address the complexities of the educational

context. West-Burnham (2009) recognized the need for educational leaders to

consider including a spiritual dimension in their work:

> If we see leadership as a full expression of humanity, rather than a set of
>
> simplistic outcomes, skills and techniques, then we need to take the spiritual
>
> dimension as seriously as any other aspect of leadership development. If
>
> effective, high performance leadership is to be sustained over time then it
>
> needs a deep, sophisticated and rich underpinning. The trees that survive the
>
> drought are those with the deepest root systems. (p. 85)

Conceptualizations of the leadership that West-Burnham (2009) described are

referred to as moral leadership in the K-12 sector (Dantley, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1992;

Woods & Woods, 2008). This approach to leadership is characterized by a challenge

for educational administrators to move beyond the nuance of everyday management

and to consider the deeper issues of education and the moral imperative of preparing

all students to contribute to a twenty-first century society. Dantley (2005) captured

the goal of moral leadership by highlighting that a goal of educational leadership is to

encourage change within society by engaging students in considering their role in a

democracy. To this end, Dantley (2005) stressed that moral leadership is necessary to

bring about societal transformation, but requires a full engagement of the leader,

authenticity, and courage. Finally, he asserted that moral leadership can be

problematic because it should challenge the status quo of the school system to the end

of educating students as a way to transform society.

Defining spiritual leadership. According to Dantley (2006), spiritual leadership as it is conceptualized in the K-12 sector has three elements: connectivity and relationship building, meaning-making and purpose, and, ethical and moral dimensions. Spiritually directed leaders acknowledge, understand, and value the interconnectivity of all involved in a learning community. As a result, a leadership practice that is applied by spiritually directed leaders is encouraging multiple voices in decision-making processes that affect the learning community. In considering meaning-making and purpose as an element of spiritual leadership, it is understood that the work of educational leaders is seen in a broader context and that their work has "purpose, mission, or calling" (Dantley, 2006, p. 581) to serve in a leadership capacity. Further extending on this idea, critical spirituality locates "educational leadership responsibilities in the arena of helping to transform society for racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and other marginalizing societal practices" (Dantley,, 2006, p. 581). The ethical and moral dimensions encourage leadership practices that adopt a social justice agenda alongside the academic responsibilities of schools.

Themes from the empirical research. As is evident throughout this review of the literature a limited amount of empirical research exists addressing the intersection of leadership and spirituality, particularly within higher education. The K-12 sector has developed a growing base of empirical research within the broader realm of educational leadership literature. For instance, in a mixed method study employing surveys and interviews concerning headteachers and spirituality, Woods (2007) pointed out the importance of the spiritual experience in educational leadership: "that they [spiritual experiences] are widespread, vary in intensity and

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frequency, are not confined to religious believers and have practical and positive consequences for people" (p. 151).

Many of the existing studies examine the characteristics of spiritual educational leaders. An ethnographic study of a principal in the Midwest revealed that spirituality was at the core of her leadership (Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, & Capper, 1999). Defining spirituality as "'what people believe about the human spirit and kinds of values that they have for people,'" (Keyes et al., 1999, p. 222), six fundamental beliefs reflect the principal's spirituality: "(a) the value in personal struggle, (b) the value and dignity of the individual, (c) a merger of the professional and the personal, (d) confidence that people are doing their best, (e) the importance of listening, and (f) the importance of dreams" (p. 222).

The empirical research is descriptive in nature attempting to explore the connection between spirituality and leadership. All the research presented was executed using qualitative methodologies and methods and seeks to understand the nature of what is often referred to as spirit-centered leadership. In comparing the findings of five studies (see Table 2.1), one will note that there are similarities in the overall findings of these studies, in particular the description of leadership practices.

Spirituality and Leadership in Higher Education

I have examined the literature on spirituality and leadership within the context of business and K-12 education. As my thinking evolved for the conceptualization of this study, I naturally looked to literature, theoretical and empirical, that examined the intersection of these two constructs within a higher education context. That is the purpose of this next section. Hoppe (2005) writing specifically about spirituality and

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leadership within higher education defined spirituality as "the search for depth and

meaning in our entire being" (p. 84) and contended that questions that one might ask

on a spiritual journey are also shared by those on a leadership journey.

Author	Summary of Findings
Yoder (1998)	4 elements of a framework of spirit-centered leadership included: spirituality, spiritual beliefs, leadership practices, and self-knowing. Spiritual beliefs include service, humility, respect, human goodness, connections, integrity, equity, and personal growth.
Ruiz (2005)	Identified an interconnecting approach of spiritual, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and ecological model of leadership that had implications for four areas in school administration: accountability and compliance, curriculum and instruction, planning and decision-making, community involvement.
Blanton (2007)	Daily leadership concerns can be understood through the following elements: spirituality, justice, critique, compassion, and broader metaphysical concerns. Principals were characterized as caring, showing concern over marginalized students, and having moments of doubt to name a few.
Harris (2007)	Experiences of school principals reflect emerging paradigm of spiritual leadership through: description of their relationship with God, integration of spirituality with leadership, by viewing education as a calling, a reliance on a higher power, displaying humility, and viewing the values of love and respect as surpassing material values.
Smith (2007)	In exploring spiritual leadership as an effective leadership style in superintendents the following leadership practices were identified: shared vision, engagement of relationships, learning and growing, passion and strength, open communication, problem-solving for accountability, and drive and confidence.

Table 2.1: Findings from Five Studies

Dalton (2001), for instance, identified a set of such questions that reflect a

search for ultimate purpose and meaning in one's life: "Why am I here? What am I

meant for? What is worth living for? How can I be for myself and also for others?

Whom and what do I serve? What is it that I love above all else?" (p. 17). Hoppe

(2005) accepted the premise that all persons possess a spiritual dimension and

therefore all leaders will wrestle with spiritual issues. In that vein, Hoppe (2005)

suggested "all leaders will likely consider some or all of the following attributes in their quest for spiritual leadership: inner journey, meaning and significance, wholeness, and connectedness" (p. 85). Inner journey refers to "a search for truth and meaning as individuals and leaders" (Hoppe, 2005, p. 85). Meaning and significance refers to the need for continuous self-questioning and self-reflection about a leader's desire to continue in leadership roles, the need for leaders to understand their motivations, and the search for purpose in one's life and work. Wholeness refers to the delicate balance that an administrator in a leadership role must maintain between one's public and private lives. Specifically in current day, lives are "fragmented and individualized" (Hoppe, 2005, p. 86). Lastly, connectedness refers to a need for a bond with the people with whom one works, the idea of how one's work becomes a community, and how spirituality has the ability to help one rise above self-interest and promote connection among humanity (Hoppe, 2005).

Manning (2001) pointed out that these spiritual trends, not only in higher education but specifically in student affairs administration "are a natural fit…where meaning making, introspection, distinctiveness, and character have long held significance" (p. 28). Therefore, she affirmed that the attributes of spiritual leadership do serve a role to better the leader. Accepting the premise conceptualized by Bolman and Deal (1995) that leadership is a set of four gifts (i.e., love, power, authorship, and significance) and at its very essence a giving of oneself (versus a set of skills or qualities), Manning (2001) drew a connection between these gifts and the foundation of the student affairs profession:

The four gifts of love, power, authorship, and significance are congruent with our profession's founding values of whole-person development, understanding of differences, and achieving all that the student is able. The journey of the soul that is central to meaning making within student affairs includes identity development, social justice, student leadership, service learning, and friendships. (p. 33)

In light of this, Manning (2001) offered six suggestions to infuse soul into educational organizations and leadership practice: "(a) strive for balance; (b) emphasize both/and rather than either-or; (c) embrace wholeness—even the negative, painful aspects; (d) make room for silence; (e) create a language to express the meaning that is at home in the soul; and, (f) embrace playfulness" (p. 34).

Themes from the empirical research. Evidence exists that the empirical research examining the constructs of leadership and spirituality within higher education is growing based on the publication of a myriad of dissertations within the last several years (e.g., Ellison, 2007; Hazelbaker, 2007; Hedberg, 2007; Jones, 2008; Richardson, 2009; Terrazas, 2005; Walker, 2008). The nuances of the research questions investigated spanned a broad spectrum, but overall this research attempted to understand some facet of the connection between spirituality, leadership, and higher education administrators. The empirical research available is largely exploratory in nature, meaning that the research primarily focuses on understanding characteristics of spiritual leadership. Qualitative methodologies are the predominant approaches to these explorations. Observation and interviews are the methods most commonly employed to collect data. A broad range of participants served as the focal

point of these explorations, including African American leaders in higher education (Ellison, 2007); community college leadership, such as presidents/chancellors (Walker, 2008), female presidents (Jones, 2008), and female leaders (e.g., deans, directors, vice-presidents) (Hedberg, 2007); African American female college presidents (Richardson, 2009); faculty and administrators (Terrazas, 2005); and Division I collegiate basketball coaches (Hazelbaker, 2007).

A few themes emerge in relation to the participants of studies about spirituality and leadership in higher education. Of those studied, African Americans, women, and the institutional type of the community college are highly represented. This likely has an explanation. Spirituality is highly recognized within communities of color as being a foundation of life and a source of a collective worldview (Bordas, 2007). As opposed to dominant communities, where individualism and fragmentation of personal and professional lives are the norm, collectivist and incorporated lives are often observed within communities of color (Bordas, 2007). Bordas (2007) provided some insight as to why that might be the case:

> The qualities of *grace, hope,* and *forgiveness* ensure that spirituality is
> grounded in everyday behavior and action. These qualities sustained people of
> color through the dark night of oppression; nourished their values of
> generosity, community, and concern for the common good; and strengthened
> their belief in a better future. Leaders in communities of color demonstrate
> spirituality by upholding and living these qualities. In addition, *spiritual*
> *responsibility* means addressing the inequitable conditions of life, improving
> the lives of people, and increasing freedom and opportunity in society.

Spirituality is working to alleviate social ills and bolster the communal good.

(p. 134)

In communities of color, particularly in African American and Native American communities, emphasizing ethics and spirituality in relationship to leadership is not a new concept (Kezar, 2009; Kezar et al., 2006); therefore, it follows that these populations are present in the empirical literature because spirituality and leadership are inherently related to each other through a cultural understanding. For instance, in a critical case study, African American male (Ellison, 2007) participants affirmed that spirituality and spiritual practices were integral to their work.

Women have also been a focal point of exploration about the constructs of spirituality and leadership. There have been a number of connections made between women and their incorporation of spirituality in their leadership as they are consistent with themes described by Belenky et al. (1986) as they articulated women's ways of knowing. As more women joined administrative and leadership ranks in the academy, female leaders discarded traditional, androcentric approaches to their work, one of these being the compartmentalization of personal and professional lives (Astin & Leland, 1991; Hedberg, 2007). Recent qualitative case study research, like that in *Contesting the Terrain of the Ivory Tower* (Garner, 2004) described how women used their spirituality to augment their leadership by "providing an ethic of care, focusing on service and social justice, and recognizing interdependence by expanding leadership beyond the organization to the community and world" (Kezar et al., 2006, p. 75).

Finally, the community college, as a context for studies exploring the

constructs of spirituality and leadership, is evident as being prominent. At the very

heart of the community college mission is operating as an open-access institution that

allows students to search for meaning and purpose in their lives. Therefore, this

> lends itself towards hiring people who believe in the potential of others and
>
> are inspired by the impact both the institution and their work have on others'
>
> lives. Community college students, faculty, and staff want leaders who model
>
> spiritual awareness and growth… (Jones, 2008, p. 2).

Jones' (2008) words above describe the purpose that community college

administrators derive from their work in that particular setting because of the

population the community college serves.

Among the findings across all reviewed studies, four themes emerged: first, an

affirmation that spirituality has a place in higher education and leadership; second,

that leaders in higher education do conceptualize their leadership through the lens of

spirituality; third, that leaders perceive their spirituality to have an influence on their

organizations; and, lastly, that leaders incorporate a number of different spiritual

practices into their work. More details about these studies follow.

First, virtually all studies on spirituality and leadership seem to affirm the idea

that spirituality is an important facet of leadership. Some conclusions critique the

modernist paradigms dominated by scientific thinking that often cause spirituality to

not be recognized as valid within the work of leadership in higher education (Ellison,

2007). Still others (Jones, 2008; Walker, 2008) make a simple connection of

spirituality being valued by higher education leaders as a guiding and influencing force in their leadership on a day-to-day basis.

The next theme that emerged among reviewed studies what that leaders within higher education do conceptualize their leadership through a lens of spirituality. Walker (2008) uncovered that participants in a hermeneutic phenomenological study depicted qualities of spirituality in leadership such as servant leadership ideals and community building. Female community college presidents understood the connection of spirituality to their leadership as doing work with meaning (Jones, 2008). Through the use of multiple case study methodology, Richardson (2009) articulated a model of the relationship among spirituality and leadership in African American female presidents. The four participants, presidents of two- and four-year colleges, conceptualized their spiritual leadership as leading with an interconnectedness of life, leading with a belief in the transcendent, and leading while searching for self-knowledge and personal meaning (Richardson, 2009).

Thirdly, leaders in higher education also identified that their spirit-centered leadership may have an influence on their organizations citing a focus on human connection and community building (Terrazas, 2005; Walker, 2008). Through collective case study methodology, Hedberg (2007) concluded that spirituality led to a greater interdependence on co-workers and community members for the leaders engaged in her study. Richardson's (2009) model also echoes the interconnectedness with which these leaders understood their role among organizations.

Finally, the last theme that emerged was that leaders incorporate a number of different spiritual practices into their work and endorse a number of spiritual and

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wellness ideals among themselves, other leaders, and their organizations. Walker (2008) identified that leaders endorsed self-care and renewal for other aspiring community college leaders. Also encouraged were spiritual practices such as self-reflection, creativity, human connection, and setting boundaries. Other spiritual practices that were promoted included being inclusive, building relationships, and self-reflection (Jones, 2008).

Though there is a small, core group of empirical studies that speak directly to spirituality and leadership within higher education, the findings support each other. Terrazas (2005) identified three broad categories under which the influences of spirituality on leadership emerged in his study: the leader's self, the leader's interaction with others, and the leader's tasks and performance. As reflected throughout the literature, these broad categories were seemingly salient to many who reflected on their spirituality-influenced leadership practices.

Student Affairs, the Academy, and the Senior Student Affairs Administrator

As I have previously noted, the absence of spirituality in the leadership conversation resulted from leadership conceptualized as a value-free idea in the industrial paradigm (Rost, 1991). Critical and postmodern paradigms have allowed spirituality to be discussed with leadership due to the critique that leadership was in fact value-laden. The work of student affairs administration is the act of conveying values (Sandeen, 1985). And though values are inherent in the work of a student affairs professional, they are not always articulated. Chickering (2006) affirmed this idea when he wrote: "each policy and practice we adopt, each resource allocation judgment, staffing and personnel decision we make, expresses a value priority…the

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gap between our espoused values and the values actually in use [are] often large, unrecognized and unarticulated" (pp. 4, 6).

Values have long been integrated into the work of the student affairs educator and administrator. The *Student Personnel Point of View* included a statement on the values of the student affairs profession. The *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (1997) stated:

> Good practice in student affairs helps students develop coherent values and ethical standards. Good student affairs practice provides opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and student affairs educators to demonstrate the values that define a learning community. Effective learning communities are committed to justice, honesty, equality, civility, freedom, dignity, and responsible citizenship. Such communities challenge students to develop meaningful values for a life of learning. Standards espoused by student affairs divisions should reflect the values that bind the campus community to its educational mission (American College Personnel Association).

As the statement above indicates, the field of student affairs is steeped in its own context of clearly articulated values. These values emerge in a number of documents and are affirmed in key sources such as the Handbook for Student Services.

Young (1996) articulated the guiding values and philosophy of the field of student affairs. The early era of values within the field of student affairs featured two principal categories: values of individuation and values of community. Individuation included a focus on a holistic education of each individual students, honoring the uniqueness of individuals, the experience of the individual student, and the

responsibility of the individual student in engaging their development (Young, 1996). Interestingly, "the dean as exemplary individual" (p. 89) was also highlighted. Deans were expected to be more concerned about their character than their scholarship (Young, 1996). Young (1996) asserted that this was due to the influence of the religious roots of higher education. Community level values included developing meaningful relationship and mutual empowerment (Young, 1996). A number of shifts in the academy over the past two to three decades have seen a re-prioritization of values for the field of student affairs, including the addition of the values of equality and justice (Young, 1996). Though there have been shifts and tensions present within the field of student affairs that have led to different values being prioritized, Young (1996) affirmed that student affairs professionals have a strong tradition of relying on the values of the profession to guide their work.

The Senior Student Affairs Administrator

The work of the senior student affairs administrator is value-laden and often value-driven. In a qualitative study, where 210 student personnel administrators were studied, Clement and Rickard (1992) uncovered three attributes of effective leaders: integrity, commitment, and tenacity. In regards to integrity, Clement and Rickard (1992) stated:

> For the leaders surveyed for this study, integrity includes clear values—a definitive sense of right and wrong, and firmly honored standards of conduct. Beyond this core, it also includes the exercise of personal values, the practice of a coherent philosophy of education, and commitment to people and to the institutions served. With strong core values and the courage to take risks,

effective leaders fulfill their responsibilities with integrity. They act on the

basis of their strongly held values. Although some aspects of leadership have

been described as situational, integrity stays constant, regardless of the

circumstances. (pp. 18-19)

Values are strongly needed and critical to the success of the senior student

affairs administrator (SSAA) particularly, when roles such as mediator and educator

are among the primary functions of the SSAA (Sandeen, 1991). As a mediator the

SSAA is often found to be "between students and the president; between the

institution and students' parents; between the faculty senate and the students; between

the community and the students; and between student affairs staff and the faculty"

(Sandeen, 1991, p. 5). Perhaps, most importantly, a primary role of the SSAA is that

of educator, one who serves as a mentor and role model for students. The charge of

the SSAA is to ensure that all programs and services are delivered in a way that is

consistent with and promotes the educational mission of the institution. As affirmed

above by the findings of the study conducted by Clement and Rickard (1992), SSAAs

expressed that possessing an established educational philosophy and approach was an

integral facet of their leadership.

Palmer (2000) is referenced earlier in this review of the literature highlighting

his metaphor of shadows and spirituality. He applies this same metaphor to the work

of educators: "I think, for example, of teachers who create the conditions under which

young people must spend so many hours: some shine a light that allows new growth

to flourish, while others cast a shadow under which seedlings die" (p. 78). Leaders

within higher education have a moral imperative to lead in a responsible fashion due to their dual roles as educators and leaders. Nash and Scott (2009) affirmed this view:

> The responsibility we hold while leading is powerful. For those of us working in higher education, we have the privilege of being surrounded by students (and faculty and staff) who are eager to learn and grow. They are at a place in their lives where they are intentionally striving to make meaning. They are in the process of creating themselves, and they are looking to us to help lead them down a variety of paths until they find the ones that fit. (p. 132)

And with all this responsibility upon their shoulders, SSAAs are known to have a hectic schedule which precludes the ability to have personal time for reflection and planning (Sandeen, 1991). As society and the needs of higher education are shifting so is the role of the SSAA. The demands of the position are ever growing in complexity. Effective and appropriate ways of leadership need to be explored in order to understand the leadership that is required of the SSAA.

The Academy as Context

The SSAA works and engages the leadership process within the context of the academy and their local campus. The importance of considering campus environment in higher education and student affairs practice is well documented (Strange, 1996; Strange & Banning, 2001). One must consider the socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to values, spirituality, and religion when examining the intersection of spirituality and leadership. The socio-cultural environment is made up of both social and cultural factors present within the academy and on the SSAA's

local campus. As has been discussed in this literature review, issues of spirituality and religiosity have a storied past within higher education.

American society influences dynamics within higher education, pertaining to spirituality and religiosity. Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011) noted that "within American society, the spiritual dimension of one's life has traditionally been regarded as intensely personal and private, an innermost component…that lies outside the realm of socially acceptable public discourse or concern" (p 139). The dynamics of spirituality and religion as a private matter pervades the academy as well (Astin et al., 2011). Astin et al. (2011) also noted a faculty member in one of their interviews who expressed fear to express their spirituality for fear that they might impose on someone's rights or be seen as not inclusive. Rockenbach (2004) posed the question: "what are the legal bounds of addressing religion and spirituality in public, private nonreligious, and private religious settings?" (p. 344). There are significant legal implications concerning religion, especially, in the academy (Rockenbach, 2011). Factors that contribute to the legal climate include: the separation of church and state; the roots of higher education in religion and the subsequent secularization of the modern university; and the changing nature of case law in this area (Rockenbach, 2011).

The First Amendment requires religious neutrality for public institutions. Students are allowed to express themselves freely through student-led activities that involve spirituality and religiosity (Rockenbach, 2011). SSAAs, as representatives of the institution, may not feel at liberty to freely express their spirituality or religiosity. This was affirmed in Moran and Curtis' (2004) findings from a study examining

religio-spirituality in the professional lives of SSAAs. Reluctance to express religio-spiritual identity for SSAAs stemmed from fear of being labeled, fear for being viewed suspiciously, fear of offending someone, or fear of suffering some type of retribution (Moran & Curtis, 2004). One participant in Moran and Curtis' (2004) study described the free expression of religio-spirituality among SSAAs as the "kiss of death" (p. 640).

Moving towards a Theory of Spirituality's Influence on Leadership

The shift in the understanding, research, and practice of leadership is documented in this review of the literature and the influence that spirituality has within this paradigm shift warrants more exploration. Within this shift, leadership is understood as a cultural process and therefore values have taken a more central role in the process of leadership (Rhoads & Tierney, 1992). Though the concept of linking spirituality to leadership is not new (i.e., these concepts were linked in pre-Enlightenment societies, non-Western cultures, African American, Native American, and some Eastern cultures) it is increasingly popular within recent times to understand leadership through a lens of ethics and spirituality (Kezar, 2009). As Kezar et al. (2006) wrote, "Critical theorists and post-modernists have exposed how supposedly value-free assumptions of early leadership theories have resulted in disguising unequal power relations and reinforcing the status quo of organizations…they encourage seeing leadership as a social process that is value laden" (p. 72). Kezar (2006) underscored the importance of acknowledging the value-laden nature of higher education and exposing how values guide the work of all within higher education.

Though spirituality has emerged as a construct of interest related to the leadership practices of higher education administrators, little empirical research has been conducted. Calls for research in this area have been growing (Chickering et al., 2006; Dalton, 2006; Kezar, 2009; Kezar et al., 2006; Schwartz, 2008). This study responds to the literature in seeking to close the gap in the literature concerning the influence of spirituality on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators and moves towards an empirically developed understanding of the influence of spirituality on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. In an interview, Nance Lucas (Schwartz, 2008) contended that research in this area is still in its infancy and needs to be further developed.

> …we have only begun this important agenda around spirituality and leadership and understanding the connections. My hope is that we'll continue seeing more research on this connection that will lead to a greater integrative theory on leadership that includes the critical themes of spirituality, ethics and values. (para. 24)

Although graduate preparation programs have begun to teach about the connection between leadership and spirituality, there is little empirical research on which they can rely. From Lucas' (Schwartz, 2008) perspective, a greater understanding of spiritual leadership and definitions associated with this concept will emerge as more empirical studies are conducted. Although she does not advocate for one universal definition, she stated that "we do need more formal definitions that can be operationalized and measured" (para. 26).

Few studies exist in the higher education literature about the influence of spirituality on leadership practices of higher education administrators. No studies that I am aware of exist exploring that connection among senior student affairs administrators. Of the studies that have been conducted, findings focus on the characteristics and outcomes of the leadership. Based on the review of the literature there are some commonalities, related to the role of spirituality within leadership: (a) spiritually-guided leaders are guided by moral imperatives and understand the potential of their work as transformational; (b) spiritually-guided leaders care about people and community; (c) spiritually-guided leaders call upon their inner resources to respond to their external environments; (d) values are important to spiritually-guided leadership; (e) integrity and ethics are of particular import for spiritually-guided leaders; and (f) spiritually-guided leaders seek to impart hope through their leadership.

Few studies attempt to address what occurs at the intersection of spiritual and leadership development. That is, how, if at all, is the leadership process unique when it is influenced by spirituality? And because there is such a strong connection between the use of values and spirituality, how does one's value-laden approach respond or react to the environment of higher education pertaining to spirituality and religiosity? Returning to Kezar's (2009) five interrelated assumptions about the leadership revolution, it is striking that the first articulated assumption is that leadership is a *process*. This study attempts to examine that very process in light of a spiritual lens that is value-laden.

Summary

Through this literature review, I conveyed the conceptualization of this study. The definitions and evolution of the two principal constructs in this study, leadership and spirituality, were discussed related to this study. Leadership practices and spirituality were discussed in light of higher education research. I used current theoretical and empirical research to make a case for the need to begin to include spirituality in the scholarly conversation of leadership. All the preceding theoretical and empirical literature composes the theoretical conceptualization for this study, which informed the research design of the study. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter builds upon the review and analysis of literature on leadership and spirituality, describing a study that examined the influences of spirituality on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators (SSAAs). Research design, methodology, and methods are discussed in detail. This chapter reviews the purpose of the study, research questions, discussion of the epistemological paradigm, and description of all research design elements. The chapter concludes with a statement of my own subjectivity and reflexivity as they pertain to this study.

Purpose of the Study and Restatement of Research Questions

The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory was to explore and understand the process by which spirituality influences the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. There are a number of studies that describe characteristics of educational leaders who view spirituality as central to their leadership (e.g., Blanton, 2007; Richardson, 2009; Ruiz, 2005; Terrazas, 2005); however, this study sought to understand not only these characteristics, but gain further insight on the *process* by which spirituality informs the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. Four research questions guided this study:

(1) What can be learned about how spirituality influences the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators when the intersection of spiritual and leadership development is considered?

(2) What are the critical influences on the process by which spirituality informs the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators?

(3) How, if at all, do the spiritually-guided leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study influence the organizational environments of their institutions?

(4) How, if at all, are the spiritually-guided and value-laden leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study challenged by the socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to values, spirituality, and religiosity?

Research Design

In designing this study, I sought to clearly identify the epistemological view, methodology, and methods that were employed in this study. Ensuring that these elements are intentionally considered ensured the quality of the study and its outcomes (Creswell, 2007; Jones et al., 2006). Below I introduce the chosen epistemological paradigm (i.e., constructivism) and explain how it relates to the research design.

Constructivist Epistemological Paradigm

Epistemology concerns itself with the "assumptions about the acquisition of knowledge" (Jones et al., 2006, p. 9). This study was grounded in a constructivist epistemology. According to Crotty (1998), "Constructivism…points up the unique experience of each of us. It suggests that each one's way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other…" (p. 58). Within the constructivist view knowledge and meaning making develops through interactions of people within historical and cultural contexts. In this way, constructivists understand knowledge to be socially constructed (Creswell, 2007; Crotty, 1998). Based on the

constructivist paradigm, this study was designed to place particular emphasis on the stories of each individual participant. As Creswell (2007) guided, I am attempting "to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation" (p. 20). I am approaching this study from a constructivist epistemological perspective because the primary construct of this study—leadership— is a socially constructed phenomenon, influenced by the interactions, background, and experiences of the leader (Kezar, 2002; Kezar et al., 2006; Parry, 1998; Rhoads & Tierney, 1992).

Leadership research has traditionally been steeped in the positivist paradigm relying on quantitative data collection methods (Conger, 1998; Klenke, 2008; Parry, 1998). The quantitative paradigm, Klenke (2008) argued, has come under scrutiny in regard to the study of leadership because "quantitatively generated leadership descriptors often fail to lead to an understanding of the deeper structures of the phenomena we study …" (p. 4). Leadership scholars (e.g., Conger, 1998; Parry, 1998) argued that qualitative studies must play a more critical role in leadership research. Qualitative research and the study of leadership are context dependent (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and quantitative results are often generalized without acknowledging the context. Within the study of leadership, a construct conceptualized as a process of social influence (Parry, 1998), constructivism can be applied to understand the social interactions between leaders and followers. Additionally, constructivists have a keen interest in the environment and culture that provide context for the interactions of leaders and followers (Kezar et al., 2006). In this way, constructivism is appropriate for the study because I sought the stories of participants with particular emphasis on how they understood the concept of spirituality and its

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influence on one's leadership both in theory and in its application within a higher education setting. In attempting to understand the influence of spirituality on leadership, both intricate constructs, constructivism allowed me to develop a more complex picture of the dynamics among these two constructs (Broido & Manning, 2002; Kezar et al., 2006).

Methodology

In this study I employed grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to generate a theory of the process by which spirituality influences leadership practices of SSAAs. There is evidence that grounded theory methodology is increasingly employed as a means of understanding leadership (Douglas, 2006; Komives et al., 2005, 2006; Parry, 1999; Reichard, 2005). Grounded theory is based on the following assumptions:

1. The need to get out in the field to discover what is really going on (i.e., to gain firsthand information taken from its source).

2. The relevance of theory, grounded in data, to the development of a discipline and as a basis for social action.

3. The complexity and variability of phenomena and of human action.

4. The belief that persons are actors who take an active role in responding to problematic situations.

5. The realization that persons act on the basis of meaning.

6. The understanding that meaning is defined through interaction.

7. A sensitivity to the evolving and unfolding nature of events (process).

8. An awareness of the interrelationships among condition (structure), action (process), and consequences. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, pp. 9-10)

These assumptions guide the way in which this study was designed. In reviewing the assumptions articulated by Strauss and Corbin (1998), I observed a number of interrelationships among the tenets of grounded theory and the design of this study. First, grounded theory allowed me to explore answers to the research questions from first-hand sources, SSAAs. As previously noted, both leadership and spirituality are complex constructs. Grounded theory allows for the exploration of these types of phenomena. It was my hope to unearth the meaning that participants in this study make of their spirituality related to their leadership practices. As reflected in the assumptions of grounded theory, meaning is integral to the creation of a grounded theory.

Though the traditional assumptions of grounded theory guided this study, the methodological design was influenced by constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000; 2006), a more recently evolved form of grounded theory. This methodology is appropriate given the chosen constructivist epistemological paradigm because "we *construct* our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 10; emphasis in the original). Constructivist grounded theory is rooted in a symbolic interactionism theoretical perspective. This perspective focuses on "dynamic relationships between meanings and actions…[and] assumes that individuals are active, creative, and reflective and that social life consists of processes" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 189). Given the tenets of constructivism, symbolic interactionism, and

grounded theory, this approach formed a sound foundation with which to address the research questions in this study.

A constructivist grounded theory guides the researcher to "be part of the world we study and the data we collect" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 10). There is emphasis placed on the meanings and experiences of participants. The interaction between the researched and the researcher yields a grounded theory, which in essence is a construction of reality (Charmaz, 2006). Seeking meaning from the participants in this study was guided by an in-depth inquiry as described by Charmaz (2000):

> …we must go further than surface meanings or presumed meanings. We must look for views and values as well as for acts and facts. We need to look for beliefs and ideologies as well as situations and structures. (p. 525)

Though grounded theory was originally conceived in a positivist tradition, constructivist grounded theory is designed to allow for "more open-ended practice…that stresses its emergent, constructivist elements" (Charmaz, 2000, p. 510). Constructivist grounded theory allows for methods to stay flexible and be viewed as strategies for gaining insight into one's research questions as opposed to strict, prescribed procedures (Charmaz, 2000). As is explained below in great detail, developing grounded theory is not a linear process. Instead, it is a process that requires the researcher to collect and analyze data simultaneously. Analysis of data occurs on multiple levels – through coding, writing, and pointed inquiry with participants (Charmaz, 2000, 2006).

Methods

Grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and subsequently analyzing data (Charmaz, 2006). As outlined by Charmaz (2000), the elements of a grounded theory include concurrent collection data collection and analysis, data coding, constant comparative methods, memo writing, theoretical sampling techniques, and the incorporation of the theoretical framework. The aim of grounded theory methods is to "move each step of the analytic process toward the development, refinement, and interrelation of concepts" (Charmaz, 2000, p. 510). As is customary in grounded theory research, the methods section provides a "roadmap" for the research design implementation, yet one must remain flexible and prepared to adjust methods if needed as this is an emergent process (Charmaz, 2000; Jones, 2002; Jones et al., 2006).

I began the research process by engaging grounded theory methods to identify viable participants for the study by applying sampling criteria, employing sampling strategies, collecting data, and eventually analyzing data. In sum, I conducted 28 interviews with a sample of 14 SSAAs. Grounded theory analysis began with line-by-line coding and generated 4, 483 in vivo codes. I employed the constant comparative method to generate 192 focused codes. Further analysis used axial and theoretical coding techniques. Codes led to major categories and then were refined to one core category and four key categories. From these categories, themes were identified and informed the emerging theory. In these next sections, I describe the data collection and analysis process in detail.

Sampling Strategies and Criteria

A number of sampling strategies were employed to achieve an appropriate sample in accordance with the purpose of this study, epistemological and theoretical perspectives guiding the study, and the tenets of a grounded theory study. The primary objective was to identify participants that were information-rich cases, possessing a depth of understanding of the particular phenomenon under investigation in this study or "manifest[ing] the phenomenon intensely, but not extremely" (Patton, 2002, p. 243). To that end, a combination of intensity, maximum variation, and theoretical sampling techniques was used in this study (Charmaz, 2000; Patton, 2002).

Intensity sampling was used to seek participants who represent the phenomena of interest (Jones et al., 2006; Patton, 2002). I sought SSAAs from non-religiously affiliated institutions who value the influence of spirituality in their leadership. Recruiting SSAAs at non-religiously affiliated institutions allowed me to gain insight into the ways that spiritually-guided SSAAs respond to the socio-cultural environment of their campuses related to spirituality and religion. Further, I was interested in those senior SSAAs who have spent time reflecting on those two identities (i.e., leader and spiritual) and how they influence each other. As the literature demonstrates, both leadership and spirituality are complicated constructs. There are an array of practices and identities that are associated with the construct of spirituality. For this reason, I used maximum variation sampling in order to attract SSAAs who express their spirituality in diverse ways (Glesne, 2006; Jones et al., 2006; Patton, 2002) (e.g., formal religion, diverse faith communities, personal

spiritual expression). Great care was given to not essentialize the experiences of the participants and assume that each spoke for all members of one's spiritual identity (Abes & Jones, 2004; Jones, 2002). SSAAs, as defined earlier in this study, included administrators who serve at the senior level of student affairs administration on their campus (e.g., vice president, dean of students, associate vice president, assistant vice president, and associate dean of students).

Participant recruitment. Participants were identified for this study through a call for participation (see Appendix A). Through the call for participation, individuals were able to nominate colleagues as well as self-nominate. To amass names of SSAAs, I solicited support from the two national student affairs organizations, ACPA—College Student Educators International and NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. ACPA provided me with a list of 633 e-mail addresses for all members that fit the parameters of the sampling criteria and NASPA sent me a list totaling 7,878 members. The call for participation was sent electronically to all the SSAAs identified by ACPA, as NASPA's policy is to not release e-mail addresses, only physical mail addresses. Thus, I reserved the use for physical mailings in the situation that response was low to my electronic call for participation, which never became necessary. The call for participation was also shared electronically with members of the ACPA Commission for Spirituality, Faith, Religion, and Meaning, the National Clearinghouse of Leadership Programs listserv, and my professional networks. I received approximately 70 nominations and self-nominations for participation in this study. About half of the participants were immediately excluded because their campus is religiously affiliated.

After receiving nominations for participants in the study, I sent out an e-mail to each potential participant notifying them of their nomination (or affirming their self-nomination) for participation in the study (see Appendices B and C) and asking them to complete a brief interest form (see Appendix D). The interest form requested further details about their contact information, experiences as a senior student affairs administrator, and a brief description of their leadership and spiritual identities.

Sample size. Consistent with grounded theory, sampling is an active process that occurs simultaneously alongside data collection and analysis. Patton (2002) recommended specifying a minimum sample that will give the coverage necessary to explore the phenomenon of interest. In essence, size selection was "guided by the goal of maximizing opportunities to uncover data relevant to the purpose of the study and that the sampling process interacts with data analysis" (Jones et al., 2006, p. 71). Lincoln and Guba (1985) encouraged that sampling occur until the point of redundancy or saturation, as described by Strauss and Corbin (1998).

This study began with an intended minimum sample size of six participants, but included a total of 14 participants. The 14 participants selected for the study were the recruited SSAAs that ultimately fit the aforementioned criteria most precisely. This sample size was consistent with other grounded theory studies focusing on leadership (Douglas, 2006 – 10 participants; Komives et al., 2006 – 13 participants). As described above, a number of sampling strategies were employed to identify the participants in this study. Most specific to grounded theory, theoretical sampling played a significant role in determining the final number of the sample size.

Theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) guided interviews conducted with the participants as I sought to "fill…conceptual gaps and holes" (Charmaz, 2000, p. 519). Theoretical sampling is a core property of grounded theory and employs its comparative methods, which set it apart from other qualitative methodologies. In essence, theoretical sampling was used to distill the ideas emerging from initial rounds of analysis (Charmaz, 2000). Theoretical sampling is unique from the aforementioned sampling techniques in that it is not "about representing a population" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 101), but instead it "pertains only to conceptual and theoretical development" (p. 101). The initial sampling strategies articulated above helped the study get started, whereas theoretical sampling guided the study conceptually as data were collected. Theoretical sampling was implemented in order to more fully understand the ideas that emerged as data was collected and coded (Charmaz, 2006).

Theoretical sampling guided how participants were added into the sample and the specific questions that were asked during the second interview. As Charmaz (2000) instructed, "grounded theorists develop analytical interpretations of their data to focus further data collection, which they use in turn to inform and refine their developing analyses" (p. 509). As themes began to emerge from the interviews, pointed questions were added in order to understand the phenomena of study as broadly as possible and "maximize opportunities for comparative analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 211).

Data collected through a total of 28 interviews, two per participant, were used in the final analysis. Once theoretical saturation was reached and no new concepts

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emerged, data collection was completed. Theoretical saturation was reached when "(a) no new or relevant data seem[ed] to emerge regarding a category, (b) the category [was] well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variations, and (c) the relationship among categories [were] well established and validated" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 212).

Participant Interviews

Grounded theory methodology favors the use of multiple sources of data in order to aid the researcher in gaining different perspectives (Charmaz, 2000; Creswell, 2007; Klenke, 2008) but interviews are seen as the primary tool of data collection (Creswell, 2007). Ultimately, Fontana and Frey (2005) captured the goal of data collection when they stated "Humans are complex, and their lives are ever changing. The more methods we use to study them, the better our chances will be to gain some understanding of how they construct their lives and the stories they tell us about them" (p. 722). Charmaz (2000) echoed this sentiment and articulated that the principal goal is to gather thorough, rich data that allows for thick description. The primary data collection tool for this study was in-depth interviews.

Charmaz (2006) referred to "the interview conversation" (p. 25) as an opportunity for in-depth exploration of a given subject matter. The role of the interviewer in this type of interview is to "ask the participant to describe and reflect upon her or his experiences in ways that seldom occur in everyday life…to listen, to observe with sensitivity, and to encourage the person to respond" (pp. 25-26). Though the goal is for the interview to be conversational in nature, the primary conversant should be the participant. In this study, each participant was involved in two semi-

structured (Fontana & Frey, 2000), face-to-face and/or phone interviews lasting

approximately 60 minutes each. Though interviewing via telephone may not have

allowed me to observe informal, non-verbal communication it was a practical way to

achieve my sampling goals by obtaining a national sample of SSAAs (Creswell,

2007). Advantages of face-to-face interviewing are well documented to include the

natural setting of the interview and greater effectiveness for complex issues, yet

telephone interviewing facilitates greater efficiency in collecting data (Shuy, 2002).

The first round of interviews, conducted via phone, took place in Fall 2010 and the

second round of interviews, held primarily face-to-face at either the NASPA

Conference or the ACPA Convention took place in Spring 2011. The five

participants who were unable to travel were interviewed over the phone for the

second round of interviews.

Participants were prompted to reflect on (a) how they have come to

understand leadership as they do now and (b) how they have come to be the spiritual

person they are now. The first interview (see Appendix E) was an opportunity to

become acquainted, establish trust and rapport, and prompt the participant to reflect

on their leadership practices. Specifically, participants were asked to speak about

their institution, roles on campus, leadership practices, decision-making, and core

values. I encouraged participants to share about these various topics by relaying

stories of experiences engaged in leadership as a SSAA. At the outset of the first

interview, I shared an explanation of the study to the participants and confirmed their

completion of the informed consent form (see Appendix F). The second interview

(see Appendix E) explored the roles of values and spirituality within their leadership

as a SSAA. Participants were asked to discuss times when they faced competing values in decision-making and dealt with times of struggle as a SSAA. I also asked participants to discuss if and how they reveal their spiritual identities to colleagues and students. Finally, participants discussed the influence of their leadership practices on their organizations and their institutional climate around issues of spirituality and religion.

Each interview was digitally audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim by a transcription service, Absolute Marketing and Research. Field notes were recorded during each interview to document main points and non-verbal expressions (for the face-to-face interview). The interview protocol and recording equipment was tested during two pilot interviews. The participants of the pilot closely aligned with the sampling criteria. The pilot participants were asked to offer feedback about the interview questions, their effectiveness, and the overall format of the interview process. Changes to interview protocol were made to reflect their feedback.

Access and rapport. A solid level of trust between the researcher and participants was paramount to ensure the success of the study. Glesne (2006) articulated that within the context of research, "rapport is a distance-reducing, anxiety-quieting, trust-building mechanism…it is something that is continually being negotiated between researcher and researched…" (p. 110). Jones et al. (2006) also underscored the need to be cognizant of the level of trust and respect within the researcher-researched relationship. In order to gain this rapport, I was intentional about setting a positive tone for the study within all my correspondence and initial contacts with participants. I was cognizant of participants' roles as SSAAs and

potential feelings of vulnerability and risk given the private nature of the information

I was asking for them to share. I also was prepared to hear information or views with

which I may not agree and therefore foster a relationship that encourages openness so

as to not have participants withhold pertinent information. Finally, I clearly stated my

expectations and objectives for this research project upfront. I did not want

participants to feel as if they were not given the full scope of the exploration of this

study.

Data Analysis Procedures

The methods for data analysis for this study included the constant comparative

method, multiple levels of coding, memo-writing, and theoretical sampling.

Constant comparative method. Constructivist grounded theory methods call

for data collection and data analysis to overlap and inform each other. At the core of

this dynamic is the use of the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967;

Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Charmaz, 2000). Constructivist grounded theory is guided by

a flexible, open, and emerging approach to data analysis (Charmaz, 2000, 2006).

Charmaz (2000) identified the following five points in defining the function of the

constant comparative method:

(a) comparing different people (such has their views, situations, actions,

accounts, and experiences),

(b) comparing data from the same individuals with themselves at different

points in time,

(c) comparing incident with incident,

(d) comparing data with category, and

(e) comparing a category with other categories. (p. 515)

The constant comparative method guided the process of evaluating emerging codes as I conducted each round of interviews and analyzed documents. I employed the constant comparative method to determine what data were missing and therefore, what additional questions I had for the participants. Thus, the constant comparative method aided me in moving towards theoretical saturation and in identifying initial categories and themes, which eventually informed the creation of the grounded theory. Employing the constant comparative method ensured that emerging concepts about the grounded theory were continually vetted through the ideas of the participants. My data analysis plan was also informed by Strauss and Corbin (1998):

(1) Build rather than test theory.

(2) Provide researcher with analytic tools for handling masses of raw data.

(3) Help the analysts to consider alternative meanings of phenomena.

(4) Be systematic and creative simultaneously.

(5) Identify, develop, and relate the concepts that are the building blocks of the theory. (p. 13)

Memo-writing. Central to employing the constant comparative method is memo-writing. Writing plays a central role in the data analysis process in grounded theory methodology. Hence, memos are a key component of the analysis process. Charmaz (2006) identified memo-writing as the "pivotal intermediate step between data collection and writing drafts of paper…[memo-writing] prompts you to analyze your data and codes early in the research process" (p. 72). As Charmaz's thoughts expressed, I invoked memo-writing throughout the entire data collection and analysis

process. I documented my reactions to each coding phase and document analysis. These memos served as a basis for the connections that I sought to make among the categories and subcategories. Memos were written in a free flowing manner and captured my ideas of the data and probed the data further (Charmaz, 2006). Early memos sought to capture my observations of the data collection process and attempted to make connections between the concepts participants were articulating. Memos written later in the analysis process focused on describing how the categories that were emerging from the data related to and informed each other (Charmaz, 2006).

Analysis of data from interviews. Coding was employed to analyze interview transcripts. Coding consists of "categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43). Coding enables an analytic frame to be constructed, which informed the grounded theory itself. Consistent with constructivist grounded theory, four levels of coding were employed in this study: initial, focused, axial, and theoretical (Charmaz, 2006).

Initial coding. Initial coding is the most open phase of coding. In this level of coding, I attempted to avoid applying pre-conceived ideas to the data. I employed line-by-line coding in this initial phase capturing the ideas of the data with action-oriented words. I began by articulating in vivo codes, meaning I coded remaining close to the text of the data and attempted to capture codes in the words of the participants. Charmaz (2006) guided that initial coding should "(a) stay open, (b) stay close to the data, (c) keep your codes simple and precise, (d) construct short codes, (e)

preserve actions, (f) compare data with data, and (g) move quickly through the data"
(p. 49).

Focused coding. Focused coding uses "the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data. Focused coding requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize your data incisively and completely" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57). In this more directed and selective phase of coding, I analyzed the data by looking critically at codes developed during initial coding and grouping them into categories. I began to refine the data during focused coding.

Axial coding. Axial coding allows for the fractured nature of the codes identified during the first phases of coding to be sorted and synthesized in a manner that begins to resemble an emerging grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2007). During axial coding, my aim was to start making sense of the relationships between the categories and the conditions influencing those categories. During axial coding, I began to draw the relationships between categories and/or subcategories as I sought to understand the conditions surrounding the primary research questions.

Theoretical coding. Finally, theoretical coding more explicitly sought relationships among the categories identified in earlier stages of coding. Theoretical codes are "integrative" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63) and allow for a synthesized, analytic story to be told. This phase of coding is meant to add precision to the coding process. I employed theoretical coding to generate the emerging theory in its most descriptive and complex phase.

Coding software. Earlier stages of coding were facilitated by the use of HyperRESEARCH version 3.0.3. As noted in Jones et al. (2006), it is important to specify how computer software will be used. In this study, the computer software was used primarily as a data management tool to facilitate the process of coding. It facilitated line-by-line and initial phases of focused coding; however, I did not rely on the software for theory generation.

Theoretical sampling. As stated previously, a key part of data analysis was employing theoretical sampling, a defining characteristic of grounded theory. Through theoretical sampling, one seeks relevant data in developing the emerging theory. Theoretical sampling functions to help one refine the categories, concepts, and properties that are emerging in the analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Theoretical sampling is an intentional and strategic tool to "fill-out" or properly clarify the theoretical descriptors that emerge as a result of data analysis. As Charmaz (2006) described, theoretical sampling ensures that the theory is on sound footing. Theoretical sampling follows from memo writing as one's writing often will expose those emerging categories that are not fully explained by the data collected to that point (Charmaz, 2006).

In the context of this study, theoretical sampling was characterized by my moving back and forth between data collection and data analysis. I employed memo-writing to unearth gaps in the analysis. By engaging theoretical sampling, I identified sources of data in order to properly fill in those gaps and eventually saturate the categories that emerge from the data analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, as a gap was identified, I reviewed the transcripts to obtain a sense of which participant(s) had

spoken to the construct I was seeking to understand more thoroughly. This prompted

me to prepare specific questions to probe further with given participants in order to

attempt to saturate data for that particular category.

Developing the emerging theory. Following theoretical saturation,

interrelationships of the most refined levels of codes are used to describe the

emerging grounded theory. But, constructing such a theory is an active process, not

passive, and entails engaging deeply in the process. After all, as Charmaz (2006)

pointed out, "theorizing is a *practice…*it entails the practical activity of engaging the

world and of constructing abstract understandings about and within it" (p. 128).

Charmaz (2006) pointed to three techniques to facilitate the articulation of the

emerging theory: theoretical sorting, diagramming, and integrating. I employed these

three techniques in order to develop the emerging theory in this study.

In short, these three methodological techniques allow the grounded theorist to

consider the data and analysis and describe the emerging theory. Though presented as

three distinct concepts, these techniques overlap with each other. Theoretical sorting

"gives you a logic for organizing your analysis and a way of creating and refining

theoretical links…" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 115). One essentially compares categories at

the most abstract level. Diagramming is a visual technique that "can enable you to see

the relative power, scope, and direction of the categories in your analysis as well as

the connections among them" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 118). Finally, integrating memos

encourages the grounded theorist to look at all memos written during the analysis in

order to observe themes on a macro level. These three techniques share one goal: to

help the grounded theorist make sense of the data and move from the findings of

analysis to an emerging grounded theory. Beyond developing the emerging theory, the benefit of these techniques is that they serve as another checkpoint to critically evaluate how data are presented and the voices of the participants represented.

Trustworthiness and Goodness in the Research Process

Ensuring that this study was executed with integrity to the research process was important. Jones et al. (2006) referred to this concept as "continuity and congruence" (p. 83) of the research process. This involves maintaining continuity throughout the research process and congruence among the various interrelated elements of the research design. As described throughout this chapter, I took careful steps to ensure that epistemological and theoretical perspectives, methodology, and methods are related in a way that ensures that the research design is sound.

Credibility, Originality, Resonance, and Usefulness

Charmaz (2006) offered four categories of criteria for grounded theory studies, including, credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness. Credibility refers to the connection between the data and the findings that the researcher espouses. By considering credibility, one ensures that there are strong links between the data and findings and that the data can support the claims made by the findings. Originality refers to the contribution of the findings of one's research. By considering originality one evaluates the significance of one's findings as well as the extent to which the findings contribute new or expounded ideas to the literature. Resonance refers to how one's participants react to the findings. By considering resonance, one seeks to ensure that the findings robustly represent the findings and that people who share the circumstances of the research can review one's results and resonate with

them. Finally, usefulness refers to the degree to which people can apply one's findings in everyday life. By considering usefulness, one ensures that findings can trigger new research and that the findings contribute to knowledge within the field of study.

Techniques to Ensure Trustworthiness

A number of techniques were employed throughout the data collection and analysis of this study to ensure trustworthiness including prolonged engagement, peer debriefers, acknowledging research bias, member checks, presenting rich and thick description, reflective journaling, and the use of a modified inquiry auditor (Creswell, 2007; Jones et al., 2006; Merriam, 2002). The semi-structured, in-depth interviews allowed me to maintain prolonged engagement with the participants over two interviews per participant over a span of approximately six months. Three peer debriefers were used to review my work and offer feedback on the development of categories, subcategories, and ultimately, the grounded theory. I leveraged their roles by requesting they ask probing questions to deepen my thinking of the emerging theory, ensuring I paid attention to tacit meanings of the participants' words. My analysis was informed by the feedback provided by the peer debriefers. My own researcher bias is acknowledged both in the development of the research design and throughout the analysis. Member checks were used after findings emerged and were concisely articulated to allow participants to review my interpretations of their voices and aid me in capturing the essence of their voices. Participants affirmed the findings and resonated with the emergent theory.

Throughout the presentation of my findings, I used rich, thick description in describing the various categories, subcategories, and properties that were presented. This was accomplished through the use of poignant quotations, which illuminate the findings and allow the reader to better understand the voices of the participants. Reflective journaling was used as a way to record the various decisions I made while executing the study. Additionally, the journal was a way to record my own thoughts and reactions to the words of participants and developing concepts. Finally, the journal served as a way to establish an audit trail. I employed a modified inquiry audit in the review of my findings. The inquiry auditor was an individual who understands constructivist grounded theory methods and verified that the methodology was executed in a sound manner. The inquiry auditor did not execute a complete inquiry audit after results were confirmed, instead reviewed findings early in the process and ensured that coding was being executed consistently and within the parameters of grounded theory methodology.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues are a part of qualitative inquiry and were considered throughout the development of the research design (Glesne, 2006). Ethical considerations were important throughout the execution of the entire study and "are inseparable from your everyday interactions with research participants and with your data" (Glesne, 2006, p. 129). I addressed two primary ethical considerations: protecting the identity of the participants and capturing the essence of the participants' voices in my study.

Many, if not all, of the participants are in politically sensitive positions. I asked them personal questions about their leadership and spiritual development and

asked them to interrogate the context in which they work. Because a key aim of this study (and leadership) was to analyze the context in which these senior student affairs administrators are practicing their leadership, implications about their supervisor(s), direct reports, and policy decisions may surface through data collection. Each participant chose a pseudonym, and I did not disclose the names of the institutions where they work. In some cases, as necessary, I changed the details of their title or work responsibilities to further mask their identity. Providing a description of each of the participants is an important step in providing rich, thick description in findings. I asked each participant to review and approve that description.

Capturing the voice of participants in a study such as this is difficult and can be viewed as an ethical issue. Hertz (1997) explained that "voice typically is informed by the selection of an empirical problem, methodology, and theoretical traditions" (p. xii). In line with constructivist grounded theory, interpretation was the goal. From the outset, I informed participants of this interpretative approach and aimed to be guided by the participants' words to the degree that was possible. I self-critically evaluated my preference for certain voices over others as I engaged in analysis and writing. My hope was that through utilizing member checking, I minimized misrepresentation of the voices of the participants in this study. Later in this chapter, I write more about voice pertaining to my own filter through which I interpreted the voices of the participants in this study.

Role of Researcher and Issues of Subjectivity

Reflexivity and voice (Hertz, 1997) are two concepts that warrant consideration when designing a qualitative study. Hertz wrote:

Reflexivity…permeates every aspect of the research process, challenging us to be more fully conscious of the ideology, culture, and politics of those we study and those we select as our audience…researchers must be more aware of how their own positions and interests are imposed at all stages of the research process. (p. viii)

My role in this grounded theory study cannot be ignored; instead, as is consistent with the constructivist epistemology, my lens is critical and must be acknowledged in co-constructing the meaning of the participants in this study. Peshkin (1988) wrote about subjectivity in research. He warned that researchers may acknowledge their subjectivity yet they do not remain attentive to subjectivity throughout the entire research process. He explained how personal qualities that are manifested in the researcher as a result of contact with the particular phenomenon of research that is being studied have the ability to shape the research:

These qualities have the capacity to filter, skew, shape, block, transform, construe, and misconstrue what transpires from the outset of a research project to its culmination in a written statement. If researchers are informed about the qualities that have emerged during their research, they can at least disclose to their readers where self and subject became joined. They can at best be enabled to write unshackled from orientations that they did not realize were intervening in their research process. (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17)

Jones et al. (2006) suggested a systematic approach to reflexivity for research conducted in higher education. This approach, according to Jones et al. (2006), should be informed by answering the following three questions:

1. Why is it that I am engaged in the present study? What is it about me and my experiences that lead me to this study?

2. What personal biases and assumptions do I bring with me to this study?

3. What is my relationship with those in the study? (p. 125)

In this spirit, I address the answers to these questions. I begin by describing what has caused me to turn to the questions in this research study (Jones et al., 2006) by describing my own leadership and spiritual development, two constructs central to this study.

The Reflexive Self: What has Led me to this Question

   My leadership identity. Since being a young boy, I have been fascinated with the concept of leadership and my understanding of leadership as a spiritual process began to develop within me – this connection has only strengthened over time. Though I cannot recall my very first thoughts about leadership, I can think of two experiences that molded my early thoughts on leadership: my relationship with my father and my Scouting activities. Though my father and I never explicitly spoke about leadership (not that I can remember), it was clear that there was an expectation that I would grow up to be a leader. I saw my father as a leader and a mentor, and I as a student.

   My father is a master storyteller (and has many experiences from which to draw these stories) and communicated early on to me that being a leader was synonymous with the concept of being a servant. My father and mother were both educators who worked their entire professional careers (in the United States) in the Newark, NJ Public School District. My father's connection to his work was

inherently a socially just one. This was important to me as a Dominican and Spaniard boy who grew up in a vastly White middle-class town. As pioneers of bilingual education in the United States, they firmly believed that Latino/a children were wrongly classified into special education tracks because of the bias of school teachers, administrators, and psychological evaluators. Even as a young boy, both my mother and father would share this with their children. Beginning in my youth I came to understand leadership as a process of servitude and humility, for social justice and transformation, often requiring one to swim against the current.

Starting in sixth grade, I became active in Boy Scouts. I quickly latched on to the idea of leadership. I am not sure what gave me the ability to be reflective as a young boy, but even within the "hierarchy" of troop leadership, I noticed how older boys in positional leadership positions were not really leaders at all, but instead mistreated and often abused younger boys. I became involved with the Junior Leader Training Camp in my home council, a program with a curriculum over a week period at summer camp that is specifically geared towards learning to become a leader. I remember going through my first week of this (I subsequently returned as part of the staff for this program) and leaving with an extensive vocabulary, able to name many observations I had made about leadership. My experience in the Scouts only grew from there, becoming a leader in my troop, attending the National Junior Leadership Training Camp at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, and taking on regional wide leadership roles in our council and the Order of the Arrow, a service organization that is part of the Boy Scouts.

My spiritual identity. My spiritual identity has always been salient to my identity as well. I grew up in a Catholic home. Catholicism's link to Dominican and Spaniard culture is very strong and often seen as a cultural byproduct or cultural norm. Within a familial context, Catholicism is significant because prior to marrying my mother, my father was a Catholic priest for 17 years. During my youth, I was very active in my church as a youth group member and altar boy. Church was simply part of who I was and what I did as a young boy growing up.

When I came to college, I began attending a Bible study where I was faced with some significant decisions. I had never questioned my faith in this way before. Learning to study the Bible, pray, meditate, and practice spiritual disciplines (e.g., fasting) forever changed me. This experience in college and gaining new understandings, eventually lead me to seek a relationship with God through Jesus Christ or as is often referred to, be born again. This was significant because I was no longer participating in religious activity because it was a familial expectation; instead I owned this area of my life – asking questions, making meaning, and drawing conclusions for the sake of my own spirituality. My use of the label spirituality is intentional. I hope to connote an allegiance to a way of being and a way of living (a commitment to God), not a commitment to a religion (defined by me as a set of rules or structures defined by humankind).

My leadership self meets my spiritual self. Thinking I might go into full-time ministry (not in the Catholic Church), I was forced to make a decision about which Christian faith denomination I would practice my spirituality. Feeling like I had to make a decision was a difficult moment for me, as was explaining to my

parents the decision I was making to "leave" the Catholic Church. In many respects, there was a sense of abandonment that they expressed and I felt– abandonment of my values, my culture, but particularly my upbringing. The seeds for this study were planted during my undergraduate career. The men's basketball coach of our institution was the featured speaker at a Campus Christian Fellowship meeting, a group to which I belonged. He spoke of his philosophy of instilling values in the men who were part of the team. He shared with the group the first pages of his playbook, which focused not on athletic strategy, but instead contained a number of values, which as teammates, each man would strive to embody on and off the court. He linked these articulated values to Biblical values. This talk happened to coincide with my developing as a supervisor and manager as an undergraduate head resident (a hall director) for a first-year hall with over 260 students and 8 resident assistants reporting to me. This had been exactly what I was struggling with at the time. I wondered how to take my own values, informed by my spiritual beliefs, and enact them in my role as a leader, a supervisor, and subsequently into the environment for which I was responsible for shaping? I was seeking congruence.

Negotiating and managing perceptions of my spiritual identity. My spiritual identity along with my racial and ethnic identities influences the way I present myself to others and how I am perceived. The external labels that might be used to describe my spiritual identity (e.g., born again Christian, conservative Christian, evangelical) have caused me great distress in light of spending the majority of my adult life in higher education. Evoking the idea that there is an Absolute Truth and that relativism must be tempered is not popular on college campuses. As a

student affairs professional, I have noticed that this is the area of my identity that I approach the most delicately, as if perceived incorrectly I could quickly be "boxed in" and not accepted. This spiritual journey has paradoxical implications for identity. On one hand, I belong to a majority religion, Christianity. This affords me certain privileges in society that are undeniable and that my Buddhist, Hindu, or even Jewish counterparts do not experience. Yet, particularly among higher education, this identity makes me feel like a minority due to my thinking and my practice. First, my spirituality is central to everything I do and my motivation for everything. My perception is that this is not the same for the majority. Second, I am willing and interested in making my spirituality a conversation that is open and public. This motivation is a byproduct of the impact it has had on me; however, society and higher education environments seem often intolerant or unwelcoming to having open conversations about one's spiritual identity. My spiritual identity and its connotations can be equally distressing among my Christian community. Asserting moral conservatism, yet supporting a liberal social agenda often brings with it negative perceptions within that community as well.

My work in and philosophy of student affairs. And so, all of these identities and experiences have travelled with me and influenced my work as a leader and a student affairs and higher education administrator. In my undergraduate years, roles such as resident assistant, head resident, office manager of the housing office, tour guide, and admissions student worker began to make me think about how the identities of leadership and spirituality complemented and challenged each other. Moving forward in my career, working professionally in higher education, as a hall

director, residence life central programmer, a campus minister (with an independent ministry organization), a student conduct administrator, a myriad of roles in residence life culminating as a director of residence life continued to spark reflections within me about my leadership and spiritual identities. These roles have been held at small, private liberal arts schools, large, land-grant institutions, and a mid-size private, urban institution. I have turned to this question because I believe that higher education holds promise of hope for transforming the political, social, and ethical landscapes of society. My experience in higher education thus far has taught me that students take the values of college and university leadership seriously. They watch student affairs professionals, faculty members, and other leaders on the college campus and seek congruence between their stated values and their lived values. My experiences and observations have led me to believe that as a collective leadership, we devalue the importance of this example. So, I have turned to the research questions of this study, because I believe that spirituality has the potential to inform leadership in a way that strengthens congruency and places values at the center of the work higher education administrators are charged to do.

The Subjective Self: My Biases and Assumptions

I bring a number of biases and assumptions to this study. First, I believe that all people are spiritual beings and created as such. As spiritual beings, people search for meaning and purpose throughout their lives. Second, I assume that those engaged in leadership and who claim a spiritual identity are influenced by the values of their spirituality. Finally, I believe the context of higher education in the United States has created conditions in which leaders cannot openly discuss their spiritual values. In

emphasizing the separation of church and state, higher education has slowly moved away from claiming any values, and leaders within higher education have claimed a value-free approach to leadership, or at the very least choose not to express their values. I do not think that a value-free approach to leadership is possible and I believe not talking about one's values is not conducive for strong leadership. Over the past decades, more scholars are beginning to realize the value-laden approach to leadership, applauding this approach, and encouraging strong values in leaders.

Voice

The nature of a constructivist grounded theory requires that I briefly address the concept of voice when thinking about the role of the researcher in executing this study. Hertz (1997) defined voice and its multiple dimensions:

> Voice is a struggle to figure out how to present the author's self while simultaneously writing the respondents' accounts and representing their selves. Voice has multiple dimensions: First, there is the voice of the author. Second, there is the presentation of the presentation of the voices of one's respondents within the text. A third dimension appears when the self is the subject of the inquiry. (p. xii)

To not reflect on how voice played a role in this study would undermine the very approach to my research questions. My desire is to have the voices of participants reflected in a way that they recognize their own voices through the emergent theory. Consistent with constructivist grounded theory, I aimed to not write in a detached manner but in a way where my own voice is also present. I strived to write in this

manner by being candid in my writing and reacting to the findings in a way that reflects my own voice and experiences.

Charmaz and Mitchell (1997) wrote about "the myth of silent authorship" (p. 193) and explored how social science disciplines have often favored silenced voices in scholarship, when they expressed "there is merit in humility and deference to subjects' views…but there is also merit in audible authorship" (p. 194). Charmaz and Mitchell (1997) articulated that they favor a balanced approach when inserting the author's voice in scholarship.

Summary

In this study, I employed grounded theory methodology to explore the influence of spirituality on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators, from a constructivist epistemological paradigm. A combination of intensity, maximum variation, and theoretical sampling techniques were used in this study. Transcripts of in-depth, semi-structured interviews containing the words of the participants served as the data and were coded in four phases: initial, focused, axial, and theoretical. The constant comparative method was employed to ensure that data collection informed data analysis and that data analysis in return informed data collection until a grounded theory emerged. Approaches were implemented to ensure trustworthiness, maintain ethical research standards, and balance my own reflexivity and subjectivity.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory study was to develop a theoretical perspective on the influence that spirituality has on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators (SSAAs). Four research questions guided this study:

(1) What can be learned about how spirituality influences the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators when the intersection of spiritual and leadership development is considered?

(2) What are the critical influences on the process by which spirituality informs the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators?

(3) How, if at all, do the spiritually-guided leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study influence the organizational environments of their institutions?

(4) How, if at all, are the spiritually-guided and value-laden leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study challenged by the socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to values, spirituality, and religiosity?

In this chapter I present the findings of this study, utilizing thick description, in several sections. First, the chapter begins with a description of the 14 participants in the study. Then I present an overview of the emergent grounded theory that depicts the leadership process when the intersection of spirituality and leadership was considered. Next, I pull apart the theory and present the core category and four key categories that emerged during data analysis to give the reader a better understanding

of the evidence for the grounded theory. The chapter ends with a postscript where participants describe their experience of being in the study.

Participant Profiles

In this section, I introduce each participant, using, when possible, their own words. Participant profiles were composed from the initial interest form and interview transcripts. The total sample consisted of 14 participants representing a myriad of institutional types. Participants' tenure as senior student affairs administrators and within the field of student affairs varies over a range. Because recent literature (see Chapter 2) has presented compelling evidence that leadership construction is influenced by various identities, an effort was made to recruit a diverse pool of senior student affairs administrators. Participants varied primarily in gender, race/ethnicity, and religious identity. Following this introduction is a brief description of each participant, including noteworthy points about their leadership experience and spiritual development. The religious and spiritual identities articulated in the table do not do justice to the diversity of perspectives and experiences surrounding spirituality, religiosity, faith, and meaning making. To protect the anonymity of participants, a description of their institutional type or geographic region is not included. Participants represented a broad spectrum of four-year institutions, all of which were non-religiously affiliated. Institutions were found in almost every region of the United States and abroad. Each participant chose her or his pseudonym used in this study to protect anonymity. Any names used in describing the data have been changed, including names of institutions. As part of the member check, each participant had the opportunity to read and edit the description before agreeing on the statement below. I

used this member check experience in part to promote participant confidentiality.

Becoming familiar with the participants' words and experiences provides a context

for the findings of this study. Table 4.1 summarizes the demographic information of

the participants in the study.

Alan

Alan, a SSAA with 20 years of experience and 35 years in the field of student

affairs functions as the senior student affairs officer on his campus. Alan described

himself as a collaborative leader who is people centric. In communicating lessons

learned and his leadership philosophy Alan expressed a light-hearted yet serious

leadership philosophy balancing hard work, having fun, collaborating, and

maintaining balance in one's life. Alan recalled being raised in a liberal Christian

household and attending Congregational Church weekly. He began questioning

organized religion at an early age and has experienced different expressions of his

faith. Characterizations of his own spiritual journey included, "confused,"

"uncertain," "distinguished spirituality from religion," "angry," questioning,"

"painful," and "hopeful." He continues to be spiritually curious and leans towards the

teachings of Buddhism.

Avani

Avani, a SSAA with eight years of experience and 20 years in the field of

student affairs, serves as a direct report to the senior student affairs officer overseeing

eight departments. Avani described herself as having a democratic and social justice

approach to leadership and admitted that "the more seasoned I become I tend to be a

servant leader although in terms of my leadership approach I lead from a situational

Pseudonym	Years as a SSAA	Professional Title* & Function ** at time of interview	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Sexual Orientation	Disability	Religious Identity
Alan	20	AVP & Dean of Students (CSAO)	Male	White	Heterosexual	None	Unsure/Buddhist leanings
Avani	10	Dean of Students	Female	Black/African-American	Heterosexual	None	Christianity
Dustin	33	Assistant Vice President (CSAO)	Male	White/Various European & Native-American	Heterosexual	None	Protestant Christian
Ellen	10	Vice Chancellor (CSAO)	Female	White	Heterosexual	None	Baptist
Gwen	16	AVP & Dean of Students	Female	White	Heterosexual	None	Methodist, Baptist, Christian
Josh	37	Retired CSAO	Male	White	Heterosexual	Hearing, Mobility	Protestant
Kenny	24	Vice Provost (CSAO)	Male	African-American	Heterosexual	None	Baptist
Kimberly	9	Associate VP	Female	White	Heterosexual	None	Christian (Protestant)
Marisa	9	Dean of Students	Female	White	Heterosexual	None	Catholic
Michele	18	Vice President (CSAO)	Female	White	Heterosexual	None	Catholic
Rose	15	Retired AVP	Female	White	Heterosexual	None	None
Scarlet	13	AVP & Dean of Students	Female	White	Heterosexual	None	Presbyterian
Xavier	13	Dean of Students & Assistant VP	Male	African-American/Black	Gay	None	Christian – loosely
WZ	4½	VP & Dean of Students (CSAO)	Female	Asian/ Malay	Heterosexual	None	Christian

Table 4.1. Summary of Participant Profiles

*AVP=Assistant/Associate Vice President; VP=Vice President
**CSAO=Participant functions as the Chief Student Affairs Officer

perspective as well." Avani was raised in a Christian home influenced by an array of denominations, including Baptist, Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, and Seventh-Day Adventist. At the age of 13, Avani joined a Baptist church where her girlfriend attended and was baptized. Though Avani believed in God, she did it principally because of her friend. In college, Avani turned agnostic questioning God's existence. A number of transformative events beginning in college including her involvement in the civil right's movement and the women's liberation movement and personal experiences, drew her back to God and her faith became the center of who she is. Today, Avani identifies as a Christian and sees her spirituality inextricably linked to her Christian faith.

Dustin

Dustin, a SSAA with 33 years of experience and 40 years in the field of student affairs, serves in a senior administrative position where he is charged to oversee both student and faculty affairs. Dustin described leadership as involving individuals, groups, and organizations. Leadership is not something related to the specific individual, according to Dustin, but is a capacity that we all have, "although certain of us have benefitted from having greater opportunity to cultivate and practice leadership." To Dustin, the most central point that drives leadership is "conviction in action" and leadership's transforming potential is based on how one arrives to the conviction and the depth of that conviction. Dustin shared, "the deeper the conviction and the more focused on mutual benefit, the more transforming our leadership is likely to be." Dustin was raised in a religious family and credited that upbringing as providing a foundation for understanding his own spirituality today. He defined

spiritual commitment as being different than religiosity. He has come to believe that there are multiple religious traditions that have their own truths and own languages and seeks to respect these traditions deeply. He admitted that his "spiritual path is far from over and I anticipate never being satisfied with my conclusions." Today he identifies as a Christian (Protestant) in large part because "it is the most familiar and comfortable faith perspective for me."

Ellen

Ellen, a SSAA with ten years of experience and 37 years in the field of student affairs, serves as the senior student affairs officer on her campus. Influential leadership scholars John Maxwell and Jim Collins guide Ellen's leadership philosophy. She believes that leaders should be about serving, modeling behaviors, and that "leaders have a responsibility to others in their organization, their institution, and larger society." Ellen identifies as a Christian (Baptist) and she grew up in a religious family and sees her spiritual development as "a bit more complicated." She would identify as not only being spiritual, but also religious. Faith is a source of guidance and comfort during difficult times. Ellen's spiritual development "has been lifelong and a process of study, learning, engaging with others to discuss various ideas about the spiritual side of our beings…" Ellen described an progression of relying on her spirituality in times of crisis to now being more mature in her spiritual development and relying on it in a more holistic sense.

Gwen

Gwen, a SSAA with 16 years of experience and over 20 years as a student affairs educator, serves as a direct report to the senior student affairs officer

overseeing a wide array of student affairs functional areas. Gwen retired from the position she held at the time of the interview and now serves as the senior student affairs officer at a religiously-affiliated institution. Gwen enjoys being part of and leading a team and credits great role models for facilitating her leadership development. She understands leadership to be "more process than position and more influence than authority." Gwen's spiritual development is rooted in her parents' example of practicing their Christian (Methodist, Baptist) faith in everyday life. Though for Gwen, her spirituality and faith are tied to her religion, she expressed how she has grown to respect religions beyond her own and grown in her understanding "that faith and spirituality do not have to operate within the confines of a specific religion." Experiencing her spiritual development as a lifelong process, she described, "I'm on a journey and I don't believe it will end in this lifetime. I believe in eternal life and am planning to experience it."

Josh

Josh is a recently retired senior student affairs administrator after 44 years in the field, 37 of those as a senior student affairs officer with posts at three different institutions. He articulated his leadership philosophy as "to support, train, mentor, inspire the people in my organization so they are successful and the organization will thrive." He found it important to invest his time with students and staff, forging relationships and supporting them. He believes deeply in involving people on all levels in decision-making, which he expressed yielded a better product. Though Josh identified his religion as Protestant, his spiritual identity is loosely connected to his religious identity. He identified as "not a very religious person" and admitted to

becoming "cynical about the organized function of religion." Josh articulated his spiritual development "focused on natural beauty and life around us." He admitted to not talking about spirituality very often but articulated, "I am very much grounded in spiritual perspective…" He recounted the absence of spirituality in the greater scholarship of student affairs for most of his career. His spiritual identity was greatly influenced by experiences of growing up in a poor family, developing a strong work ethic, and forging strong relationships with staff at college who deeply invested in his success, which catapulted him to earn a terminal degree. The focus of his spirituality surrounds the focus of deepening human relationships, "humanism and working with people and trying to make the world a different place and trying to commit yourself to others…"

Kenny

Kenny, a SSAA with 24 years of experience and 37 years in the field, serves as the senior student affairs officer on his campus. Kenny described possessing a shared leadership philosophy and the importance of leaders investing in the on-going development of their staff. He views his role within the leadership process as a convener and facilitator and he believes that any group "given the necessary space, structure and support, is capable of creating a dynamic plan for its relationships and direction." While Kenny feels grounded in his religion, he feels a stronger identity as a spiritual person possessing a "deep connection with the humanity of others and the world we share." Kenny articulated his role as honoring the humanity of each person with whom he interacts and creating space within his work community that "allows others to unleash their spiritual self."

Kimberly

Kimberly, a SSAA for nine years and a student affairs educator for 24, serves as a direct report to the senior student affairs officer. Kimberly resigned from the SSAA position she held at time of interview due to a relocation of her spouse's work and now serves as a higher education consultant. Kimberly articulated her leadership philosophy to be relationship-oriented, believing that "leadership at its best is about working collectively toward some common goal or purpose to make the world around me a better place…" Kimberly identifies as a Christian who believes in a loving, forgiving God that helps to direct and guide her life. Though the foundation of her spiritual growth was in a Christian home through her family and church experiences, Kimberly's journey of spiritual development has also been shaped by her education, friends, colleagues, and life experiences. She articulated that the role of spirituality, though individually defined and expressed, "calls us to understand that we live in a world much greater than ourselves for which we all have some responsibility."

Marisa

Marisa is a SSAA for 9 years and has 15 years of experience as a student affairs educator. When the study began Marisa was reporting to the senior student affairs administrator, a position that she now occupies as Dean of Students. The Social Change Model of Leadership and Invitational Leadership influence Marisa's framework for leadership. Marisa articulated that her role as a leader is "to inspire people and align people with that inspiration." Marisa was raised Catholic but thinks of spirituality and her Catholicism as two separate entities. Spirituality allows for grounding and peace in her life while providing perspective. Marisa articulated

spirituality as her "value, purpose, and true vocation." Marisa has been a key advocate on her campus for leading efforts to encourage students to consider their own spiritual development through the opening of an interfaith center which actively programs and is supported by student and academic affairs.

Michele

Michele, a SSAA with over 18 years of experience and 30 years in the field of student affairs, serves as the senior student affairs officer on her campus. Michele describes her leadership style as collaborative. She described a commitment to being involved with student leaders. Her focus with staff is to "hire strong people who will do good work and try to facilitate them and help them have the resources and support they need…" Michele was raised Catholic and despite her questioning throughout her young adult life, has remained so. She articulated that "I am very much a practicing Catholic…and I hope that it influences most things that I do."

Rose

Rose is a recently retired senior student affairs administrator after over 20 years in the field, 15 of those as a senior student affairs officer with posts at two different institutions. Rose credited trial and error throughout her career, empowering supervisors, strong work ethic, and her writing and public speaking as assets to her leadership development. When reflecting on her leadership philosophy, Rose articulated leading by example, being collaborative, taking risks, standing for what is right, and engaging others in the process of bringing a vision to fruition as some of the core tenets of her approach to leadership. Rose grew up in a conservative Christian family and church and attended a conservative college for her master's

degree. Though she distanced herself from the church, she noted, "I retained many of the values and ethical standards that I learned as a young child…" It remains difficult for her to articulate her spiritual identity today, but voiced caring deeply for the welfare of others, committing to a life of service and cultivating an inner life.

Scarlet

Scarlet, a SSAA of 13 years and a student affairs professional with over 20 years of experience, reports to the senior student affairs officer at her institution. Scarlet articulated three significant areas of her leadership philosophy as leading by example, advocating for her staff and students, and living with integrity in "word and deed." Scarlet views spirituality as especially "important …in hard times and gives me the strength to go on." She grew up in a Christian home and is currently attending a church for the "fit…rather than…denomination." Spirituality has become more central to her identity as she has grown older. Life events such as her marriage and having a child reinforced the importance as the church being a center of her community. She articulated that as a family unit "we are still on a faith journey and growing and learning each and every day."

Xavier

Xavier, a SSAA of 13 years and a student affairs educator with over 20 years of experience, reports directly to the senior student affairs officer on his campus. In defining leadership, Xavier shared, "of all of the leadership models the one that most speaks to my heart is the Social Change Leadership Model." Xavier articulated that his leadership is about "creating positive social change…empowering others…creating vision…providing people with the tools." In relation to his role on

campus Xavier summed up his leadership role to "inspire and motivate people to do their best and to serve students in their best capacity…" Though Xavier is active in a church community, he articulated his faith being more tied to spirituality than it is to religion. For him, spirituality is about connection: "believing in something bigger than myself, believing that I'm not alone on this planet, believing that things don't just happen by accident, that is more tied to a sense of, again, the connectedness that I feel."

WZ

WZ, a SSAA with over four years and a student affairs professional with over 18 years of experience, serves as the senior student affairs officer on her campus. WZ's leadership philosophy is grounded in servant leadership and leading by example. She explained "…and when I say serve in leadership it is more the philosophy that this is a service. I'm not doing it for myself but it is really to serve a larger goal and a larger community…" WZ articulated that her spirituality is tied to her religion, Christianity explaining, "it's the basis, it's the core of my principles and what I go back to at the end of the day." Yet, WZ described Christianity as a religion for her that is synonymous to a way of life, an ethos guiding her day-to-day life and leadership practice.

<div align="center">Overview of the Emerging Theory</div>

The primary aim in this study was to investigate the process by which spirituality influences the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators by considering the intersection of spirituality and leadership. Further, the study examined how participants' spiritually-oriented leadership influenced their

<div align="center">125</div>

organizations and how the participants negotiated their spiritual identity within their role as a senior student affairs administrator. Within the findings, I present one core category and four key categories. The core category is *leading with a spiritual orientation.* The four key categories are *sustaining a spiritual outlook, catalyzing spirituality to maximize leadership capacity, prioritizing people in leadership practice,* and *"managing your identity": navigating the academy's socio-cultural environment.* The findings form a framework for the emergent grounded theory, *Walking the Labyrinth: The Process of Leading with a Spiritual Orientation among Senior Student Affairs Administrators* presented later in this section. First, I present a brief overview of the core category and four key categories and explain how the findings informed the emergent grounded theory. The core category and key categories will be explicated in detail later in the chapter.

The core category and four key categories informed the emergence of the grounded theory that depicts the lived experience of leadership of the SSAAs in this study when the intersection of spirituality and leadership was examined. Stemming from the core category and four key categories, three critical influences, two characteristics and the context of leading with a spiritual orientation for SSAAs are presented. Table 4.2 presents the findings and helps the reader understand how the findings and categories are interrelated and inform the emergent grounded theory.

Categories/Findings and their Corresponding Roles within the Emergent Grounded Theory	
Three Critical Influences on Leading with a Spiritual Orientation	
Core Category Leading with a Spiritual Orientation	The pervasive and ever-present nature of spirituality is a critical influence on the leadership and leadership practices of the participants. The personal core, another critical influence, "centers" the leadership process and forms from the relationships between spirituality, values and leadership. Participants described returning to the core to recharge, reconnect with their purpose as SSAAs, make meaning of their experiences as SSAAs and seek congruence among their spirituality, values, and leadership in their leadership practices.
4 Key Categories 1. Sustaining a Spiritual Outlook	Participants develop(ed) and sustain a spiritual orientation in their lives, a process that emerged as a critical influence on leading with a spiritual orientation.
Two Characteristics of Leading with a Spiritual Orientation	
2. Catalyzing Spirituality to Maximize Leadership Capacity	Participants leverage their spirituality to expand their leadership capacity and refine their leadership practice.
3. Prioritizing People in Leadership Practice	Leadership practices center on regarding people as sacred and the primary priority of leadership.
Context of Leading with a Spiritual Orientation for Senior Student Affairs Administrators	
4. "Managing Your Identity": Navigating the Academy's Socio-cultural Environment	Participants are cognizant that higher education is a socio-cultural organization that possesses expressed and unexpressed values, customs and practices creating unique constraints and opportunities for leading with a spiritual orientation and requiring participants to "manage" their spiritual identities in relation to their role as an institutional leader.

Table 4.2. Categories/Findings and their Corresponding Roles within the Emergent Grounded Theory

The core category, leading with a spiritual orientation, captures the essence of a leadership process steeped in and oriented by the leader's spirituality. The core category illuminates the relationship between spirituality and leadership as well as the influence of spirituality within the leadership process. The participants describe leadership that is inextricably linked with their spirituality. In essence, participants' spirituality and leadership are perpetually interacting and informing one another. At the intersection of spirituality and leadership, values operate as a mechanism to imbue leadership with one's spiritual orientation. Both leadership and spirituality contribute to the definition of and reinforcement of one's values. The interconnection of spirituality, values and leadership form a salient "core" that participants rely on as they engage in leadership.

Two critical influences on the process of leading with a spiritual orientation were identified from the core category. A third critical influence on the process of leading with a spiritual orientation, discussed later, was identified from the first key category. The first critical influence is the nature of the influence of spirituality on the leadership process and leadership practices. Spirituality was found to be ever-present and permeates the leadership process from start to finish. The second critical influence is the role of the core described above. The personal core of the leader forms from the relationships between spirituality, values and leadership and "centers" the leadership process. Participants described returning to the core to recharge, reconnect with their purpose as SSAAs, make meaning of their experiences as SSAAs and seek congruence among their spirituality, values, and leadership in their leadership practices.

The first key category, sustaining a spiritual outlook, informs the theory by identifying the third critical influence on the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. This key category captures the experience that participants articulated of developing and sustaining a spiritual orientation in their lives. This process includes experiences that contribute to one's spiritual development and the integration of one's spiritual orientation within their work as SSAAs. The spiritual outlook of the participants (i.e., spirituality) intersects with leadership to inform the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. Developing and sustaining a spiritual outlook serves as a critical influence because the resultant spiritual orientation foregrounds the participants' leadership as SSAAs.

The next two key categories presented, catalyzing spirituality to maximize leadership capacity and prioritizing people in leadership practice, are characteristics of the leadership practices of the SSAAs in this study. Catalyzing spirituality to maximize leadership capacity describes how participants leveraged spirituality to expand their leadership capacity and refine their leadership practice. Participants expressed that as their spirituality deepens their capacity to serve others and engage in leadership also grows. Essentially, participants believe that their spirituality reinforces and strengthens their values expressed in their leadership practices. Prioritizing people in leadership practice describes the second characteristic of leading with a spiritual orientation. Participants articulated employing many leadership practices that share a person-centered focus. Participants described people as "sacred" and whenever possible people are held in higher regard than any other resources within their organizations. Serving people was identified as a key aim of

leading with a spiritual orientation. Both catalyzing spirituality to maximize

leadership capacity and prioritizing people in leadership practice are characteristics of

spiritually-oriented leadership practices which in turn influence one's spirituality and

values.

The last key category presented is "managing your identity": navigating the

academy's socio-cultural environment. This key category highlights the context of the

process of leading with a spiritual orientation and clarifies how the values and

practices of higher education influence leading with a spiritual orientation.

Specifically, the key category illuminates how the socio-cultural context of higher

education results in a unique set of constraints and opportunities for one's leadership

practice within the academy. This key category is reflected in the emergent theory as

the context in which leading with a spiritual orientation occurs.

The emergent grounded theory depicts a dynamic process where leadership is

continuously influenced by the pervasive presence of a spiritual and values-based

orientation and uncovers the interconnected relationships between spirituality,

leadership, and values. The emergent theory, *Walking the Labyrinth: The Process of*

Leading with a Spiritual Orientation among Senior Student Affairs Administrators

illustrates the trajectory of "spirit-informed" or spiritually-oriented leadership.

Leading with a spiritual orientation occurs metaphorically while walking the

labyrinth, a structure known as a tool for spiritual growth, contemplation and

development (http://www.labyrinthos.net/labyrinthstory.html). Thus, walking the

labyrinth represents leading with a spiritual orientation because engagement with the

leadership process and one's spirituality occurs simultaneously. Being in the labyrinth

portrays the pervasive and ever-present nature of spirituality. The entwined and seamless nature of leadership and spirituality that participants described is exemplified by the unique design of the labyrinth. "Unlike a maze, the labyrinth is unicursal, having a single path leading to the center with no loops, cul-de-sacs or forks," (http://www.nativity-indy.org/labyrinth.html). The labyrinth is walked as the spiritually-oriented leader engages the process of leadership, walking the same path towards the center, as is walked away from the center to exit the labyrinth. Walking the labyrinth is recurring and on-going because engaging in the leadership process is iterative. The level of consciousness or intentionality of engaging in this process may depend on the salience of spiritual identity. Seeking congruency among spirituality, values and leadership; facing difficult decisions; desiring to recharge; affirming purpose of one's leadership; and, making meaning of one's leadership triggers one's core (i.e., intersection of spirituality, leadership, and values) to become salient and draws participants into the labyrinth. Figure 4.1 depicts the emergent theory, Walking the Labyrinth: The Process of Leading with a Spiritual Orientation among Senior Student Affairs Administrators.
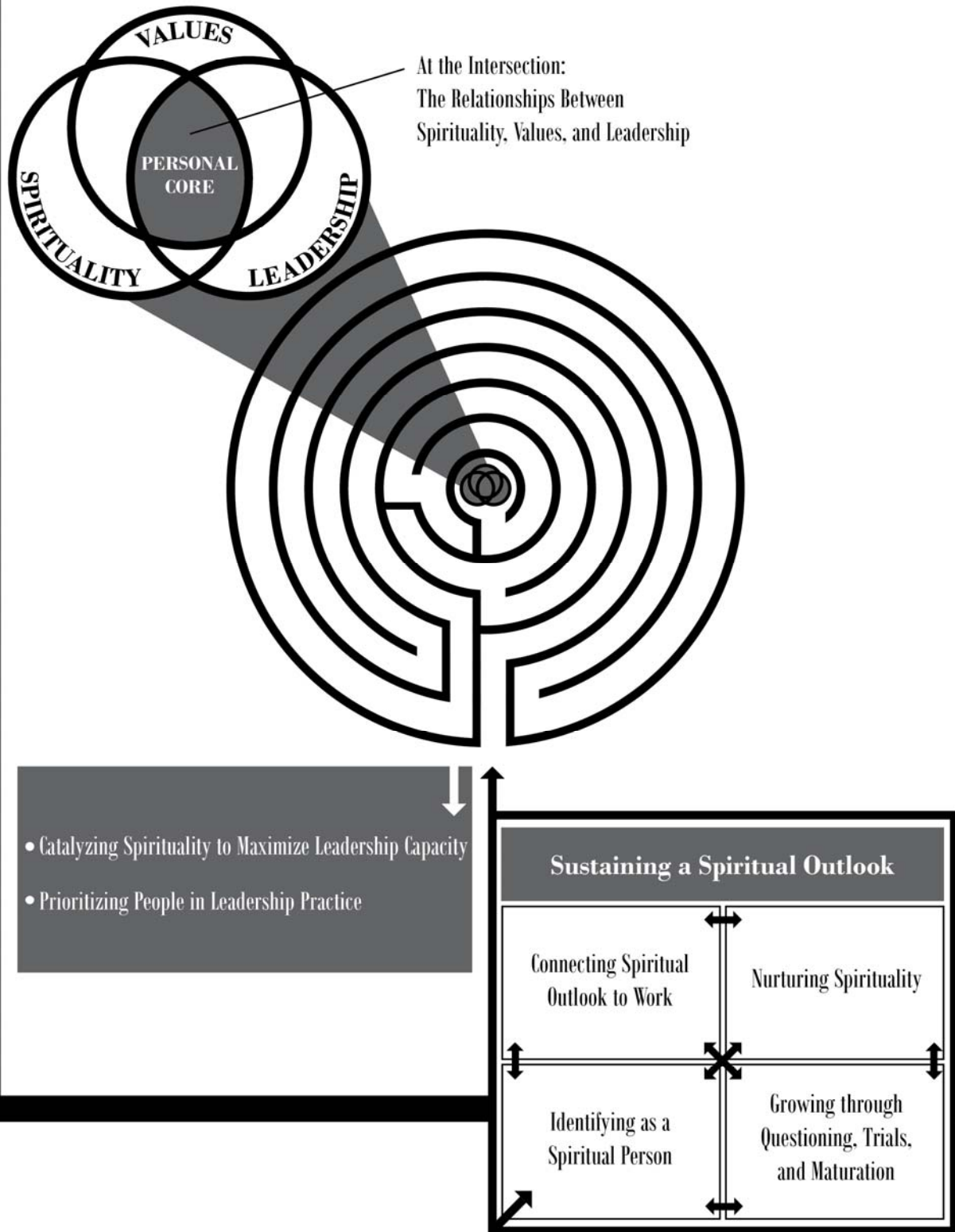
Figure 4.1. Walking the Labyrinth: The Process of Leading with a Spiritual Orientation Among Senior Student Affairs Administrators

Sustaining a spiritual outlook foregrounds the beginning of the process. Four elements compose sustaining a spiritual outlook, including *identifying as a spiritual person; growing through questioning, trials, and maturation; connecting spiritual outlook to work; and nurturing spirituality.* The process of leading with a spiritual orientation is bounded by the context of higher education, which is indicated by the thick black border around the labyrinth. Note that part of sustaining a spiritual outlook occurs outside of the context of higher education. This graphical nuance is intentional as it represents how the initial steps of developing a spiritual identity and growing in one's spiritual identity occurred for participants outside of the context of their roles as SSAAs. As indicated by the arrow in the bottom left of the *identifying as a spiritual person* square, the spiritually-oriented leader begins developing a spiritual outlook by identifying as a spiritual person. Once the leader has a spiritual identity, all four elements inform each other to sustain a spiritual outlook in their life.

The core (or center of the labyrinth) and the congruency sought at the core, draws the leader through the labyrinth. At the center (or core) the intersection of leadership and spirituality is found. Participants are continuously engaging in the leadership process, informing leadership with their spirituality, and returning to the core to influence their leadership practices. Participants seek out their core to reconcile leadership practices with spirituality by examining values in light of both their spirituality and leadership. At the intersection, the leader employs values to infuse her or his leadership practices with spirituality. As the leader finds congruency among her or his spirituality, values, and leadership, the characteristics of leading with a spiritual orientation become apparent: catalyzing spirituality to maximize

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leadership capacity and prioritizing people within leadership practice. In the midst of deepening leadership capacity and employing leadership practices, spirituality and values may be reinforced and/or challenged but regardless re-engaged. Thus, the leader begins walking the labyrinth once again.

Walking the labyrinth is contextualized by the socio-cultural values and practices, overt and latent, of the academy and one's campus, which create both opportunities and constraints for leading with a spiritual orientation. The thick black border around the labyrinth bounds the process of leading with a spiritual orientation within higher education. Participants described ways in which their spiritual identities and spirit-informed leadership supports their role as institutional leaders and ways in which their leadership role caused them to have to manage their identities and negotiate their spiritual identity with their role as institutional leaders. Together, the critical influences, characteristics, and context form the framework to describe the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to describing the core category and associated key categories. I will pull Figure 4.1 apart and present additional illustrations of the core category and the key categories.

To gain a deeper understanding of the center of this process, there are several questions to be answered. How does the SSAA's spirituality influence their leadership practice? How would one characterize the process of leading with a spiritual orientation? How would one describe the relationship between spirituality and leadership? In the next section, I describe the journey of walking the labyrinth by

explicating the core category, leading with a spiritual orientation, the crux of the emergent grounded theory.

Leading with a Spiritual Orientation

The core category, leading with a spiritual orientation, uncovers two critical influences in the process of leading with spiritual orientation: (1) the pervasive nature of spirituality, and (2) the relationship between spirituality and leadership. I begin with an overview of the first critical influence. The participants described an influence of spirituality that permeates their leadership and is ubiquitous. The process of leading with a spiritual orientation is not a mechanical process; on the contrary this process is fluid, dynamic, and organic. Thus, the influence of spirituality on the leadership process occurs through an orientation that is formed by the constant presence of one's spirituality. Participants described a spiritual orientation that is present and engaged, at times more salient than others, but always present. The characterizations of this process, as described by the voices of the participants, are presented in this first section of explicating the core category.

Entering the labyrinth engages the leadership process. The purpose of walking a labyrinth is to be with one's thoughts through contemplation, mediation, and prayer (http://www.labyrinthos.net/labyrinthstory.html). Thus, the context of the leadership journey within the labyrinth captures the influence of spirituality and the presence of the spiritual orientation. As the leader walks the labyrinth (i.e., engages the leadership process) they do so within their spiritual self (i.e., the labyrinth itself). Walking the labyrinth is purposeful, sacred, and directed. There is momentum towards the center

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of the labyrinth and this trajectory emerges from the second critical influence that arose within the core category, the relationship between spirituality and leadership.

The entwined relationship of leadership and spirituality emerged as a critical influence in the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. Participants described points of connection between their leadership development and their spiritual development, between their leadership journey and their spiritual journey. The connection is so clear for some, that in deepening development or capacity of one construct (i.e., leadership or spirituality) they deepen development or capacity in the other construct. When the intersection of spirituality and leadership was examined, a third construct emerged as being present – values. As Figure 4.2 illustrates the constructs of spirituality, values, and leadership are interconnected. Values serve as a conduit through which to infuse one's spirituality in their leadership.

The center of the labyrinth is inhabited by the intersection of spirituality, values, and leadership that form the personal core found at the intersection. The core draws the leader through the labyrinth. The leader seeks the core to vet their decisions, ideas, and visions. The spiritually-oriented leader seeks to return to the core to ensure that their actions are in congruence with the core, to deepen capacity for leadership and spirituality, and to re-connect with purpose and meaning of their work as leaders. The core serves to "ground" and "center" the leader as s/he walks the labyrinth. In the subsequent sections, I explicate the core category and describe the influence spirituality has on leadership and the relationship that emerged among spirituality, values, and leadership.
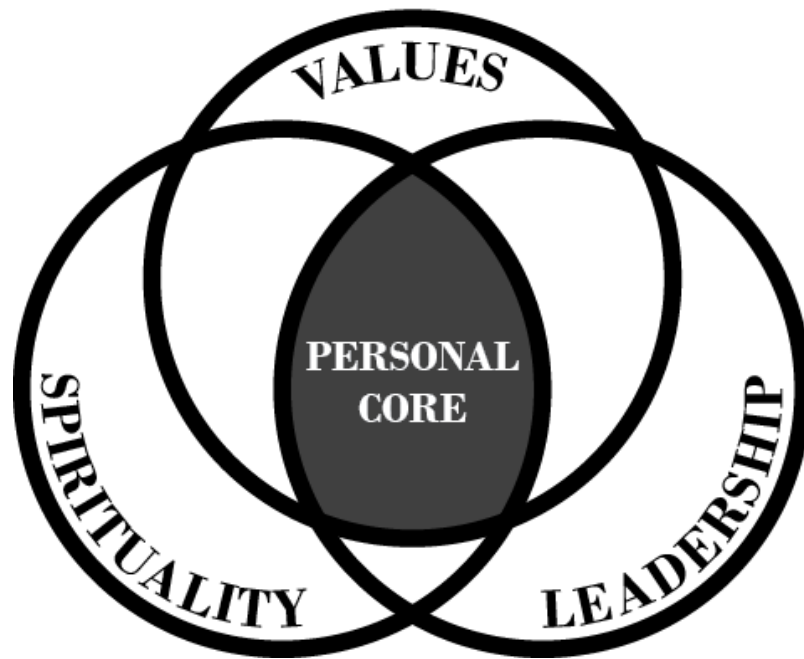
Figure 4.2. At the Intersection: The Relationships between Spirituality, Values, and
        Leadership

Entering the Labyrinth: Uncovering the Influence of Spirituality

The primary aim of this study was to uncover *how* spirituality influences the

leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. Leading with a spiritual

orientation, the core category, provides a characterization of spiritually-oriented

leadership. How does one describe that influence? The influence of spirituality

emerged as being pervasive for participants. The presence of one's spirituality within

one's leadership practices was described as being "organic," "consistent," and "ever-

present." Kenny reflected on the influence of spirituality in his leadership practice:

I think it's a constant and I think it's sort of a low level hum that is sort of a

constant in my leadership, which means that it's not overwhelming but that

it's present.

Kenny described how spirituality's influence on his leadership practices is present

and constant. Participants considered the pervasive nature of the influence. In Gwen's

case, she noted how the influence is there all the time. Gwen's spirituality is

reinforced through spiritual disciplines that are rooted in her religion, faith and

beliefs:

[Spirituality] probably influences them [leadership practices] totally and 100

percent of the time. I wake up in the morning and have a good talk with God,

and that's my spirituality, has God and Christ and all that involved. And, I

start with my prayers for my family and then work right on into my work

group and my people at work, and our students, and ask for good guidance

and direction, carrying through on what I hope there's this good purpose that

I'm supposed to be carrying out, and I'm out here trying to do it.

Avani expressed similar thoughts using the metaphor of spirituality as a guide, "So it

does [spirituality] guide me I think in my [leadership] practices." Ellen affirmed the

influence of spirituality on her leadership practices in an aspirational statement, being

honest about her limits, but expressing her hope for this influence:

I hope [my faith] influences what I do every day. I think it should. I think my

faith should influence what I do every day. I don't pretend to tell you that it

does.

Finally, in describing his own view of how spirituality influences his leadership practices, Kenny asserted, "So the scope and the breadth of my own spirit really does influence my leadership." The idea that one's spirituality is ever-present was echoed by all participants. Yet, understanding how one's spirituality actually comes to influence one's leadership practices was more difficult. Since participants expressed they did not usually think about the connection because it is a "gut" process, it was challenging for them to articulate this process. Kimberly expressed the intuitive nature of the influence:

> I think it is more intuitive and so it is sort of gut. I don't have to pause and cognitively make those connections. It happens just through intuition. Now, sometimes maybe if the decision is harder…? When I stop, just to be the most extreme, I don't say "What Would Jesus Do?" That's not the way I would capture it, but I think when it comes to how we treat each other, when it comes to understanding impact and influence, I think all of that relates to my sense of spirituality…those are things for which I have values that I think have transference to the workplace in an intuitive way…

Ever-present, overlapping, seamless, and wholeness – these are the primary concepts expressed by participants when describing the influence of spirituality on their leadership practices. Kenny, Josh, and Rose offered three different characterizations of the process of leading with a spiritual orientation and how they make meaning of this complex process. Kenny described what he has come to term "spirit-informed leadership":

…I use the term spirit-informed leadership because I think what happens is that I think there's a point at which your spirit does begin to inform your leadership, and as your spirit expands, and your sense of spirituality expands, so does your leadership capacity, and that the expression of your leadership over time can be connected to the growth of your spirit, and that for me as I become more comfortable in the world and more comfortable in various relationship networks where different elements of spirit were at play, the more comfortable I felt being able to lead within those contexts…

Josh shared his understanding of the influence of spirituality on leadership,

It is sort of like a catalyst. You know a catalyst that causes a chemical reaction or something to happen. But it isn't part of the reaction and so maybe spirituality is a kind of catalyst for leadership. It causes a type of leadership to happen. It has an effect on the population of students or whatever. But in itself it is sort of something that is maybe not part of leadership.

Rose described a continuum of leadership:

There it is. That's what it is for me…to me, spirituality is very linked to a larger purpose, where if there were a continuum to a spiritual leader to a not so spiritual leader, the not so spiritual one, that purpose would be either very ego-centered, its all about me, or again, it would be more about the power, the what comes with being a leader, than a deep, deep, deep purpose. And oh, I would so rather be around the one that is driven by purpose than the one that is driven by power.

Walking through the labyrinth, one engages leadership permeated with spirituality.

Walking to the Center: Examining the Intersection of Spirituality and Leadership

The intertwined characteristics of spirituality and leadership become evident in the labyrinth. Participants articulated that there is a connection and overlap present between spirituality and leadership. Where does this connection emerge? Why do participants describe the relationship of leadership and spirituality as seamless? Data analysis uncovered the influence of spirituality within leadership as well as the relationship that these constructs have with one another, particularly at the intersection between the two.

Kimberly's insight into the manner in which spirituality influences her leadership practices not only describes the process, but also begins to uncover why the process is an organic and intuitive one. Participants expressed how spirituality and leadership are both identities that "overlap" and to some are "seamless." Hence, teasing out the differences and nuances about how they interact was challenging. Gwen described the intertwined nature of spirituality and leadership as two sides of a picture, "…I've been that so long that it's hard for me to peel it down so you can take the two apart and look at them as even different sides of the same picture because there are all intertwined."

Participants characterized this overlap as a seamless or whole relationship between spirituality and leadership. Participants expressed that one's spirituality being seamless with their leadership is a bit idealistic but nonetheless a reality most could resonate with and aspire to. Dustin explained how beyond overlap there is a seamless nature to the dynamic discovered in leading with a spiritual orientation,

…the most connected people in terms of their spirituality with their being,

whether that's the way they interact or lead or whatever, they're very, very

subtle…I mean they're the people for whom literally there is no difference.

That's just who they are.

WZ added to the understanding of spirituality and leadership as seamless in context of her specific faith and religious beliefs:

[Spirituality and leadership are] not two separate entities. It lends themselves

seamlessly. It's interconnected because I don't just lead, I can't say that I lead

with humility but I don't have that value in my spirituality. Does that make

sense? [For example], I will say…that Jesus Christ is always asking us to be

humble. So I can't be a leader and say that humility did not come from the

role modeling of Jesus Christ. It is definitely from Jesus Christ that I am a

humble leader. I am a forgiving leader because of that.

Supporting the idea that spirituality and leadership can operate seamlessly, Michele, Scarlet and Ellen described how they bring their wholeness to work. For them, separating out leadership and spirituality begins to appear artificial and forced. Michele shared:

You're a whole person and you come to something like leadership or the

practice of your religion with everything that you bring with you. If you are

leading in a way that's not congruent with your own spirituality, you're not

going to be a very authentic or effective leader because you are two different

people.

Scarlet could not find a way to parse out spirituality and leadership:

I don't know how I could ever really separate the two in my work as the Dean

of Students and in my life as Scarlet. It's combined and I don't know how I

could put it into two separate boxes. I don't see that happening.

Ellen helped to characterize the distinctions among spirituality and leadership by

using a metaphor from her identity as a mother:

I'm a mother. I'm still a mother all the time, and I can't separate that nor

separate my children. I can separate them physically but not from that part of

me, so sure, I think that's a part of all of us.

Discovering values at the nexus of spirituality and leadership. At the

center of the labyrinth the relationship between spirituality and leadership is fully

realized and one begins to understand why there is an overlap or seamless nature

within the relationship between spirituality and leadership. Leadership and spirituality

are inextricably linked through the presence of values. At the nexus of leadership of

spirituality are one's core values.

Values serve as a mechanism to imbue spirituality into the leadership process.

Marisa described the interconnectedness of spirituality, values and leadership. Marisa

described the role that values have in reference to the intersection of spirituality and

leadership:

…I really feel like the term spirituality and leadership, so much of it is

overlap. Like when you're looking at how I define leadership, if I'm looking

at the social change model of leadership and I am talking about my values,

what's important to me, what makes me all of that is also my spirituality. So

there is such an overlap when you look at it. If you're going on a leadership

retreat and you're doing different self-assessments and you are learning about

yourself so you're learning about your leadership style. To me that's you

learning about your spirituality. So a ton of it really overlaps for me and I

would almost use them interchangeably in a lot of ways…

Values, spirituality, and leadership are interconnected. Values operate as a bridge for

the participants to infuse their spirituality into their leadership. Values are the

common denominator between their spirituality and leadership. Participants were able

to define core values with relative ease in contrast to more difficult conversations

articulating one's spirituality. It was clear from this contrast that participants regularly

articulate and promote one's values in their work and throughout their organizations.

As Gwen shared, "they're almost so basic I don't know if I should mention them."

Participants articulated many of their core values, including excellence, integrity,

civility, respect, interconnectedness, inclusiveness, students, honesty, and justice to

name a few. The importance of the human element was salient in the core values that

participants described. Kenny's explanation that "everybody and every situation

deserves dignity and deserves to have their humanity affirmed" was echoed among

most participants. "Treating others the way I would want to be treated" (i.e., The

Golden Rule) emerged in everyone's values.

Values were a central concept of how spirituality and leadership are related.

Xavier described how leadership, values and spirituality are interrelated and

connected:

For me they're all interconnected. I have long believed that you can't talk

about diversity without talking about leadership, leadership talks about

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diversity. I've long believed, too, that if my leadership is then formed by my values and my values are very much part a form of my spirituality and so yes, it's like a little diagram and all of these issues, to me they're not compartmentalized. And I think often where leaders get into trouble is we try to detach ourselves and compartmentalize these things naturally put together…

For Kimberly, values are the starting point when considering how spirituality influences her leadership practices, "I would start with talking about how I think it influences my moral compass."

Though the interconnectedness of spirituality, values, and leadership is illustrated in a Venn diagram, the relationships between these three constructs are not static. There is a trajectory that participants described whereby spirituality most directly informs one's values which in turn inform one's leadership. Ellen connected her values directly to her spirituality, "that's a part of that spiritual part, because I think that spiritual part really is what helps me articulate my values…" Scarlet elucidated this trajectory when she expressed, "My spirituality and my faith shape who I am and they shape those core values and they shape my actions and they shape my choices." Here Scarlet revealed how her values are borne of her spirituality and faith and how in term those core values shape her actions and choices (i.e., leadership practices). Marisa made sense of this interrelation as well, "…how do I make meaning of my life and how do I know what I value and then how do I act upon those values which is kind of how I see leadership…"

The primary trajectory reveals that spirituality influences the formation of values which in turn influences leadership. Though that is the case, participants described that this process was not unidirectional. Despite the primary trajectory being spirituality-values-leadership, participants also described how engaging in leadership reinforced their values or came to bear on deepening one's spirituality.

The relationship between spirituality and one's values and leadership reveals another way that the interconnectedness of spirituality, values and leadership is not static. The salience of one's spiritual identity undoubtedly has an impact on the significance of the influence of one's spirituality on their leadership. Ellen pondered, "I wonder if for some people, certain parts of their being play bigger roles than other parts." Though the participants acknowledged that not all people practice spirituality or identify with their spiritual selves, all participants affirmed that they believe that every person has a spiritual being. Thus, the salience of one's spirituality may vary and has an impact on how broad the influence of one's spirituality is on their leadership practice. For those who are actively sustaining a spiritual outlook, salience of spirituality is high and, therefore, the influence of spirituality on leadership is likely greater than someone whose spiritual identity is not as salient.

"Who I Am": Returning to my core. The intersection of spirituality, values, and leadership forms a personal core upon which participants articulated they rely on when engaging in leadership. The core is powerful, deeply personal, and as the name suggests, fundamental to the leadership process. The core draws the spiritually-oriented leader through the leadership process, giving momentum to the leadership journey through the labyrinth. The act of walking the labyrinth is motivated by a

trajectory towards the center to the intersection of spirituality, values, and leadership. Participants reflected on "returning to my core" or the "ebb and flow" that brings them back to the core. The leadership process has an on-going trajectory towards their core.

Participants shared how their core informs their work as senior student affairs administrators. The "core" at the intersection describes "who I am." As Scarlet shared, "For me I think it's just a core, it's my core being and who I am." The core serves as the center of the leadership journey where the leader can discern congruence, evaluate decisions, discover a source of renewal, and reconnect with the meaning and purpose of one's work. The core functions as one engages in leadership on a daily basis. The core also becomes deeply valued in times of stress, crisis, and challenge.

In analyzing the data, a parallel between the role of the core within one's spiritual journey and one's leadership journey emerged. From a spiritual perspective, participants rely on the core to ground them. The core draws one in to reconnect with one's spiritual self. From a leadership perspective, the core functions to align one's decisions and vision with one's values and spiritual orientation. The core draws one in to connect with the purpose and meaning of one's work as a senior student affairs administrator.

Spiritually, participants connect their spirituality to their values and to their core. Scarlet described:

My spirituality, I think, is such the foundation of my values that they're kind of one in the same and so they're the core of who I am and where I've come

from…It's not intentional when it's the core of who I am if that makes sense. But I fall back on kind of weighing those pros and cons based on what I believe.

Whether it was to reflect on the big questions of life or evaluate one's spiritual journey, there was recognition that turning inward to the core would help one resolve a question. Josh described its role as "…very important, sort of like a foundation or grounding or something you can go back to." Rose discussed that in stressful times she is pointed to the core: "In times of stress I have some sense of a centeredness that I don't always feel but I'm looking for a core, sort of what really matters here that I think I fall back on a lot."

In using a metaphor borrowed from the Judeo-Christian tradition, Dustin elaborated on the role of the core as a place of clarification and realignment with his beliefs in the ebb and flow of his spiritual journey:

> But I've really found that throughout my life there's kind of…ebb and a flow to this spiritual connection. I'll have moments and experiences that take me right back and it's like, wow. You use the Christian imaginary of I'd strayed off the path. It isn't like you're straying off the path but it's just losing my focus. And so it's a very repeating theme that I come back and forth and I don't think it's necessarily a neglect, it's just life gets complicated and then you start paying attention to different things and then all of the sudden for whatever reason something just smacks you right in the face and you go, oops, I need to get back on track. But I have found particularly in times of greater struggle and kind of the searching times that I will use the spiritual questions

more deeply. Sometimes I wonder if that isn't just kind of a crutch for me to

get through those difficult times but I don't believe that it is. I mean it really is

coming back to my core purposes, you know, what am I here for, what am I

trying to do and that is deeply informed by, I believe, a spiritual belief system.

In a spiritual sense, the core is a place to re-evaluate one's beliefs. Alan describes

how he returns to this "place" and struggles through some of life's bigger questions:

But I do find myself coming back to that place with great regularity and as I

said continuing to try to I sort of test myself from time to time. Do you believe

in God or don't you? Do you think that there's some calling that we all have

that's bigger than what we do day to day or don't you? There's sort of a little

set of questions that I go through. The answers may change a little bit from

time to time but it is still that sort of basic set of questions of who am I in all

of this.

The concept of the core is not unique to this study. Rose describes her core

and makes a connection to the model of multiple dimensions of identity (Jones &

McEwen, 2000) to help her define and articulate what it is and how the core functions

in her spiritual journey.

…so I think the core, the diagram that Jones…created about multiple

identities, that one sort of core thing, that really is the picture that comes to

my mind when I think about this. It's the "who we think we are," but maybe

it's not visible to others, but then those other parts of our identity sort of float

around.

In either times of struggle, challenge, or competing values, the core became an important function in leadership. Parallel to how the core functioned with one's spirituality, the core in leadership functioned as a place to return to evaluate what is most important. The core functions as a "place" to realign and remind one of their most deeply held values. Consulting the core is an organic and fluid process. Marisa explained:

> … I never check my values at the door so I think that they're with me all the time. Not that I'm necessarily sitting there thinking oh, gosh, okay, I need to be sensitive to diversity when making this decision. But I just think it is always there. It's the piece that's at the core of who I am and so I think that it is kind of just innate that if I'm going through a decision making model or something like that, those things just always come into play even if I don't realize it or intentionally am thinking it through.

The core allows senior student affairs administrators to practice consistency and congruence in decision-making. Michele explained her goals for achieving congruence, "…I try to live a congruent life so that the decisions I make and my behavior are as congruent with that as they can be humanly possible…" Dustin described some core beliefs that he returns to consistently in his leadership:

> The decision making I mean it's ultimately all pointed at creating good learning environments and then it's designed to surface all the good capacities that people have to create those environments and then it's also based on just some core beliefs about honesty and forthrightness about optimism, about

fulfilling human potential. Those are the kinds of things that I very, very

consistently will come back to.

In describing the value of people within his organization Kenny described one of his core values as "the humanity and the dignity of the people with whom I work is the first consideration, 'Am I doing what's right by people or the students, or faculty, or staff?'" Kimberly shared her own view on the value of people, a common theme among all participants and explains how she returns to this value, "I'm going to go back to my core value is people. I value people and relationships and the health of people and particularly when I think about this role, when I think about senior leadership and what I value, recognizing that people matter."

Identifying times of struggle and challenge, whether with staff, students, or institutional constraints, participants were able to quickly identify how their core informed their leadership decisions. Even in a difficult time with students, Avani informs her response to students by returning to her core. Describing the tension between understanding the mistakes of students and simultaneously needing to hold students accountable to the institution's standards, Avani explained:

…values are constantly challenged (laugh)…Sometimes it's a challenge

working with those students sometimes because they can be very ugly (laugh)

in the process. So I have to call on, if you will, it goes back to what I value.

You still have to respect them.

But these challenging times are not reserved for working with students. Dustin recalled a conflict with a staff member and explained how his core informed his response:

In my bad days I get a little impatient with that. I get to feeling like doggone it

this just is not worth our time. "Why are we doing this?" But ultimately then I

come back to my core which says of course I know why this is and it's that

we're striving to do our best and even a person which whom I have conflict I

don't perceive them to be ill-willed or bad or anything like that.

Spiritually-oriented leaders walk the labyrinth as they engage in the leadership

process. Doing so uncovers the pervasive nature of the influence of spirituality on

their leadership journey. As the SSAA walks the labyrinth, s/he is drawn to the center

of the labyrinth where the intersection of spirituality, values and leadership resides.

One's core, found at the intersection of spirituality, values and leadership, gives them

an ability to connect with their most deeply held values.

Leading with a spiritual orientation begins with spiritual development.

Spiritually-oriented leaders walk the labyrinth with a depth of spiritual identity that

pervades their approach to and philosophy of leadership. It is this spiritual orientation

that foregrounds the leadership process. In this next section, I describe the four

elements that contribute to sustaining a spiritual outlook, one of the key categories

and the third critical influence of the emergent theory.

Sustaining a Spiritual Outlook

The process of leading with a spiritual orientation begins with developing and

sustaining a spiritual outlook. Participants enter the labyrinth with a spiritual outlook

developed over the course of their lives and careers. Participants rely on their

spirituality in their lives; that is, their spiritual outlook permeates all aspects of their

life not only their leadership practice. As Gwen shared, "So I think that my

spirituality probably impacts everything that I'm doing all the time." Marisa echoed

Gwen's thoughts:

> I think [spirituality] trickles into all areas of my life whether it's at work or
>
> my hobbies or my family life…to be able to have that calming balanced view
>
> and be in touch with what's important to you and your priorities is kind of the
>
> center of everything and probably the most important thing in my life I would
>
> say.

Participants conveyed that spirituality is pervasive in their lives. Kimberly recounted

how she engages her spirituality daily, "I think in general though I'd say how I live

my everyday life is probably the most important connection I have with spirituality."

The centrality of spirituality within these participants' lives is connected to the

centrality of a spiritual orientation within their leadership.

Four elements emerged that contribute to sustaining a spiritual outlook on life.

The first, *identifying as a spiritual person*, describes the identity that participants hold

as spiritual beings in a spiritual world. Each participant told a story that describes her

or his spiritual identity development. How participants maintain a connection to their

spiritual selves varied, yet they all share a salient identity as a spiritual person. The

next element, *growing through questioning, trials, and maturation,* describes the life

experiences that many participants recounted that shaped who they were as spiritual

people. For some, questioning and trials occurred in their childhood or was related to

their families of origin while for others these experiences took place beginning during

young adulthood. *Connecting spiritual outlook to work* describes how participants'

spiritual outlook is embodied in their work as student affairs educators. The

integration of one's spiritual outlook into their work is an important step in

participants' spirituality becoming influential in their leadership orientation. Lastly,

nurturing spirituality, summarizes how participants continue to nurture their

spirituality as adults and SSAAs. As noted by the various arrows in Figure 4.3, the

four elements inform one another as they are interrelated. The four elements together

facilitate the process of developing and sustaining a spiritual outlook in life. In the

following sections, I will detail how each influence contributes to sustaining a

spiritual outlook.
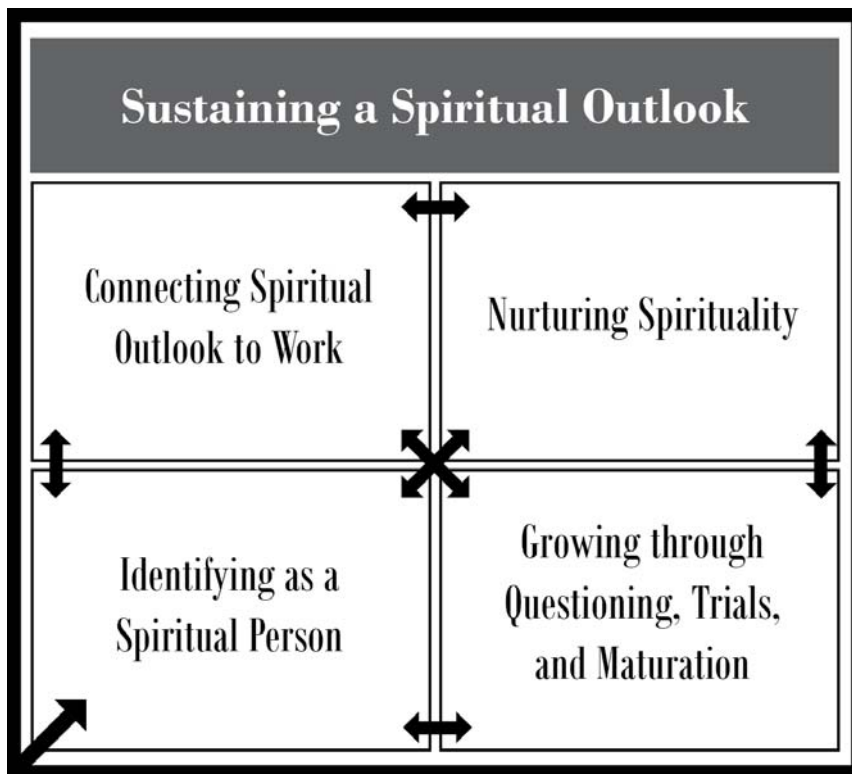
Figure 4.3. The Four Elements of Sustaining a Spiritual Outlook

Identifying as a Spiritual Person

 Though all 14 participants identified as spiritual, how they made meaning of

their spirituality varied. For instance, all participants affirmed that spirituality and

religion are two distinct constructs. For some, spirituality is practiced in the context of religion (i.e., religiosity), while others conceptualize spirituality and spiritual practices as separate from religion. Most participants reported a religious identity, however, of those not all practice religion. Faith and meaning-making also played a role in spiritual practice for many. Spirituality became introduced and important at varying times in the participants' lives, introduced as children through their families of origin for some or as a young adult for others. Regardless of when it was introduced, all participants experienced spirituality as becoming "my own" in adulthood. Though all identified spirituality to be important, a few participants were still searching for how to best articulate their own spirituality.

Where does spiritual identity come from? For many participants spiritual identity began within their childhoods. Dustin recalled that from a young age, his family was religious. This was a shared experience among most participants. For example, Michele shared, "I was raised Catholic…a central part of my upbringing." Kenny remembers, as a child, particular ways in which his spiritual identity was engrained and reinforced within his low socio-economic, inner city community: "Our spirituality was one of the things that we had to hold onto because there weren't a whole lot of other material things to hold onto as to kind of what was real."

Part of identifying as a spiritual person was also discussing the relationship one's spirituality may have to one's religious practices. Participants separated both of these identities and shared how they were interrelated. Participants acknowledged that these two identities can be separate and distinct and for most it was, however for some, they overlapped. Alan recounted that his own spiritual identity was affected by

his experience with religion because "I have a rocky history with organized religions." In speaking of his own spiritual identity, Josh clarified his spiritual identity and thoughts on religiosity:

> …I think that I would sort of separate from a religiousness…I'm not a very religious person. We used to be and I became sort of cynical about the organized function of religion and so forth. But I think I'm a very spiritual person in that I'm thinking about the impact that I can have on other people and how we're sort of all related as brothers and sisters.

For WZ, her spiritual identity is related to a dominant religion and yet she does not consider herself a religious person: "I don't consider myself a religious person, but I would say that I am a Christian, and I don't want to equate Christian and not being religious, but I do fall back on the qualities from Jesus..." One more component entered the conversation, faith. As Xavier explained, his spiritual identity is more closely tied to faith than religion:

> …I see that my faith is much more tied to spirituality than spirituality is tied to religion. So this faith, believing in something bigger than myself, believing that I'm not alone on this planet, believing that things don't just happen by accident, that is more tied to a sense of, again, the connectedness that I feel. So my spirituality is much informed by this.

How one understands their spiritual identity in light of religiosity and faith was seemingly as diverse as each participant themselves. Spiritual identity was questioned, formed, and wrestled with in light of religion and faith. Participants' stories made it clear that religion, faith, and spirituality are interrelated and dynamic.

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Kenny presented one way that the interrelation of faith and spirituality has come to shape his own spiritual identity when he shared, "[spirituality] grew out of my faith tradition, but I think it has also been enhanced by my exposure to other faith traditions…it's not just about the tradition in which my life was formed but it's about the many ways it shows up on the landscape of my life." Kenny's spirituality was influence by his own "faith tradition" as well as the faith traditions he has encountered within his life. He attributed the sum of those faith traditions informing his spirituality.

Spirituality serves to ground and center participants in life, contributing to the formation of their philosophies about their approach to relationships and community throughout their lives. Avani spoke to the centrality of her spirituality and her identity: "[Spirituality] is important to me because it pretty much, now that I am older, it pretty much kind of, it is who I am now. It's very much a part of who I am." Marisa shared "For me it is what grounds me I think. It helps keep me peaceful. It is a way, I think, to have perspective." Gwen found it hard to consider how spirituality was not important to her:

> It's hard for me to say how it's not important to me. It's an overriding piece of
> who I am. I guess part of what makes me. It's important to me in that my
> beliefs and my spirituality affect how I interact with everybody all of the time.
> It's important to just how I live my life and what I believe is important and
> how I treat other people and probably how I want them to treat me too.

In the case of Alan, who remains unsettled as to his specific spiritual identity, he shared the importance of his spirituality:

…it's an important part of my life that I find sort of fascinating because I remain unsettled about it. Sometimes I'm kind of looking for those signals that I'm maybe more settled about certain aspects of it and yet it's sort of this elusive piece out there that is clearly sort of an important part of kind of who I am.

Growing through Questioning, Trials, and Maturation

Valuing one's spirituality as a core identity is one element in developing a spiritual outlook on life. Lived experiences of wrestling with big questions, engaging in trials, and being keenly aware of spiritual maturation were key markers for participants' spiritual development, which led to a stronger spiritual outlook on life. In most cases, spiritual development was marked by stories of growth, which often came through challenging situations. There was a trajectory noted by participants, like Avani who shared, "…it sort of has been a progression for me" when describing spiritual development.

Participants reflected that with age and life experience, their spiritual identity grew in importance. Ellen shared about her engagement in religious and spiritual activities over time, "it was a must-do, some type of expectation from my time of growing up, and then to something where I made a conscious choice." Marisa, Scarlet, and Xavier specifically stated that with age, their spirituality becomes more important. For Marisa, with age comes a stronger spiritual identity and for Scarlet, spirituality has "become a stronger part of my foundation and my being…" Xavier shared a bit about how his faith and spirituality deepened,

The older I get the more I understand why this is so important to me…around 30, 31, 32 there was just this sense that I needed to meditate more. I needed to reflect more. I needed to pray more. But I wouldn't put it under any context of being Baptist, being Catholic so there wasn't this dogma that followed it but it was just an awareness of you are not on this earth by yourself…So the older I get the more deep it becomes.

Along the path of spiritual development described by the participants, questioning played a significant role in further cementing spiritual definition and direction. Dustin described:

I've gone through periods of questioning and the questioning moments, I mean those are really kind of interesting in terms of like you're trying to in some ways hang on to your belief system because it gives you some anchors but on the other hand if you deny the question then it ultimately undermines your faith so you have to be comfortable with asking the question.

For Alan, questioning began as a child when he observed his parents undergoing a difficult situation at church. This situation challenged Alan because he began reconciling the congruence of the values taught in Sunday School juxtaposed to the dissonant decision his church had made. He recounted:

There was a discussion about whether or not they were going to allow this family to join [the church] based on their color. I remember not only hearing my dad's frustration but I'm sitting there saying "geez the stuff that I've been exposed to in Sunday School, why would we ever not allow somebody to be a member of our church based on this, based on color?"…that was a really

powerful moment and experience for me where I said "whoa is this really

something I want to be a part of?"

Questioning may lead to a change in one's spiritual direction or reinforce a

current direction. For Michele, it was the latter, "when I became an adult, [being

Catholic] remained that way even through the questioning college years when you

just wonder what you're supposed to do and who you're supposed to be and ended up

with at that same result." The result of questioning is both a deepened faith and a

broadened spiritual journey. Michele described how questioning reinforced her

spiritual and religious convictions yet questioning led her to an intentional decision to

being Catholic.

> To realize that if I was going to claim to be Catholic, it needed to be an
>
> affirmative act, not just an assumption. So at that point when my faith was
>
> questioned, and I said I better find out what I believe and what I'm standing
>
> for. So that led to the beginning of the question of "Why am I Catholic, what
>
> does it mean, what is it?", and a very, very slow developmental process during
>
> which I slowly deepened my faith.

Through Gwen's recounting of her own questioning, she demonstrated the types of

questions that led her to growing in her spiritual identity beyond the boundaries of

organized religion:

> …[questioning] made me think about my faith and how I view it but also that
>
> it's brought me to the point of knowing that I think it's part of what people do,
>
> is that they look for what's bigger than me. What's higher than me? How did

I get here? Where am I going? All of that and so in that journey I think it's a broadening journey for me. It's becoming less religious and more spiritual.

It is not just questioning that spurred on spiritual development in the senior student affairs administrators participating in this study. Some of the participants described enduring trials that either distanced themselves or drew them nearer to their spiritual selves. More broadly, these trials were transforming moments in the way the participants came to understand their spiritual selves. Participants described profound moments where they were forced to face some of life's deepest questions. Car wrecks, murder, tragic accidents, and mental health crises were just some of the examples. Avani shared two situations in her past that she continues to reflect on today. The first, a car wreck during her formative years in college convinced her to return to attending church. She reflected, "I think at that time [after surviving a life-threatening car accident], I thought 'okay I'm no longer agnostic.' There is a God." This was a moment of drawing near to her spiritual self. Another moment Avani described was when her mother was murdered during a robbery gone awry. She described the aftermath and how it drew her nearer to God, in a spiritual sense, not a religious sense:

> But anyway that was sort of a hallmark moment when I knew and it drew me closer to God when my mother was murdered. That drew me much, much closer. Then it was sort of just a natural progression of eventually of really having a relationship, which I think "yes it's good to be a member of the body of Christ and to go to church and whatever because we're called to do that. But that relationship with God is far more important."

Once again, through Avani's experience, she described the deepening of her spiritual identity as distinct from her religious commitment. Attending to church and engaging in religious activity was important, but nurturing her relationship with God and deepening her spirituality was more important.

Some participants described transforming moments that they live with on a daily basis. The reality of living daily with an ever-present tragedy causes one to be in an almost perpetual state of questioning as one has to face an on-going trial. Alan shared about a tragic accident where his daughter nearly drowned and has been left unable to communicate with him and his wife. Alan described how he wrestles with the reality of the spiritual dimension of this tragedy on a daily basis:

> But that clearly was something that happened in my early 50's has had a profound impact on me having to kind of go back more focused on what the hell do I really believe. "Am I at a different place?" I don't know how to answer that. I think that I've come to believe or hope that there is a God. Much beyond that I couldn't really tell you…But her accident I live with day in and day out and I refer to it as I've had to learn how to live with a broken heart. So the spiritual dimension of her existence is profound from the standpoint of I think about it every day.

As participants matured in their spiritual development, they articulated thankfulness for trials and tribulations in their life. Participants were able to describe how the trials they underwent served a purpose to draw them nearer to their spiritual selves and clarify their values. Dustin illustrated this point when he recounted his struggles with an on-going anxiety disorder:

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And in a weird sort of way I have to kind of count my blessings that I had

those [anxiety] episodes because when you're a young man and ambitious and

all of that kind of thing, I mean I think I needed a little bit of kind of a reality

test and some humbling and certainly the anxiety disorder gave me just that.

So maybe this is one of those odd blessings…

Connecting Spiritual Outlook to Work

Developing and sustaining a spiritual outlook on life results in a spiritual

orientation that is pervasive throughout life. The workplace is no exception. In order

for the participants to lead with a spiritual orientation, they first became comfortable

with bringing their spiritual orientation to their job sites. The consciousness of this

process is on a spectrum for participants. For some it was intentional while for others

it was more intuitive. Nonetheless, the participants share the experience of bringing

their values and their spiritual perspectives with them to their various campuses.

For participants particularly in a dean of students or direct helping roles,

spirituality aided in defining their approach and in engaging the human element of

their work, since they often work with students and families during difficult

situations. Until receiving a card from her church's interim pastor at the start of an

academic year, Scarlet did not connect her faith and work as concretely as she does

today. She shared,

My work… is a ministry…I do not proselytize or have testimony about my

faith in my work but it is a demonstration of my faith and ministry each and

every day when I come to work. I told you I spend 85% of my time dealing

with students and parents in crisis. I have an opportunity to help them and

support them and care about them and sometimes love them in times of great

need and to try to make things a little bit better for them…

Scarlet's perspective is echoed by Gwen who expressed

…I get to see the agony and the ecstasy, I see that there is a lot more

opportunity for my spirituality to be put to use in work than maybe some

people might. There are more times when things lend themselves to both

discussion and thought about spirituality.

Alan, who is in a similar role as Michele and Gwen shared how his spiritual outlook

at work is expressed in keeping him centered amidst an environment where crisis and

panic can be a daily challenge. Alan's spiritual outlook at work gives him the ability

to be effective amidst difficulty:

In it all what people say to me and…I think people feel like I'm going to jump

out the window when they tell me something new…It doesn't mean that I

don't feel stress, although I'll be honest, I kind of feel like I don't feel a lot of

stress. Sometimes I wonder "why am I not stressed?...I'm just not built that

way is part of it. Part of it is I think there is some spiritual piece that keeps me

centered.

For some, one's spiritual outlook influences how one approaches their job and

engages the human element of their work. For others, spiritual outlook is about

seeking guidance in the daily tasks of one's work. Gwen believes "that there is a

higher power that is helping me all the time…" She was not alone in articulating that

integrating spirituality into the workplace centered around relying on a higher power

for guidance. Avani shared a saying she recites to herself which helps to remind her

where her guidance comes from: "Moment by moment I'm kept in His love; moment by moment I have life from above. Looking to Jesus His glory does shine. Moment by moment oh Lord I am thine." For Kimberly, the guidance she seeks is more specific. One of her deeply held values is leading and living in an ethical manner. Remarking about how she integrates spirituality in her work, Kimberly shared, "fortunately time has helped me figure out that role but when it comes to spirituality as it relates to me just the sense of what is ethical, what is right, what is true to myself." Kimberly expressed that she relies on her spirituality to guide her in discerning what is right and ethical.

Nurturing Spirituality

A spiritual identity is established, life experience facilitates spiritual maturation, and one's spiritual outlook pervades work life. But how does one maintain the spiritual outlook? The final element that contributes to participants sustaining a spiritual outlook requires an investment of time. Staying connected to one's spirituality involves nurturing their spirituality. Participants describe how their trials and process of maturation is one facet of nurturing their spirituality, but participants were also able to detail specific practices or approaches they maintain in order to nurture their spirituality. In doing so, participants are also strengthening their spiritual outlook and spiritual orientation of their leadership. Nurturing spirituality implies that one is staying fresh and immersed in developing one's identity as a spiritual being.

Participants described nurturing their spirituality in a myriad of ways. Engaging people, relationships, and community were ways that participants nurtured

spirituality. Participants expressed how central interactions with others are a reflection of their spirituality; hence a natural way of nurturing that spirituality is in developing deeper relationships with others. Related to people and yet distinct was nurturing spirituality through seeking out spiritual conversations with people of other faiths and worldviews. Participants described these opportunities to nurture their spirituality as their horizons were broadened and their beliefs were challenged. Commonly held spiritual disciplines such as prayer, meditation, and church attendance were also opportunities for nurturing spirituality. Finally, creating space and time for reflection – through music, connecting with nature, or withdrawing from one's daily routine – was another way participants sought to nurture their spirituality.

Investing time in people, relationships, and community emerged as an important way to nurture spirituality. These relationships and community were found both on- and off-campus, in the participants' professional and private lives. Josh cited that connecting with students on a personal level as a senior student affairs administrator was a source of renewal and a reminder of his greater purpose:

…by contact with people and with students because I think student affairs people get caught up in all of these budgets and political stuff and everything. So the grounding is back to the student that is a base of doing all this stuff…even as a senior professional…I think that is really important to do that because I have seen people that have gotten away from that. They sort of say, "well, that is what entry level people do." And they lose track of what they are doing and why they are doing it.

Gwen discussed how having difficult conversations with others who share one's faith can be a source of staying connected and nurturing one's spirituality sharing, "…people…who are similar in faith but who are also saying how could this bad thing happen to this person…and how does that fit in with what you think about this loving God." Marisa shared that "seeking mentors and being around people that also identify as being spiritual or I feel like have those same type of or that connection" helps her to nurture her spirituality in the context of relationship with others. Kimberly similarly seeks out a community where her faith is shared and in many ways has developed over time, her family. She stated, "I definitely think it happens through my family because that's something we all share so regularly a part. In my marriage it's certainly been something that's been important…" Xavier's partner also plays a role in nurturing his spirituality as he acknowledged that "now my spirit also is being filled by love in my life with my partner." WZ also reflected on the role of her partner and described how she seeks her partner's perspective on challenging situations and how their spirituality might speak to its resolution. This serves to help her wrestle through spiritual issues that may present themselves in her life.

In reflecting on the role of her church community in supporting her son, Scarlet shared "there's a community of faithful, if you will, within our Presbyterian Church that takes an interest in him and his wellbeing and his faith journey. That's where most of our friends come from is our church." Once again people and community are a source of staying connected to one's spirituality and a common place where Scarlet turns in difficult times. Rose finds her spirituality nurtured in

connection to a friend. Since retiring, Rose has been able to spend more time with her

friend who is dying of a terminal disease. She reflected on her weekly visits:

So I spend Fridays with her, and…am I getting a dose of what is important?

And so in a funny sort of way, that does nurture my sense of spirituality,

because it deepens my sense of what meaning there is in life, which frankly,

there isn't much sometimes.

Spending time with friends, who sometimes share their faith backgrounds, or

in community that is grown around one's faith emerged as a place of nurturing one's

spirituality. Similarly, spending time with people of other faiths or learning about

other faith traditions was a source of nurturance. Dustin shared that one of the ways

his spirituality is nurtured is "through relationships that I have and those are

sometimes the same religious nurturing and sometimes it's different religious

nurturing." Gwen, who stated that relationships with those who share her faith are

important, also values her relationships with those of other faiths and finds that

investing in relationships with international students can nurture her spirituality:

…the students from Turkey and other places that have different faiths than I

do and just when there's an opportunity to say tell me more about your

religion and how that works and all for those that are open to doing that. I like

that. I like to hear where they are too. Where'd this come from?

Michele echoed this sentiment when she shared that nurturing her spirituality happens

by "becoming more knowledgeable about it, and other faith traditions. I think that is

useful to have some interest in comparing your beliefs with other people's beliefs."

Nurturing spirituality also took place through engagement in spiritual disciplines such as prayer, yoga, meditation, reading a holy book, and church attendance. Xavier shared the role of his church attendance on a weekly basis, "I'm missing church today and I'm not happy about it. It feeds me for the week in a very strong powerful way…" WZ also attends church and finds that reading the Bible provides opportunities for nurturing,

> …simply by going back to…the Bible, reading…and just say 'okay when you're faced with this situation what would you do?' Going back to the Bible with the values that it teaches us how to be a good human being and then at the same time going and surrounding yourself with those that probably help to nurture…those principles.

Michele attends mass each morning before going to work. Gwen reads a devotional each morning. There emerged an importance on how one's morning routine can nurture one's spirituality but also how that can help to sustain a spiritual outlook throughout the day. Avani shared how important her time with God in the morning is, "even before I say hi to my husband or whatever I talk to God…and I really turn the day over to God and I recognize…I'm not doing anything in my strength at all. So I surrender everything to God."

Many of the spiritual disciplines are in essence putting aside time for quiet and reflection. Kenny maintains a morning routine that sets aside time for reflection and also creates space for calling upon various spiritual disciplines in nurturing his spirituality. His morning routine includes a workout and walking a labyrinth as he prepares for his day. Carving out time for reflection is a priority that emerged in

nurturing spirituality. Reflection is fostered through music, connecting with nature, or taking time out of one's work day. As a musician, Dustin described that music is one way he nurtures spirituality. Rose who does not attend church or pray anymore is moved by being in nature and "feeling small around something bigger" but also finds herself nurturing her spirituality through music.

> I have an office in the chapel and there's a huge organ and these choral groups and there's been times, it's so dopey, I sit in this office and I am tearing up. I don't know what that's about. But this music can just really tap into something that's deep inside me that I can't describe.

Walking and running as means to reflect and taking time out were ways that both Ellen and Marisa rely on their ability to take time out of their day when needing to nurture their spirituality. Ellen recognizes that she needs time to reconnect with her spiritual self and looks for signals of when taking time out of her day to nurture her spirituality becomes necessary. She described, "if I really become hyperactive, I realize that I probably need to step back, take a deep breath, take some time for some solitude, and even during my workday, I might take a walk." Marisa seeks times of calm during her day as well "even if it's like five minutes in between a meeting, if I can have a time to shut it down and just relax and be calm I intentionally do that."

The four elements of sustaining a spiritual outlook, identifying as a spiritual person; growing through questioning, trials, and maturation; connecting spiritual outlook to work; and nurturing spirituality, form the foundation of the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. Sustaining a spiritual outlook is an iterative process that is on-going throughout one's life and leadership. The four elements

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interact with and inform each other. There is considerable evidence in the words of the participants that confirm that their spiritual identity continues to be probed and stretched. Nurturing one's spirituality leads to a connection with and a subsequent, re-definition, affirmation of, or reconnection with one's spiritual identity.

Catalyzing Spirituality to Maximize Leadership Capacity

What characterizes spiritually-oriented leadership? Two broad characteristics of spiritually-oriented leadership practices were identified in data analysis. First, participants are able catalyze their spirituality to maximize leadership capacity. Second, participants prioritize people in their leadership practice. I will discuss each of the characteristics of leading with a spiritual orientation that emerged during data analysis.

Catalyzing spirituality in the leadership process describes how participants are able to leverage their spiritual orientation to deepen their leadership capacity. Participants articulated how they maximize their spirituality in their leadership practices daily. Participants likened deepened faith and spirituality to deepened capacity to lead complex organizations and face difficult decisions. A deepened leadership capacity enabled participants to work with a diverse array of people and situations, lead through crisis, and enabled participants to see decision-making through a spiritual lens and thus, respond in congruency with their values. How did participants describe the characteristic of catalyzing their spirituality to maximize their leadership capacity?

Kenny shared about a workshop he facilitates that describes three dimensions of one's being. For Kenny, these three dimensions represent one way he catalyzes his

spirituality to maximize leadership capacity in reflecting on the type of leader that he is to his staff.

> The first one is the weight of our being, which is how heavy or how light does it feel to be you as a leader, how much psychic weight do you carry and for whom do you represent heavy lifting, or how much lightness or heaviness do you bring to your relationships in the organization…The second is the breadth of your being, so who are you capable of wrapping your arms around and holding in a relationship with you…The third one is the depth of your being, so how far are you able to invite others into your own life and experience and how deeply are you able to enter a life and the experiences of others, and who gets access to your story, and whose story are you capable of hearing.

Kenny described how spirituality can catalyze the deepening of one's leadership capacity and in turn can broaden one's influence on their organization.

Having an expanded leadership capacity also affected one's ability to lead through crisis. Scarlet discussed her ability to weather crisis through her own spirituality's influence and as a driving force in motivating her to work with parents and students in those situations:

> That faith can help me get through those times but it also is the foundation for the compassion and the strength and the knowledge and experience to manage those times and to manage those crises. I think that, again, that do unto others and that compassion is a driving force for me to do outreach to students and their parents in need.

Participants described the importance and frequency of needing to make decisions as a SSAA. Applying their spiritual orientation, participants articulated that they often see decisions that impact their leadership through a spiritual lens. Being able to identify spiritual dimensions of their decisions draws them back to their core to seek congruency among their spirituality, values, and leadership. Dustin shared "there is lots of things about the way that I make decisions in my leadership that are informed by my spirituality." Spirituality and faith is oft-credited for being a guide as WZ reflected, "I think my faith allows me to make decisions or act in a way that I feel good about that at the end of the day I am contributing to the greater good." Spirituality enables these spiritually-oriented leaders to trust their instincts and decisions as a result. Marisa shared the way this happens for her and speaks to the sometimes intangible facets of leadership, "As a leader I think another way that I trust my spirituality is I feel like intuition is important in my leadership style. I don't necessarily fight intuition…"

Ellen shared how her reliance on her spirituality has evolved into her spirituality being one of the lenses that frames all of her decision-making:

But I think it's probably something more routine than…than it used to be. I think it's something that when I have to make a difficult decision, that spiritual part kicks in. And so I think for me, it isn't just about a crisis. It is about decision making. It is about when those values or those wants that I have, it helps me with my priorities I think.

However, beyond decision-making and trusting one's decision, participants spoke to the concept of seeing and experiencing leadership decisions with spiritual

dimensions. Therefore, decisions meant more than just the decision itself, but one's

spiritualty prompted these leaders to think about it differently, understanding spiritual

dimensions of one's decision.

The decisions that were most frequently cited as being those that the

participants struggled with were decisions involving people – hiring, firing, and

downsizing of employees; student conduct issues that involved suspension and

expulsion; and, difficult situations that involved highly-charged issues on campus

(e.g., race relations) where the SSAA functions as an arbiter. Throughout these

decision-making processes, participants shared how they maximized their spirituality

to understand issues as being spiritually informed. Alan described his need to be a

good listener when he is speaking to someone about a difficult issue. He articulated

how his spirituality plays a role in motivating him in being a good steward of his role

by simply listening:

> …I try to really hear not only what people are saying but kind of what's
>
> behind it and where the motivation is and what the intent is and all of that. I
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> guess I try to think sometimes (laugh) probably the spiritual side of this there
>
> but for the grace of God go I, how would I want to be treated…

The sentiment of connecting with one's "spiritual side" and thinking through the

dignity of a human life was a common one expressed by the participants who found

themselves in a situation where they need to evaluate a person's behavior or

performance versus their worth as a person.

Kenny reflected on situations where he was in a position to respond to the

behavior of members of his campus community and how his reaction and decisions

were guided by his spiritual values: "…even when people do things that might be seen as inhumane, or disrespectful of the dignity of others, I still have a responsibility as a leader to respond in a caring and thoughtful way." Gwen reflected on a situation that took place on her campus where students were "furious" and her value for inclusivity in decision-making (i.e., to hear all voices and facilitate conversations prior to making decisions) prompted her to bring people together into one room to resolve an issue: "…my belief about the good in people and trying to facilitate them being able to come together and having those conversations…bringing people into a conversation is better than having them on the outside of it…"

Participants described how they catalyzed spirituality to understand how the spiritual dimension of their decisions was colored by their spiritually-informed view of people. Describing the process of terminating employees, Alan shared, "I certainly have struggled with those from a leadership standpoint but I think that the struggle is a spiritual one of I want to see the good in people." Gwen connected that her care for people and students is connected to her spiritual orientation, "I'm not explaining very well how this has to do with anything spiritual but it kind of does because it's about caring about people and caring about students." And, Michele added:

> I just try to remember that they're people and we all make mistakes and to balance the compassion for the victim with the compassion of the alleged perpetrator and just try to be really fair and mindful of that… I just think my faith and concern for people shaped that part for me.

As Michele alluded to, in describing decisions with people, participants reflected on their role in the lives of their students and employees. The interactions SSAAs had

with students and employees, even if terminating them from work or removing them from the campus environment, was important because there was hope for that individual to being successful in a new environment. Alan reflected that,

> My communication to that person is very important to me in that moment and I think from a spiritual sense. I want to be absolutely honest with them in what this is about and my perception of what it's not about. It isn't about them necessarily being a bad person.

Viewing a student's infraction or an employee's poor performance from a spiritual dimension relieves the SSAA from making a judgment about the student's or employee's personhood. Instead, the SSAA is making a decision and judgment that the behavior or performance is incongruent with the community in which they belong to or work in, however, they are able to focus on building up the person or protecting the campus because they do not get mired in judging the person themselves. Even in the midst of that, honest communication is valued. WZ provided some insight about how she has experienced this:

> You make that hard decision and then at the end of the day, I think it is making that right decision. I think it is the gut that tells you this is the right thing to do, no matter how difficult it is, you've got to make that decision. I try to be, in every decision that I make, and whatever area, or whoever I am with, I try to be honest, open and honest, with my decision-making. I try not to blame anybody. I try not to push it, to pass the buck.

> For the participants, their spiritually-oriented leadership allows them to fully engage the complexity of situations when they weigh (potentially) competing values.

Michele experienced this type of conflict when she worked to support students who were advancing a policy not in line with her religious doctrine but was compelling based on her spiritually-informed value of human dignity.

> I think that the value of human dignity is it. Even when probably there'd be many in the Catholic Church who would say expanding the non-discrimination statement for gender identity and gender expression was wrong in the eyes of the Catholic Church, I think that I acted out of valuing human beings in all their forms more. It certainly wasn't my religious doctrine that led that, but my spiritual values.

> Some participants described how they found themselves in a situation of being a victim of being mistreated, generally by a supervisor and how their spirituality influenced their response to that individual. Avani shared:

> It was bizarre to say the least. I was like okay. But throughout that whole process I had to learn to forgive because this was my direct supervisor who was doing the jerking around. I had to pray through it and I had to practice forgiveness…

Ellen experienced an abusive supervisor and relied on her viewing the spiritual dimensions of that situation to remind herself about her own dignity and worth:

> …that spiritual part of me that was the part that kept saying, "You don't deserve this. You're not like that. You are better than that." And so I was quite reliant on that, and came through it fine, and probably a lot better for it. But I could have found better ways to have been tested frankly, or easier ones.

Catalyzing spirituality to maximize leadership capacity is one of the characteristics of leading with a spiritual orientation. Participants described situations where their spirituality deepened their leadership capacity, particularly when they faced difficult situations. The SSAAs in this study also shared a fervent desire to serve people and elevated view of the dignity of the students, faculty, employees, and other constituents of their work. Their deepened leadership capacity, participants described, enabled them to engage the complexity of working with and prioritizing people through their leadership practices.

Prioritizing People in Leadership Practice

The interrelationships among spirituality, values, and leadership are connected to the leadership practices that participants articulated. In this next section, I present the second characteristic of leading with a spiritual orientation, prioritizing people in leadership practice. Prioritizing people in leadership practice describes the people-centric emphasis that spiritually-oriented leaders embody through their leadership practice. Some of the leadership practices that participants articulated included leading with integrity and honesty; being inclusive; exercising a social justice approach; utilizing a team orientation in leadership; employing a values-based model of leadership; leading with a service orientation; fostering healthy organizations; and, operating with a process orientation. Person-focused leadership emerged as the thread that wove together the leadership practices identified by spiritually-oriented leaders. Thus, participants used their leadership practices to uplift people, promote dignity of humankind, and to create space to empower people to thrive in their organizations.

Data analysis yielded five associated themes that describe the ways participants demonstrate prioritizing people through their leadership practice. The five themes are: inspiring and motivating others; seeking to include many voices in the decision-making process; sharing leadership; promoting relationship-building and encouraging team orientation; and investing in others. Understanding the value that participants place on prioritizing people in their leadership practice contextualizes the five themes presented and reveals the connection prioritizing people in leadership practice has to the core of the spiritually-oriented leader. Why did prioritizing people through leadership practices emerge so strongly? Why did the participants in this study articulate leadership practices that indicate people are central to their work? Kimberly provided some insight into the answers for these questions when she identified people as a core value:

> …my core value is people. I value people and relationships and the health of people and particularly when I think about this role, when I think about senior leadership and what I value, recognizing that people matter…

The enduring message from participants is echoed in Michele's words when she explained "…I really value people and that I think whenever possible people should be kept more important than things or policies or procedures." Prioritizing people in leadership practice means holding people and humanity above all other competing interests. Kenny illuminated this point, "…people are sacred; structure is not. We've actually put that in writing that people are sacred and structure is not and that whatever decisions we make they need to represent growth." The sacredness in people may, in part, be due to the way participants view all people as spiritual beings.

Ellen shared, "...I think we all have a spiritual part to us, and some of us nurture it more than others probably. But I suppose there could be somebody out there who doesn't." Gwen added, "So I think we're people and so we are all on the journey whether we're conscious of it right now or not."

The intersection of spirituality and leadership is exemplified through the prioritization of people. The core value of "people" as articulated by Kimberly is reinforced by the spirituality of the participants. Though the particular spiritual root varies among participants, their spirituality influences how people are prioritized in their leadership. For instance, Dustin discussed how his own religious and spiritual values underscore the importance of serving others:

> Well, I think that as a Protestant...the New Testament scriptures are very, very powerful in terms of the things that Jesus taught. I mean they're unbelievable in terms of the commitment to the treatment of others in a humane sort of way and the desire to feed the hungry, to heal the sick...They are implicitly a part of what I do.

The value of being people-centric in one's leadership practice is infused and reinforced by the spirituality of the participants. People emerged as a core value and priority for all participants. What follows is a description of the five themes that emerged that demonstrate how the SSAAs in this study prioritize people in their leadership practices.

Inspiring and Motivating

Inspiring and motivating staff and students was one way that participants described prioritizing people in leadership practice. Participants shared that

prioritizing people is inherently about believing that others can and should be part of the leadership process. The participants spoke about how inspiring and motivating those around them was a way to engage them in their work and to connect with the mission of serving students. Marisa shared how she makes sense of her role in this way, "when I'm thinking about what my role is as a leader I think…my role is to inspire people and align people with that inspiration." Xavier echoed Marisa's thinking and indicated the importance of "heart" in his work:

> …I really feel that my role as a leader is to do two things, inspire and motivate…It is to inspire and motivate people to do their best and to serve students in their best capacity through that lens… They know they're going to get it done but there's no heart in it.

Kenny focused on the heart as well. Within the context of discussing the importance of listening to others and the role this plays within his leadership, Kenny explained his responsibility to arouse the hearts of others:

> …one of the things that I hope characterizes the way that I work is that every person who leaves a conversation with me will leave that conversation feeling like they're the most special person in the world and that who they are matters and that whatever is in their heart has been validated and has been supported and has been encouraged. I think it's a thing that spirituality does but I think part of my responsibility as a leader is to arouse other people's hearts and to give them something bigger than they knew they had to live for, something bigger beyond themselves that's worthy of their energy and worthy of their investment.

By inspiring and motivating, spiritually-oriented leaders hope to connect constituents with their vision and mission. Taking the time to inspire and motivate others demonstrates that spiritually-oriented leaders see their vision and mission being carried out through the people in their organization and thus gives insight into the value these SSAAs place on the people within their organizations.

Seeking and Including Voices

Investing time in listening to staff and students was a practice that participants described engaging in regularly. Seeking out and including voices to inform decision-making within the organization is another way spiritually-oriented leaders demonstrate prioritizing people in their leadership practice. As SSAAs who value including many voices in their work, listening is used to empower those around them to have a voice. Rose described how she was asked to implement a mentoring program for African American and Hispanic/Latino students and how the success of that program was ultimately about gathering a group of people so she could listen to their voices. She discussed her approach to seeking out voices.

> …my practice before making a decision was to explore with others both those who agreed or had a different point of view…So I consciously sought out opinions of people, not just people that I liked or I thought they thought like I did or whatever but I intentionally tried to seek out people that might have an entirely different opinion.

The act of seeking out voices becomes a tool that these leaders rely on to connect with students in particular. Charged with broadly overseeing the student experience, senior student affairs administrators need to first understand the student experience(s)

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at their particular campus. Josh sought out voices of students and parents and listening led to the establishment of scholarships to support students.

> Every year that I was there I met with students, I heard their stories, I met with their parents, I learned about the pain and struggle that students were going through to be able to be successful at [State]. By being directly linked with students and their families it made me think of the urgency of trying to develop more scholarships for students…

The act of listening for Josh was more than just including voices or understanding the student experience, it was connected to the very purpose of his work as he reflected, "the soul of what you're doing is really coming from working directly with students and knowing about their lives, their struggles and what they're doing. It reenergizes me…"

> Kenny is affirmed in his leadership by making space for all voices within the organization he oversees. When he became the SSAA at his current institution there was a need for fresh voices to speak to the many challenges student affairs was facing on the campus. In concert with his direct reports, he organized a number of conversations where all voices from student affairs units were welcome to come and contribute. He conveyed how this stemmed from his approach to leadership and his recognition that certain voices are often neglected or even silenced.

> ... the smartest person I knew in my life was my grandmother who had a third grade education. When I think about student affairs and higher education and how we organize the kind of role she would have on our campus would likely be as a housekeeper or maybe working in food service…Those voices very

seldom find their way into our organization's leadership or into our values. So

for me it was designing an organization where the brilliance of my

grandmother would be able to surface…So whether you were a dishwasher in

our food service or you're a physician in our student health you were going to

have the opportunity to be in the same conversation about where we were

headed as an organization…

Listening and intentionally seeking to include multiple voices in decision-

making were important elements of the leadership process to ensure that people

around them knew they were valued. Additionally, the inclusion of voices reinforces

the core belief that all people within the organization should be involved in the

leadership process.

Sharing Leadership

Seeking out and including voices naturally connects to sharing leadership.

SSAAs in this study described their desire to broadly share leadership throughout

their organizations, knowing that this approach would reinforce their value for people

and yield a better product in their collective work. The participants described how

they incorporate the voices and positions of many to inform the creation or

implementation of a policy, a project, or decision in response to the student body

about a particular issue. Michele expressed how this is her go-to beginning point with

projects on campus, "…so we started a project…that's a lot like the other projects I

start where we get a lot of people together and talk about what that could look like on

our campus." Avani described an eight-year project on her campus of creating a

comprehensive bias protocol. Particularly because of the many communities on her

campus that such a policy would impact, she led this project in a way that

incorporated many people on campus. She reflected on that process and why it was

worth it:

> …the more diverse and inclusive we are in talking about problems and issues
>
> and decisions that have to be made, whether that's policies or procedures or
>
> programs or marketing materials or whatever it may be, the more diverse the
>
> people are at the table, I think the better the decision is. Sometimes it takes
>
> longer to make a decision that way because you simply have to consider more
>
> views of life (laugh) and the lenses and experiences that people bring to bear
>
> on it...

Participants shared the importance of designing conversations carefully and meeting

often to reinforce the importance of sharing leadership. Participants expressed that

they wanted their staff to know that as a SSAA they were committed to the journey

alongside them. Dustin summarized,

> I hope that that is a very, very clear message that people get from me and that
>
> I don't stand above other people and I don't assume that I'm in anyway
>
> superior but that I perceive that this is a journey together.

Sharing leadership occurs within the context of building relationships and possessing

a team orientation, another theme that exemplifies how participants prioritize people

in their leadership practice.

Building Relationships and Relying on Teams

Building trust, being transparent and building relationships was another way

these SSAAs communicated a reliance on their teams. One way to build trust among

staff is to be transparent with decisions. Marisa, who reported having a more "flat" organization where a group decision making model is promoted, expressed, "I think transparency is really important. I think that's kind of the key when you're getting people to work together. I like to involve all of my staff at the grassroots level…" Gwen shared about her value of relationships with the various constituents with whom she works and the implications of communicating with them accurately and in a timely fashion.

> …I do think relationships are important but I think that includes relationships with students and relationships with all employees, and parents, and whomever that we are working with, that I need to treat people with the respect that I hope that they all have for others.

Throughout data collection, Kimberly described working within a somewhat chaotic organization that was not always congruent with her values. Nonetheless, she credits her ability to navigate effectively and be successful in that environment to her relationship orientation.

> I can speak fairly confidently that the number one thing that has helped me to be successful in my leadership role here especially, but absolutely at every place that I have been, has been relationship orientation… and so how to develop relationships, prioritize relationships, put priority on that relationship, a sense of authenticity around relationships and really believing that we are better together than we are by ourselves, then operating from that framework, is very, very important…

Shared relationship distributes leadership among many in a way that discourages self-reliance and rather promotes reliance on those throughout the organization or on one's team. A team orientation results in these leaders sharing accomplishments with others, implementing a strengths orientation, and promoting a model of organic leadership. Josh, who retired after holding a chief student affairs officer function at three different institutions reflected on his career and his accomplishments and credits his team for many of his accomplishments, "A lot of people have helped me. All of these accomplishments that are on my résumé other people helped me do all of those things. Hardly anything I just did myself."

Gwen, who described herself as a leader who enjoys leading the team but equally enjoys being part of the team, articulated that her team orientation dovetails with a strengths orientation in maximizing the talents of her team members.

> … I see the strength in people when I meet them, when I talk with them, when I listen to them. What I hear and see and discover is usually what their talents, and strengths, and abilities are, what comes kind of naturally to them, what could they do really well, how could they flourish in this role, and what could they bring to it.

A reliance on others in a team setting minimizes the power that positional leadership may hold within an organization. Kenny relayed a model of shared leadership that promotes organic leadership, where the "energy" of the organization is followed regardless of where that originates, "Our goal is to try to catalyze as much energy within the organization as possible…to invest in the energy that people bring forth…we don't spend as much time honoring positional leadership as we do the

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organic leadership." In this way, participants expressed that their reliance on their

staff as a team was reinforced by encouraging all levels of staff to add to the vision

and mission of their units.

The SSAAs in this study prioritized staff, students, and constituents by

inspiring and motivating; seeking out and including voices; sharing leadership;

relying on teams; and ultimately by investing in their staff and students. Participants

invested in both the professional and personal growth of their staff and students.

Investing in Others

Sharing leadership, seeking out voices, building relationships and teams all

take time. Investing in the human resources of one's organization is the final theme

that is presented. On one level participants invest in others to deepen leadership

capacity. Dustin spoke to his approach:

> …my belief about leadership is that leadership is, and not something that's
>
> related to the specific individual but it's a capacity that we all have…Some
>
> want to do it; some don't want to do it. You have to kind of just provide the
>
> space for people to make the choices that they need to make but certainly I
>
> look very, very carefully for people that show interest and show raw capacity
>
> and then I try to do everything that I possibly can to nurture that…

Dustin's belief about developing leadership capacity and "creating space" implies that

investing in others occurs within a culture that promotes nurturing one another.

Participants described the need to influence culture towards the end of promoting

healthy organizations that in turn are good places for people to grow. Dustin

summarized, "create a culture that values everyone, create a culture that nurtures

leadership and develops people and then do as much as I possibly can to keep that front and center…creating a learning environment where students are the benefactors."

Professional development was one way that was identified to invest in people within the organization. Alan shared:

I do try to give, I try to be very conscious of people that I'm responsible for that they have development opportunities, primarily professionally, but recognizing there's a lot of personal development that (laugh) can happen in the course of professional development and always be willing to support that and nurture it…

SSAAs in this study conveyed a sense of responsibility for the staff within their organizations and the students in their care. It is this sense of responsibility that often spurred them on to make time to invest in the growth of their staff. Josh captured this value when he explained his approach in facilitating his staff's success after he has hired them:

…I have a tremendous obligation to work with them and to help them be successful, not just sort of dump them out in the university and say okay, go do it. So I need to support them, I need to nurture them, I need to help them when they are having trouble. I need to help them when they are discouraged so I can help them build their own professional perspective that is successful and they feel good when they are doing it. So it is sort of an educational role where I am trying to be an educator, a mentor, a role model for the staff that I have…Now that kind of leadership takes a lot of time. And it also requires

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that you touch the people around you. You can't do it by sitting in your office

with the door closed and sending e-mails.

Investing in staff meant setting them up to be successful when first hired. Josh

described a hands-on approach to communicate a high level of support for new staff.

Participants also invested in the personal lives of their staff teams. Alan

shared, "I think it's important also for me to try to give some attention to people's

personal lives. People's personal lives are messy and messy many times in good

ways." Michele described how she values having a solid professional personal

relationship:

I also highly value having a strong professional personal relationship with

those with whom I work. I think it's important for us to understand each other

and know what's going on…

Josh reflected how he spent time getting to know staff and supporting them

So I spent a lot of time getting to know people and working with them so they

would feel supported and liked to try to help them through difficult times they

were in. I think one important leadership thing is to really know and work

with and support the people on your staff.

Investing in the personal lives of participants was another way to communicate the

priority that they held within the values of the SSAA. The ways in which participants

described prioritizing people demonstrate the value they have for the people they

have in their organizations. Five themes that underscore the ways in which

participants prioritize people in their leadership practice were discussed. The themes

uncover the ways the participants' spirituality influenced values which in turn influenced leadership practices, a dynamic uncovered in the core category.

The process of leading with a spiritual orientation for SSAAs occurs within the context of their home campus, which in this study are all religiously non-affiliated, and more broadly, the academy. Participants described that walking the labyrinth within the context of the academy creates unique opportunities and constraints for them as spiritually-oriented SSAAs. In this final section, I discuss the findings of leading with a spiritual orientation within the culture of higher education.

"Managing Your Identity": Navigating the Academy's Socio-cultural Environment

Walking the labyrinth and leading with a spiritual orientation occurs within the socio-cultural environment of higher education. Participants described "managing your identity" in reaction to the overt and latent beliefs, values, practices and customs of higher education as they relate to discussions of spirituality, spiritual development, faith, and religion. The SSAAs in this study described negotiating their spiritual identity and at times attempting to reconcile their identity with their role as institutional leaders. The unique nature of the SSAA as an institutional leader who must remain approachable to all students, models inclusive practices for the entire campus community and often acts as an arbiter between various student groups contributes to the complexity of navigating the campus' socio-cultural environment as it relates to the SSAA's spiritual identity.

Leading with a spiritual orientation, participants described, involves managing your spiritual identity in reaction to the values, latent and overt, of the academy

broadly and of one's campus. Participants were asked to consider how they reveal their invisible spiritual identity to those around them, how that impacts their organizations, their interactions with students, and how their spirit-informed leadership interacts with the socio-cultural environment on their campus. Participants also reflected on the lived experience of leading with a spiritual orientation in an environment where there exists a separation of church and state, as a significant factor in the socio-cultural environment of higher education. Though none of the participants defined religion and spirituality as the same, they agreed that "church" (as in the "separation of church and state") often served as a proxy for spirituality.

In this section, I present four associated themes that relate to how participants manage their spiritual identity in reaction to the socio-cultural environment of the academy and their campus. First, I present *finding (my) voice and revealing spiritual identity*, which summarizes how participants become comfortable speaking about and revealing their spiritual identities with colleagues or students. Next, I describe how participants engage in *advocating for spirituality within the co-curriculum.* Participants find themselves championing inclusion of spirituality or spiritual development within the co-curriculum or find themselves as a support sought out by students who also identify as spiritual.

Despite finding voice, revealing one's spiritual identity, and advocating for spirituality on campus, participants described hesitation in revealing their spiritual identities. The third associated theme, *hesitating to reveal spiritual identity*, clarifies salient reasons why including, *considering religion vs. spirituality; fearing assumptions of proselytizing;* and *considering power and privilege.* Finally,

participants spoke about *adjusting for campus climate* each time they moved to a new campus. The impact of the SSAA's home campus climate in relation to their spiritual identity and subsequently, their leadership is discussed in this section.

Participants relayed their experiences of sharing their spiritual identities with their colleagues, supervisors, and with the students they serve. Though not all participants articulated an exact point when they gave voice to their spiritual identity within their career, all described ways in which they give voice to that identity in their leadership and their work. For some, it is a decision to not speak about it within their work but for most it is a careful decision-making process as to how that voice emerges. All participants described managing their spiritual identity and being aware that their spiritual identity has implications for their leadership on their campus. Avani's description of finding her voice is an illustrative description of this process. Though her re-counting is particularly focused on her racial identity, the process of finding her voice through attending a powerful conference affirmed for her the need to be who "God created" her to be. This experience empowered her to be true to who she is in all her identities as a Black/African American, Christian woman. This experience was a pivotal moment in managing her spiritual identity as a SSAA.

> I can remember just working at the university and having these role models of White men and really just trying to figure out how do I lead and these are my examples. I can remember long ago of maybe subconsciously emulating these White men and leading in the way that they led. This hasn't been very long ago, probably maybe 12 or 13 years or whenever, right when I became Dean of Students so that was just 2002. I remember going to NCORE…I remember

feeling so free being around all of these minorities…I remember finding my

voice and I remember coming back thinking I will no longer emulate…White

men. I'm going to be an African American female Dean of Students and lead

in the way that I lead. I'm going to be true to who I am because God created

me…I need to be me.

Avani's experience at the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in American

Higher Education (NCORE) served as an experience that helped her find her voice

and empowered her to begin considering how she might engage the leadership

process from her own identities, not the identities of others. Participants shared

similar stories as they specifically pertained to their spiritual identities. The common

experience of participants was finding how to voice and reveal their spiritual

identities to others within their organizations.

Finding (my) Voice and Revealing Spiritual Identity

Participants discussed when they felt comfortable to talk about their spiritual

orientations with their colleagues and students. Overall, participants felt comfortable

to speak about their spirituality when that was a topic of discussion that emerged

organically, when they knew that a colleague shared that identity, or when they

picked up on cues that made them believe that the other person would appreciate

speaking about it. Conversations about spirituality and religion have been on-going

on Alan's campus. Within that context, Alan feels comfortable to speak about his

own identity. He commented "When we talk about [spirituality initiatives] I feel

comfortable talking about [spirituality or religion] but it happens in the context of

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talking about religion and spirituality." Avani shared how she suggested praying with someone she knew shared a Christian identity."

> …I know that she is a Christian and so I was able to pray a Christian prayer. For those who aren't I don't push that on them. I might just pray silently for someone but I wouldn't pray with them or anything of that nature.

Michele shared how she might bring up a conversation that included reflecting on one's spiritual orientation with a student if a sign of religious or spiritual commitment is obvious:

> …I would have never [brought up issues of spirituality] many years ago, but now if I'm in a situation where it's obvious…with a student…and I could tell back when people were wearing the "What Would Jesus Do?" bracelets [or if] they had on some kind of a religious symbol…I have used that obvious spiritual dimension of the student…to maybe put a situation into context….

How one's spirituality became known to others around them varied. Kimberly summed up the prevailing sentiment when she responded, "…in small ways not big ways," describing the way in which her spirituality is made public on campus. Most participants described revealing their spirituality over time in the context of a collegial relationship. Some described that within the context of their work others know that their spiritual identity is important to them. Dustin described how he revealed his spiritual identity to various colleagues or students, "I've done that lots of different times. I've done it with students in private settings or sometimes in a small group, intimate kind of a setting…But, yes, with staff, with students." Scarlet shared "a more public stance than I had probably made at work before" when she met with a

group of faculty and staff to whom spiritual identity was important to discuss a topic

pertaining to spirituality and pray. This group was convened by a campus minister at

her institution and would congregate for lunchtime discussions.

On a more practical note, Kimberly described that her personal boundaries of

ensuring she is available during certain times of the week, outside of normal business

hours, in order to nurture her spirituality has become a way that her spiritual

orientation has become known to others. She shared, "So that is often the way [my

spirituality] feels the most public…to talk about the parameters I'm willing to put on

my availability because of commitments I make…to my church and that experience."

Marisa, who has been involved in working with the opening of an interfaith center on

her campus, experienced a public statement of her spirituality when she was asked to

write and present the invocation for a town hall meeting on her campus featuring

President Obama. She described how the invocation introduced her as a person with a

spiritual orientation to all in attendance:

> I think it kind of started when Obama was on campus for a town hall meeting
>
> last January. So I was asked to write and do the invocation for him. There's
>
> really not a more public [statement] than that… So I think, yes, [my spiritual
>
> identity] is definitely out there and for the most part…really positively
>
> received.

Marisa described her public experience in front of her campus community, but the

opportunity to do so grew out of her involvement with opening an interfaith center on

campus that will focus on programming that will engage students in reflecting on

their spiritual development. Finding voice through being involved in that type of

project was another way that participants felt they could bring their full spiritual selves to their work.

Advocating for Spirituality within the Co-curriculum

Some participants found voice in working on behalf of students to advance projects or respond to issues of equity relating to spirituality and spiritual development. Participants acknowledged that on most of their campuses, spiritual development is likely the least advanced area where student affairs intentionally facilitates co-curricular opportunities for students to consider their development. Alan reflected on when he was "awakened" to the dearth of opportunities for students to engage their spiritual development:

> It sort of reawakened in me, and I'm sorry let me say one other thing, part of my orientation of being really a public college/university advocate was I thought it was healthy that there was this separation of church and state. But my experience with [a chaplain at a private, religiously-affiliated institution] was one of holy smoke, no pun intended there, but it was this thing of, "wow if I believe in student development and the total development of a student how the hell can I ignore the spiritual or religious piece of their life?" That's not really believing in the total development of the student.

Being administrators who nurture their own spiritual identities, they often created or are involved in opportunities to more formally educate students about spiritual development. Marisa, who has been involved in a multi-year project to create and open an interfaith center, has been directly supervised by the president at her

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institution and she has found purpose in being the primary coordinator of this project. She shared,

> …I'm responsible for spiritual life and character and values initiatives on our campus. We are in the process of building an interfaith center on campus. We are a secular institution so this is the first time we've had an initiative like this on campus…there's a group called the Resource Team for Faith Values and Spirituality, it's a faculty, staff and students' interdisciplinary group that started, we're in our second year, we started planning before the building was even built.

Michele discussed how she has been working on a project to address the spiritual development of students. She described that the gap of addressing students' spiritual development was identified within her staff. She pulled together a group of staff across campus to discuss how they might address this and where the programming might best fit.

> I value the development of students in a holistic way…developing students intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Not many public institutions want to acknowledge the spiritual development side…we have a spiritual life project that we're trying to find a place for…

Participants also reflected on initiatives that they created shortly after coming to a new campus as it relates to spiritual development. Xavier conveyed "…one of the pieces that I did…is we started an [interfaith initiative] because I firmly believe in partnership with the community leaders off-campus who do faith and spirituality work…" Alan, who struggles with organized religion, would not have pictured

himself as the person moving a project involving the spiritual development of students forward and yet, he is involved in doing just that:

> So I…come to [State University]…probably the most secular of any place and lo and behold, here I am struggling with my own [religion], I'm not an organized religion guy, and here I become the chief advocate for us establishing a spiritual and religious life resource center. I kind of laugh at the irony of it all, except that I'm looking at the stuff going on in the world and I'm wondering we have no forum on our campus in which to discuss these things.

Creating and directing projects was not the only way that participants advocated for students and their spiritual identity development on campus. Some participants described opportunities to help students needed to speak to someone who would understand their perspective from a spiritual perspective or, like in Gwen's case, the opportunity to openly advocate for the need to consider the faith of campus community constituents when making scheduling decisions. Gwen described when a home football game was scheduled over Yom Kippur and how she engaged in discussions with others on campus over the scheduling of family weekend and homecoming on this particular weekend. In the end, homecoming was scheduled for this weekend and she advocated for the campus to carefully message around how this decision was made ensuring there was sensitivity to those that would be marginalized given the date of homecoming:

> So I tried in that instance to say people's faith is important…but we're not going to be able to tell people that we checked with everybody and this was

the best alternative. We're going to just have to say we did have the

experience that we had been asked specifically not to have family weekend on

that weekend so we're not. But let's don't go out there and try to say so we

made a wonderful decision, [after all] we're having homecoming on Yom

Kippur.

Michele shared an opportunity she had to have productive conversations with

members of the Catholic Student Union, a group to whom she serves as an advisor,

when an anti-abortive group came to campus and pro-choice students responded to

their presence on campus. Students were wrestling with their religious beliefs and the

way in which pro-choice students were responding to that presence:

Have you heard of the Bio-Ethical Reform Movement, the people who have

the big displays of the aborted fetuses, and go around campus? So they were

here a couple months ago…the pro-choice [students] were out there

demonstrating, and the Catholic student union [students] who knew me came

up and just wanted to talk about their feelings about that and really not liking

the means of the pro-life people, but really having trouble with the pro-choice

people. So, it felt good to be somebody that they thought they could come and

talk about those conflicting feelings.

Managing identity involved finding voice to reveal spiritual identity to others on

campus. Advocating for issues about spirituality served as a medium through which

to find and insert their spiritual voice in one's work. Yet, participants still convey that

they continue to feel hesitation to reveal their spiritual identity.

Hesitating to Reveal Spiritual Identity

Despite participants finding voice by revealing their spirituality and advocating publicly for students and their spiritual development, participants experienced that managing their spiritual identity as a balancing act and expressed hesitation about revealing their spiritual identity. Hesitation was experienced because of the perception of how others would see them; how others defined spirituality and religion and the implications of those definitions; the fear that others would confuse speaking about spirituality for an attempt to proselytize; and, how the dynamics of power and privilege in relation to the SSAA role on campus.

Spiritual identity as a barrier for relationship-building. One of the reasons participants experienced hesitation to discuss one's spiritual identity was because it was deemed that doing so might be a barrier to the ability to build relationship with someone. In some instances doing so, participants shared, might take the focus off of the student. Gwen shared that in the context of meeting with a student, her approach was to put listening before assuming what they needed:

So my way of acting out my spirituality is not to sit them down and give it to

them but to listen, listen, listen, listen, listen, and to respect them enough to let

them articulate what it is they're thinking that they need…

Michele echoed this sentiment and recalled her counseling training in why she was careful in making the decision about whether or not talking about her spiritual identity was appropriate:

Sort of back to the whole counselor thing and my Master's is in counseling so

I'm aware of what I bring to a relationship or conversation and I don't want

anything that I am to be a barrier when I'm not the focus. The student is

supposed to be the focus.

Rose on the other hand, reflected on her career and though she did not regret her

posture with students, she does think that she would take opportunities with students

one-on-one to encourage them to more deeply consider some of life's larger questions

or challenging students to consider their values more deeply. She shared "[I am] not

disappointed in how I help students think through those things, but I might have done

it a little differently."

Outside influences, campus climate, perceptions of negative assumptions, and

feeling that talking about one's spirituality is not always "safe" led some participants

to make decisions to not share in particular moments or as a habit throughout their

careers. Alan reflected on the reaction staff had towards him discussing the need for

creating opportunities for students to explore and nurture their spiritual development:

I'm reading looks that I get and I do think there is some of that. Alan? You?

And then sometimes people want to know what is this all about and I'm not

trying to keep my personal thing out of it but I am trying to approach it from a

standpoint of sort of an educational [initiative] and here's why I think this is

really important.

This reflection also reveals Alan's struggle with balancing how much to correlate the

need for student affairs to pay attention to students' spiritual development with his

own personal experience and spiritual identity. Ellen conveyed how she may suggest

to her staff to implement practices that she finds spiritually renewing for herself in a

number of terms with the hopes of being inclusive. However she also finds that she

simply does not talk about her spirituality within the context of her work:

> …for some probably, that's a pretty public statement about my spirituality,
>
> because I might say, maybe you take a retreat; maybe you meditate; maybe
>
> you pray. I sort of offer all that type of thing to talk to people about that. . . So
>
> when you say have I thought about going public about it, I don't talk about it.
>
> I mean this is as much I've probably talked about it to anybody. I just
>
> probably do things that would lead people to believe that I'm a spiritual
>
> person.

Michele conveyed a similar set of experiences. She shared how she is not overt in

sharing her religious identity as a Catholic. Yet, nonetheless, she hopes, like Ellen

does, that people would not be surprised that she leads with a spiritual orientation.

Despite her commitment to attend mass daily, Michele reflected on why she struggles

with revealing more about her spiritual identity and why she chooses not to reveal

that identity to most of her department heads…

> …I would hope that they wouldn't be surprised when they find that out [that
>
> I'm spiritual]. I don't hide it. I'm more open with it than I used to be, but it's
>
> not something I talk about openly. But if somebody asks about it or the
>
> occasion comes up. I will certainly talk about it….Well, an interesting thing is
>
> that to me at a large public to talk about spirituality and your faith and
>
> leadership is not always appropriate. Out of the twelve department heads
>
> maybe half of them at the most know that I go to mass every day mostly that's
>
> because my perception of how people would then think of about me and then

also is that appropriate and I wouldn't ever want anybody to think that I'm

doing something just because that's what my religion dictates. So I really

struggle with that balance between being open about that and making sure I'm

professional and appropriate.

Michele's back-and-forth struggle in this quote demonstrates the salience of this

conflict for her. Struggling with "religion" was a common topic and reason for why

some SSAAs hesitated to reveal spiritual identity.

Considering religion vs. spirituality. What accounts for the struggle that

Michele articulated? Participants identified a number of factors that contribute to

their hesitation in sharing about their spirituality and religiosity openly. One of the

factors that prominently emerged through the analysis was how religion and

religiosity is viewed within the academy, the profession of student affairs, and on

most of the campuses where participants serve as senior student affairs

administrators. Recall that all participants were chosen from non-religiously affiliated

institutions with most serving at public and state institutions. Though spirituality has

become more acceptable, in the experience of participants it remains to be a highly

charged term alongside religion or the discussion of one's religiosity. Xavier admitted

"It's funny how when other people talk about religion and spirituality I immediately

have a negative visceral reaction to it. When I frame it I don't." This was not a

unique experience among the participants. When asked to consider how her

spirituality affected her leadership, Rose struggled to respond because of her

experiences with organized religion and her ability to separate her spirituality from

her religious identity. She responded:

How has my spirituality affected my leadership? Oh, I'm going to struggle

with this. It's very difficult for me to separate a broader definition of

spirituality from my old definition of being religious. The two are very

intertwined for me. But what I kept when I ditched the religious piece, I think

I kept the spirituality piece.

Another facet to this issue is the definition that some assign to religion and religiosity versus the definition of spirituality and spiritual development. Finding religion and religiosity threatening to the separation of church and state, the climate exists on some campuses of being closed to open conversations about spirituality because there is little distinction between the terms. Marisa explained that this occurs on her campus, a private non-religiously affiliated institution, even though they have made great progress in engaging students to consider issues of spirituality and spiritual development. She shared, "every now and again it's hard because some people that have…an out of date definition and…don't necessarily separate religion from spirituality…because we're a secular campus don't necessarily get it or are receptive [to the interfaith initiatives]." Kenny reflected on why the tension between spirituality and religion exist – the value of inclusion. He was able to highlight how people value spiritual leaders, particularly in times of shared grief, therefore making it more acceptable to talk about spirituality or religion during those times. Kenny honed in on the tension:

I think the tension is between spirituality and religion, and so the people with

whom I work have no idea what my religious practices are, what my church

going attendance habits are, anything like that. I think many of them would

probably describe me as they think I'm a spiritual person but I don't know that

they would describe me as being a religious person because they don't know

anything about what my religious background is. I think within higher

education, people within the public context in which I work, being public

about spirituality is a difficult thing to do, except during times of shared

grieving or loss when we can call people to get in touch with what matters to

them without appealing for religious engagement. So I think people want to

see that there are leaders who care about the soul of the community, and so

people identify with that when I talk about the soul of our community, that

when people talk about the spiritual energy or the spirit that we bring to our

work with people, helping people identify with that. But I think people would

be more challenged if it started to feel religious because then there are people

who are so diverse in their beliefs and their ways of being that it would feel

like people, if they were non-believers, who couldn't be part of the

conversation and who wouldn't be invited into the circle.

Larry's summary offers insight into where boundaries in language exist. It may be

safe to talk about "spiritual" things but not "religious" things.

For those leaders who identify with a religion, beyond their spiritual identity,

they find themselves negotiating with their religious beliefs and religious doctrine and

how that influences the way others see them and interact with them if that religious

identity is public. They also find themselves negotiating how they make decisions on

campus through the lens of their spiritual values that may conflict with their religion's

doctrine. For example, Michele worked with a group of students over a number of

years to have her institution include gender identity and gender expression in the institution's non-discrimination clause. This was a grassroots effort initiated by students – one that Michele felt that she must support given her values. However, she recognizes that her actions likely are contraindicative to her religion's values and doctrine. She reflected "…gender identity and gender expression was wrong in the eyes of the Catholic Church… I acted out of valuing human beings in all their forms more. It certainly wasn't my religious doctrine that led that, but my spiritual values."

Fearing assumptions of proselytizing. One of the factors that contribute to bringing tension to dialogue about religion or spirituality, but particularly about religion and religiosity is proselytizing. If there was a faux pas one could commit while communicating one's spirituality or religiosity, based on these leaders accounts, it would be proselytizing. There was a sentiment repeatedly expressed, almost a fear, by participants that in bringing up, talking about, or referencing one's spirituality that someone would interpret that to be an act of proselytizing. This concern also drives a hesitation to openly share about one's spirituality or religiosity.

Participants once again are in a position to negotiate their roles as senior student affairs administrators where they value being open and available to all students or staff and sharing openly about their spiritual identity. The concern is that if one speaks too much about her or his spiritual identity or religiosity that students and staff who may share different spiritual convictions or religious beliefs may not feel comfortable seeking them out in their capacities as SSAAs or that their decisions will always be associated with their religious or spiritual identities. In responding to how her spirituality influences her leadership practices and how she has revealed her

spiritual identity to others in order to convey care for them as people, Avani was clear to delineate how her spirituality does not influence her leadership, being careful to explain that she is not attempting to impose her beliefs on others:

> But I think it doesn't influence my practices in the sense of that I am wanting everyone to be a Christian or that I'm wanting everyone to adhere to my beliefs. It's not in that way at all…I say I'm going to pray for you or I'm going to whatever but they appreciate it. Not that I'm trying to get you to be like me or get you to be a Christian or proselytizing but I'm going to say I'll pray for your family.

Scarlet explained to me how she affirms spirituality in students in a one-on-one context drawing from her own experience. Similar to Avani's delineation around her relating to staff, Scarlet is careful to point out how she is not proselytizing to a student in this context:

> …depending upon the student and what they say, if they talk to me about their faith then I will acknowledge faith and spirituality in my own life, again not proselytizing to them but acknowledging that I have similar beliefs or journeys and that creates another connection for them. I think it makes them feel safe and that there is somebody here who cares about them.

Even in the context of this study, participants would share an anecdote with me and be quick to add a caveat that they were not proselytizing. This reaction illuminates the negativity that exists in the academy with proselytizing and how it may influence spiritually-oriented leaders in their work.

Considering power and privilege. The root of the tension between spirituality, religion, and the role of the SSAA is framed by realities of power and privilege. The participants in this study had a high value for inclusivity of all students and demonstrated commitment to creating campus cultures where all are welcomed, particularly populations of students that are historically underrepresented and marginalized within the academy. Being this type of advocate and often finding oneself in a role to arbitrate between various communities on campus, a role many of the participants reflected upon, the participants articulated the need to be perceived as supportive of all. Affiliation with a religion could compromise this because of how some marginalized students may assume one's values based on their religious affiliation. Spirituality and discussion of spiritual identity can sometimes be enough to off-put students or staff who are either non-believers or who have an identity that has been oppressed by a religious institution currently or in the past. Awareness of one's power and privilege was a consistent conversation throughout the participant's reflections. In considering how she has revealed her spiritual identity to others on her campus, Gwen admitted that because her institution is geographically situated within a strong Christian, Bible-believing area and she is part of this group, her need to "go public" with her spirituality was unnecessary. She recognized this reality as a consequence of her privilege as a Christian:

> …because of my situation and also again because of living in an area where my religion, I think this would be different if I perceived myself as being of a religious or spiritual persuasion that was in a minority because now that I've gotten grown up and learned about social justice I understand about Christian

privilege. So I'm in the group that's already got the privilege where I am, so

in the sense of kind of coming out about it to people, I don't think I have ever

had that really. Now I have had conversations where I realized that this is

more important to me than it is to somebody else.

Privilege is not the only factor at play as it relates to this area. Power is

significant and participants were also cognizant that they needed to be aware of this

as well. Holding senior leadership positions, participants were aware of the power

that they possessed within their organizations and how they had to negotiate that

power with their role of being accessible and approachable to all students and staff on

their campuses. Again, this triggers hesitation for the participants to openly share

about their spirituality and religious identities. Alan reflected on this tension:

At the same time, I guess I'm not trying to constantly expose it or relay it as

the reason I'm making this decision is because, at my spiritual core, I believe

this is the right decision to make. As I said, I feel like because of the role I'm

supposed to play, because of the title there is power and influence there and I

have to acknowledge that.

Reflecting on how she is inhibited by her awareness of her power and privilege and

her institutional commitment to inclusivity, Avani explained how her work would be

limited and simply unfair to students should she be completely open with her

religious and spiritual identity:

Oh, it would be horrible [to reveal my religious and spiritual identity to

students]. I wouldn't be able…to perform my job effectively at all. It wouldn't

be fair to those students who are Buddhists or Muslims…It would not be fair

to them at all and I would never want to do anything intentionally to harm

them in any way or not make them feel included in any way….

The socio-cultural environment of the academy broadly brings certain forces to bear

on the experience of the SSAA in this study managing their spiritual identity in

relation to their role. Additionally, there are unique socio-cultural factors that are

present at specific campuses based on leadership, tradition, culture, values and

geographic location. Participants described the nature of values within the academy

and on their local campus and discussed the need to change the way they manage

their spiritual identity depending on the campus where they work.

Adjusting for Campus Climate

Finding voice for their spirit within their work for the participants was largely

influenced by the climate and organizational context of their campuses. Experiences

at various campuses for the same senior student affairs administrator may differ given

the particular climate present at each. Dustin found this to be true in his career: "Each

institutional setting depending on the overall climate…made the conversation or the

way that I professed my faith commitment…very different." These senior student

affairs administrators described how they need to reconcile their spiritual values with

the values held by their institutions. In most cases, those values were synergistic and

compatible. However, there was still a prevailing sense that these leaders felt "out of

step" with their institutions particularly when it comes to bringing one's spiritual self

to the workplace. Kenny summarized where the root of this feeling comes for him:

…the other thing that I would think about as a leader is that my leadership

doesn't exist in isolation, and so often times the question is if you're spirit-

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informed leader and you supervise people who aren't, how you manage the

situation in which you find yourself, because often times you may find that

you're in an organization where everybody else is bottom-lined, or most of the

time people are bottom-lined leaders, and you're talking about how people in

the organization are feeling and other people were talking about what they

want to do, so other people are identifying the tasks and you're identifying the

processes. It sometimes can have you feel out of step, so I think it's a matter

of how do you manage your identity and manage your approach when you're

maybe out of step with the culture in which you find yourself, and I find that a

lot.

So, expressing one's spirituality or spirit-informed leadership is not only about

revealing one's spiritual identity or religiosity but also about the values one

encounters that may be contraindicative to one's spiritually-informed core values.

Kenny's response to being in an environment that is operating in contrast to his own

is to "create the context in which you want to work…" modeling the type of values

that one may want to embody one's workplace.

Despite the uniqueness of each campus, there is a shared value system among

institutions that belong to the higher education community. Participants experienced

higher education to be value laden, however, a tension exists because values are often

not always expressed or attributed openly for the decisions that are made. Avani

conveyed her own experience of higher education being value laden yet attributes

some tension in negotiating her voice to a desire to be value free.

It would have to be value laden. I don't see how it could be value free. How

could it be?...I have always assumed that to some degree I thought well part of

this is because higher ed is or it's not actually value free but maybe it wants to

be value free.

The tension that emerges with values in higher education, as affirmed by the

experiences of participants, is that values are often unexpressed or unclear in higher

education. Xavier responded:

Oh, my God, laden to the, but I think it's a value laden unexpressed. I don't

think that it's always clear. It's not direct but it shows up in the conversations.

It shows up in the decision making processes, it shows up in how policies get

written, it shows up in who is even at the table. It's just layered. It's so

intertwined like that but it's never like someone's going to say this is it.

For most participants, this tension is relieved as they became comfortable operating

within higher education environments and asserting one's values. Participants

realized that generally higher education is open to many ideas, however, one has to be

committed to simply entering those ideas into the marketplace of ideas and not

planning to impose any of those values on anyone. Dustin had a moment in his career

when this all came together and he summarized:

I used to pretend that environments were value free and then all of the sudden

there was a moment…it was just like, well, of course, everything is value

oriented. Even the value of being open to all perspectives, that's a value. And

so I became much more comfortable with just professing the value as long as I

wasn't pushing the value on other people. I don't think we have any problem

in higher education owning our own values, living our own values, engaging

with others within the value context as long as we don't cross the line to say

and you ought to live this way, too. That's not right. But how can we possibly

live lives without recognizing the values that we have and recognizing the

values of others? It's there. It's the elephant in the room.

Despite this revelation, Dustin and many of the participants are left negotiating how

their spiritual voice can enter the greater "conversation" within higher education since

values, though espoused, are often not spoken about or made clear within the higher

education community.

Do the lack of clarity of values and the climates of their individual campuses

inhibit the spiritual expression of the participants in the study? Most would say no

and even those who admit that they are inhibited have a value for that inhibition to

exist because their role as senior student affairs administrator takes precedence over

their ability to have the space to express their spirituality completely. Kimberly

conveyed that "I don't ever find myself feeling like I'm inhibited from being who I

need and want to be in this large public university." WZ concurred with that point of

view and spoke about why her choice of institution is influenced by her ability to be

congruent with the values of the institution:

No, it does not inhibit me at all. I think that it would be difficult for me to go

to an institution where it will, it doesn't allow me to be who I am. I think that

part of the main reason that I have left both of the institutions that I was

previously it was because of that. It's just the clashing of values and just really

how innately truthful are you that you are really enriching the lives of

students, that you're being student centered. That really means a lot to me…

There were participants who experienced their campuses as inhibiting their

spiritual expression. However, in these situations, participants were quick to point out

how they are comfortable with the tension that exists based on their roles and their

particular work as a senior student affairs administrator. Avani shared how she makes

sense of this tension:

It inhibits it…But that's okay. It has to be that way. There are a lot of

nonbelievers on campus and there are a lot of people who believe in different

faiths and I respect that. In one way it inhibits it but then in one way you

really get to practice who you are…

Ellen considered the tension of the campus environment inhibiting her own spiritual

expression as well:

I was in a meeting here on campus, and the person leading the meeting started

it off with a prayer…I was pretty stunned…that's not how I'd start a meeting.

There are days when I wish I could, honestly. But that's not…I work at a state

institution and that's not how I would start a meeting. And so is that

inhibiting? I suppose. I mean if you want to say that it probably keeps me

from having any kind of religious symbol in my office, but I don't…. I have a

Bible at home but I don't know that I would bring it to work anyway. So, is it

inhibiting? I don't think that it is. I don't think that it is.

The values of the student affairs profession are reflected in both Avani and Ellen's

comments. The value for openness and inclusivity rank high for both of them and

they see those values as being a cornerstone of their work. At the same time, as WZ indicated there is a choice that these senior student affairs administrators have made to work within a certain environment. Alan reflected further on his choice in terms of institutional type and his role as a spirit-informed leader at a secular institution:

> I think that I would have problems professionally at a number of religious affiliated schools where religion and spirituality is probably a very strong identity and affiliation for those places…I'm probably more comfortable being at a secular place that is sort of a blank slate and maybe advocating for some recognition of some spiritual religious service and programming…

The socio-cultural environments of the academy and the individual campus on where the SSAA works do require the spiritually-oriented leader to manage her or his identities, but participants also possess a respect for the type of environment that does exist. Dustin helps to frame this issue of one being on a continuum versus thinking of it in a dichotomous fashion, that is, being in an environment that is congruent or not. He shared "The settings where I've been, I mean it's not like you're either totally aligned or totally unaligned. It's a continuum. So different settings where I've been some of them have been more aligned and some less aligned." Participants' ability to negotiate the different environments, in which they worked, was dependent on their ability to read the environment and react appropriately. Kenny shared how he learned to filter his spirit:

> Your spirit can inform, but sometimes it has to have a filter for how directly it can inform, depending on the strength of your spirit. For some people, it can

be very powerful, so as a result in order for me to function in this setting I

have to be more careful.

Managing spiritual identity is the lived experience of the spiritually-oriented leader.

Summary of Grounded Theory

In this chapter I presented the grounded theory that emerged from data

analysis in this study. One core category and four key categories were uncovered in

the analysis. Three critical influences, two characteristics, and one context of leading

with a spiritual orientation were described by the core category and key categories

(see Table 4.2). The emergent grounded theory describes a process where leadership

is continuously influenced by the pervasive presence of a spiritual and values-based

orientation and uncovers the interconnected relationships between spirituality,

leadership, and values. The emergent theory, *Walking the Labyrinth: The Process of

Leading with a Spiritual Orientation among Senior Student Affairs Administrators*

(see Figure 4.1) illustrates how leading with a spiritual orientation is an iterative

process, which occurs metaphorically while walking a labyrinth.

Sustaining a spiritual outlook foregrounds the beginning of the process. Four

elements compose sustaining a spiritual outlook, including identifying as a spiritual

person; growing through questioning, trials, and maturation; connecting spiritual

outlook to work; and nurturing spirituality. The core and the congruency sought at the

core, draws the leader through the labyrinth. At the center of the labyrinth, the

intersection of leadership and spirituality is found. Participants are continuously

engaging in the leadership process, informing leadership with their spirituality, and

returning to the core to influence their leadership practices. Participants seek out their

core to reconcile leadership practices with spirituality by examining values in light of both their spirituality and leadership. At the intersection, the leader employs values to infuse her or his leadership practices with spirituality. As the leader finds congruency among her or his spirituality, values, and leadership, the characteristics of leading with a spiritual orientation become apparent: catalyzing spirituality to maximize leadership capacity and prioritizing people within leadership practice. Walking the labyrinth is contextualized by the socio-cultural values and practices, overt and latent, of the academy and one's campus, which create both opportunities and constraints for leading with a spiritual orientation.

Postscript: "You're actually the first person who has asked me about this"

Though the "conversation" around spirituality is becoming more popular, it was apparent from some of the participants' reactions that the salience of the connection between spirituality and leadership is not something they often consider. For several participants the experience of being engaged in this study clarified or reinforced the influence of spirituality on their leadership experiences. Many of these reflective statements were communicated at the beginning of the second interview after participants had time to ponder and observe points of connection following the first interview. Here are some examples of those reflections. Alan summarized his thoughts:

> It's funny, since we talked last time, José, I think you're the one who is
> causing me to connect these in some ways that maybe I haven't before to be
> honest. Here's what I will say. I think my spirituality is more connected to my
> leadership than I believed before we started this process. So this is all your

fault… I think what I'm saying is I recognize, again it's your fault, José. I

recognize through these conversations I do rely on my spiritual center in the

way I conduct my professional life and I'm not trying to cover it up from

people.

Dustin appreciated his involvement in the study as a chance to reflect on the issues

considered in this study, "It's actually been very fun for me to kind of reflect on these

questions. You know I do have a chance to talk about these in some context…that

allowed me to kind of do some searching too. It's cool." Avani added her own

thoughts: "It's been interesting though because it causes you to be introspective,

which is how often would I even stop and think about these things."

Some participants communicated how recent they believed this area of inquiry

was (i.e., intersection of spirituality and leadership among SSAAs). In reaction to

being asked to consider the intersection of spirituality and leadership, Rose bluntly

shared "well, you're actually the first person that asked me this. No chance to

practice." Alan shared similarly that this was his first time thinking about the

connection between spirituality and leadership:

I'm not certain that I've talked so much about the connection between my

spiritual self and my leadership or my work but that's because I haven't

thought about it until you and I have had these conversations. It's certainly

something I would feel comfortable talking about now. It's just that I'm not

certain that I've made some of those connections before.

Josh felt similarly and conveyed that little reflection or openness about this topic is

embodied among generation of SSAAs:

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Because I don't talk about my spirituality, I don't routinely give examples of this in my leadership and stuff like that. But I think that I am very much grounded in spiritual perspective to do these things we have been doing. I don't know very many senior or lifetime leaders in student affairs or higher education that would identify spirituality as part of their leadership that they were talking about. But if you got them to think about it like your questionnaire then that sort of says yes, I think that this is how this works.

Finally, Rose reflected on the freshness of this topic:

Until I added spirituality in my college student course in the winter, and until I started talking to you about spirituality, I don't think I ever, if you had asked me about my leadership style or strengths or weaknesses or whatever, eight years ago, the word spirituality never would have crept into the conversation.

I chose to include this postscript for a couple of reasons. First, to be very honest, the reactions of the participants were affirming. I struggled with managing my own identity as a "spiritually-oriented leader" walking the labyrinth. I wondered if this "mesearch" was valid, important, or needed. Is there really something to be studied or am I just trying to make myself feel good? Reactions from the participants demonstrated that there is something here worthy of the field's attention and affirmed that spirituality does indeed have an influence on leadership.

Reflecting on the comments of the participants made me ponder generational differences (Roof, 1993) in the experience of spirituality. The HERI (2010) national study on spirituality has demonstrated that the generation of students in higher education today is the most spiritually curious in some time. How will that impact the

development of this research in coming years? The voices of the participants also had

me question: "why did it take so long for someone to ask them about their

spirituality?" Though I will discuss this more in the implications section, I believe the

silence on this subject, particularly as it relates to SSAAs, speaks to the way

participants negotiated and managed their identities within a context of power and

privilege (Jones, Kim, & Skendall, 2012).

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

In this chapter I discuss the emergent grounded theory depicting the influence of spirituality on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators (SSAAs), *Walking the Labyrinth: The Process of Leading with a Spirituality Orientation among Senior Student Affairs Administrators.* The chapter begins with a discussion of the emergent theory in relation to the research questions that guided this study. Then, the emergent theory is discussed in the context of the existing literature about spirituality and leadership, particularly as it relates to higher education administrators. Next, the implications of future research and practice are discussed. Finally, the limitations and strengths of this study are articulated.

Discussion of Emergent Theory in Relation to the Research Questions

The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory was to understand the process by which spirituality influences leadership practices among senior student affairs administrators.

Four research questions guided this study:

(1) What can be learned about how spirituality influences the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators when the intersection of spiritual and leadership development is considered?

(2) What are the critical influences on the process by which spirituality informs the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators?

(3) How, if at all, do the spiritually-guided leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study influence the organizational environments of their institutions?

(4) How, if at all, are the spiritually-guided and value-laden leadership practices

of the senior student affairs administrators in this study challenged by the

socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to values, spirituality,

and religiosity?

The research questions were used to guide all aspects of this study, including the

analysis of the data. The intention of the study was to gain a greater understanding of

the relationship between spirituality and leadership as it pertains to the leadership

practices of SSAAs and to articulate theoretical statements that capture this process.

In this next section, I present how the emergent theory addresses each of the research

questions.

What can be learned about how spirituality influences the leadership practices

of senior student affairs administrators when the intersection of spiritual and

leadership development is considered?

Examining the intersection of spiritual and leadership development revealed a

complex, fluid, and dynamic process by which spirituality influences leadership of

SSAAs. Findings suggest several implications of the relationship between spirituality

and leadership, including a) the interrelation of spiritual and leadership development;

b) the role of values within the relationship between spirituality and leadership; c) the

role of the salience of one's spirituality; and d) the reliance and dependence on one's

personal core, which is informed by one's spirituality, values, and leadership.

The intersection of leadership and spirituality revealed a "seamless"

connection between leadership and spirituality. A seamless relationship, as described

by participants, represented more of an aspiration than a reality, but nonetheless

reflects the close co-existence of these two constructs, spirituality and leadership. Thus, for spirit-informed leaders, leadership and spiritual development have many points of connection, overlap, and intersection. The connection and overlap between spirituality and leadership unearth the connections between spiritual and leadership development. Self-reflection, values clarification, seeking purpose, and meaning-making are just a few examples of the experiences that are common among both leadership and spiritual development processes.

Examining the intersection of leadership and spirituality led to the discovery that a third construct was present at the intersection: values. Values play a central role in facilitating the integration of spirituality into leadership. Though there are direct connections between spirituality and leadership, values serve a role in informing leadership practices steeped in spirituality. In a context such as higher education that is highly steeped in values, values also become a common language for spirit-informed leaders to make meaning of, and find common ways to communicate with, others.

Next, when the intersection of spiritual and leadership development was considered, the degree of salience of spirituality in the participants' lives was discovered to have a role in the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. Identifying as a spiritually-oriented leader depended on the salience of spiritual identity. For some, integrating spirituality into leadership practice was a conscious process, while for others it was subconscious. All participants agreed that there were subconscious elements to integrating spirituality into leadership practice. The intensity or consistency with which one nurtures their spirituality and engagement in

spiritual disciplines (e.g., prayer, meditation, contemplation, study of holy texts) may have implications for the salience of spirituality within the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. That is, the greater the salience of spirituality, the greater the consciousness of spirituality's role in the process of leading with a spiritual orientation.

Finally, the personal core emerged at the center of the intersection of spiritual and leadership development. The personal core is informed by spirituality, values, and leadership. The personal core serves as a "home base" for spirit-informed leaders, serving as a "place" to check in and filter decisions and direction. Though described in a variety of ways, the personal core serves to help spirit-informed leaders engage in leadership that is congruent with their spirituality and values. The personal core undergirds a value-driven leadership. That is, the core is a blend of spirituality, values, and leadership and values are central in both spirituality and leadership.

What are the critical influences on the process by which spirituality informs the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators?

The process of leading with a spiritual orientation is marked by three critical influences. The first, sustaining a spiritual outlook captures various ways the spiritually-oriented leaders in this study develop and sustain their spiritual identity. Sustaining a spiritual outlook includes four elements: identifying as a spirituality person; growing through questioning, trials, and maturation; connecting spiritual outlook to work; and nurturing spirituality. Next, the pervasive and ever-present nature of spirituality within the leadership process is a critical influence on how spirituality influences leadership. Finally, the nature of the personal core is a critical

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influence on the process of spirituality influencing leadership. The core creates momentum and energizes the process of leading with a spiritual orientation.

The process of leading with a spiritual orientation is foregrounded by sustaining a spiritual outlook. Becoming a spirit-informed leader begins with developing a spiritual identity. As spiritual identity develops, a process of maturation occurs that is marked by engaging "big" questions and enduring trials, which prompt critical evaluation and exploration about faith, religiosity, spirituality, and meaning-making. The spiritually-oriented SSAA, at some point in her or his career, integrates her or his spiritual outlook into her or his work. Finally, nurturing spirituality is the last element in the cycle of sustaining a spiritual outlook. Nurturing spirituality encourages deeper connection to spiritual matters, promoting greater salience of spiritual identity. Nurturing occurs in many spheres of life, including through work and leadership. Thus, sustaining a spiritual outlook is a critical influence in the process of leading with a spiritual orientation because the four elements described, collectively form the context through which leading with a spiritual influence is possible. Through identifying as spiritual, deepening that identity, and allowing that identity to be expressed through one's work, the spirit-informed leader creates the foundation through which the process of leading with a spiritual orientation occurs.

The ever-present and pervasive nature of spirituality is another critical influence in the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. Just as the elements described above contribute to establishing a foundation for spirit-informed leadership, the ubiquitous nature of spirituality creates a context for leadership that may not always be noticed, yet is always present. The leadership process itself is steeped in

one's spirituality. The nature of spirituality's presence in the leadership process,
therefore, allows the process to be organic and dynamic. Though there are moments
or decisions when spirituality is more salient (e.g., when facing a decision that may
require evaluating values or spiritual beliefs), spirituality remains present throughout
the entire leadership process through the values that inform one's leadership
practices.

Finally, the nature of the "personal core" that is present at the intersection of
spirituality, values, and leadership is a critical influence on the process of leading
with a spiritual orientation. Without the core, spirit-informed leaders would not find
their way through the labyrinth (i.e., the leadership process), or at least not as clearly.
The core becomes the point of meaning-making and of developing purpose in
leadership. Both in their spiritual and leadership development, spirit-informed leaders
return to their core to seek congruency in their spirituality, values, and leadership
practices. This iterative journey to the core defines the leadership process of the
spirit-informed leader. Spirit-informed SSAAs return to their core to make difficult
decisions, find respite, further define their purpose, and to make meaning of their
experience as campus leaders and spiritual beings. Thus, the core is a critical
influence on the process of leading with a spiritual orientation because it provides
momentum for the leadership process, and serves as a central point in the leadership
process that refines the spiritual orientation of the spirit-informed SSAA. Because
both spirituality and leadership inform values, returning to the core serves as a
reinforcement of one's spiritually-oriented leadership. Each time spiritually-oriented
SSAAs return to the core, their spiritual beliefs and values are challenged and/or

affirmed. Therefore, returning to the core spurs on a deepening of both spiritual and leadership development.

How, if at all, do the spiritually-guided leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study influence the organizational environments of their institutions?

Prioritizing people and engaging in value-driven leadership within their organizations are hallmarks of the leadership practices of spirit-informed SSAAs. Participants linked their people-centric emphasis in leadership to their spirituality and values. Participants articulated that without their spiritually-informed leadership they would likely be more focused on resource acquisition and administrative issues within their organizations. Among the many leadership practices employed by spirit-informed leaders, prioritizing people through leadership practice emerged as a passion and value. In the relationship between spirituality and leadership, values are present and hold an important role in linking spirituality to leadership. Since values are interconnected with spirituality, and subsequently express themselves through leadership practices, spirit-informed leaders seek to ensure congruency between spirituality, values, and leadership practices. And, because values are the expression of spirituality within leadership practices, spirit-informed leaders seek to shape and drive their organizations by establishing shared values, consistent with those of the institution, with their leadership team. Findings suggest SSAAs connect their own values with those of the campus and of the greater student affairs profession. Each of those sources influences their values and their leadership practices.

Despite the broad array of leadership practices utilized to respond to diverse and complex situations, prioritizing people as a leadership practice is of great import. Spirit-informed leaders lead with the mantra "people are sacred, structure is not…" to guide them in daily leadership practice. Leadership practices such as treating others as you would like to be treated, leading with integrity, sharing leadership, leading for positive social change, and leading in socially just ways are motivated by the value for people within the organization. This is expressed through taking time to build relationships with students, creating space for all voices within the organization, and investing in the development of students and professionals.

How, if at all, are the spiritually-guided and value-laden leadership practices of the senior student affairs administrators in this study challenged by the socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to values, spirituality, and religiosity?

The spiritually-oriented SSAA manages her or his identity, as it relates to the intersection of spirituality and leadership, in response to the socio-cultural environment of spirituality and religion found within the academy and on her or his campus. To frame the discussion of this research question, it is important to recall that the sample of SSAAs in this study worked at non-religiously affiliated institutions (most public) where the separation of church and state was prominent. When I refer to "the academy" I do so knowing that their perspective comes from that context and does not represent the totality of the academy. The practices, customs, and values of higher education that pertain to spirituality and religion are salient to spiritually-oriented leaders at non-religiously affiliated institutions. These values operate both in

an overt fashion or are latent in the environment. Though there was agreement, among participants, that higher education is value-laden and not value-free, an "elephant in the room" was also identified, in that one of the academy's values is being open to all perspectives. So, the academy recognizes values (e.g., the value to be open to all perspectives), and even is guided by values, yet, the academy does not always encourage (and perhaps discourages) the values of individuals being recognized, particularly if they appear to be infringing on the prevailing values of the academy.

Several key findings inform a response to this research question. First, revealing one's spiritual identity is a process. Through revealing their spiritual identities, spiritually-oriented leaders find voice to know how to articulate their spiritual identity. Next, for some spiritually-oriented leaders, advocating for issues of spirituality or engaging students in reflecting on their spiritual development as part of the co-curriculum is a role they embrace and view as a unique opportunity given their identity. Doing so helps them find a venue to voice the importance of spirituality in their lives. Third, despite revealing their spirituality to some (or many), a hesitation persists in revealing their spirituality. Spiritually-oriented leaders are selective about when and with whom they reveal their spiritual identity or if they reveal it at all. Finally, spiritually-oriented leaders engage the process of revealing their spiritual identity each time at each new institution where they are employed, being attuned to the particularities of the campus climate pertaining to spirituality.

The findings of the study suggest that although higher education is value-laden, there are unspoken practices or customs that create a challenging reality for

administrators who espouse a spiritual identity. The value of being open to all perspectives, as described by participants, and held by the academy, is of importance to the SSAAs in this study and one of the reasons they work in higher education. Yet, they also acknowledged that higher education broadly exhibits an unspoken culture that does not recognize the values of individuals, particularly when those values are not in line with the prevailing thought of the academy. For example, absolutist values are discouraged and often unrecognized within the academy. If Truth (with a capital "T") is professed, generally that would be marginalized within the academy because the prevailing value in the academy is for truth (with a lowercase "t"). By using this example, I am not stating that the participants in this study profess Truth with a capital "T", it is simply an illustration based on the quotation of one of the participants. When leadership is foundationally values-oriented, as it is for spiritually-oriented leaders, the absence of acknowledging and identifying values can cause the environment to be challenging to navigate.

The data suggest a tension present between the SSAAs in this study and their work within campus environments. In response to that tension, spiritually-oriented leaders experience the need to manage their identities within the higher education environment. This tension is partially due to the dynamics regarding an unwillingness to acknowledge specific values of individuals within the academy, but is also due to the specific job function of the SSAA, a dynamic that may not be as salient for other administrative leaders outside of student affairs. Though participants acknowledged that their spiritual expression may be inhibited, none had a problem with that citing the importance of their roles as student advocates on campus. SSAAs desire to be

both approachable and accessible to all students and felt that in order to be effective, their spiritual (or religious) identity could be a hindrance for certain students or student populations.

As a result spiritually-oriented SSAAs find themselves reconciling their roles as spirit-informed leaders and institutional leaders who represent students and advocate for their success on campus. They choose carefully when and how to reveal their spiritual identity to colleagues and students. Some choose never to reveal their spiritual identity. Others assume that colleagues and students will realize their spiritual identity based on how they lead and their chosen leadership practices. Again, the necessity to manage their identity to this extent, points to unspoken or latent practices present in the academy about the stigma of openly speaking about issues of spirituality, faith, and religion. Though findings suggest that spiritually-oriented SSAAs experience constraints pertaining to their ability to reveal spiritual identity, findings also suggest that unique opportunities, such as advocating for the inclusion of spirituality within the campus environment or relationally connecting with students and staff that share a spiritual identity, also exist.

Discussion of Emergent Theory in Relation to Existing Literature

This section of the chapter focuses on the emerging grounded theory of leading with a spiritual orientation among SSAAs in response to the theoretical and empirical literature. In Chapter 2, I presented a review of the literature related to the constructs of leadership and spirituality within higher education. The literature review contextualizing this study presented: (a) the evolution in the conceptualization of leadership from the industrial paradigm to the postindustrial paradigm; (b) the

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(r)evolution of leadership within higher education highlighting shifting research paradigms of leadership; (c) an exploration of the construct of spirituality; (d) the presence of spirituality and leadership within the literature of higher education, K-12 educational leadership, and the field of business; (e) background on the role of the SSAA and their role within a student affairs organization; and (f) background on the socio-cultural environment of the academy pertaining to issues of spirituality, faith, and religion.

With these areas of literature in mind, I present some of the most significant ways that the findings of this study offer congruence or possess notable points of departure from the literature presented in Chapter 2. First, I present literature that reinforces the concept of the personal core described by participants, discussing the importance of congruence for the spirit-informed leader and the role of ethics within the leadership practices of the spirit-informed leader. Next, I discuss the characteristics of leading with a spiritual orientation and how the literature intersects with the findings. Then, I discuss the implications of spiritually-oriented SSAAs managing their identities within the socio-cultural environment of the academy. Finally, I discuss the dynamic of the spiritually-oriented SSAA facilitating the spiritual development of students.

Leading with a Spiritual Orientation

From the core category, leading with a spiritual orientation, two critical influences were identified that informed the emergent grounded theory. The first critical influence is the pervasive nature and presence of spirituality within the leadership process. The second critical influence is the personal core, formed from the

relationships between spirituality, values, and leadership found at the intersection of leadership and spirituality. Tisdell (2003) identified seven assumptions of spirituality based on 31 interviews of educators in higher and adult education. One of the seven assumptions is simply that spirituality is always present. Though not specifically tied to the leadership process, Tisdell's observation held true in this study. Further supporting the pervasive nature of spirituality is Teasdale's (1999) observation: "spirituality is a way of life that affects and includes every moment of existence" (p. 17).

The emergence of the personal core, which articulates the relationships of spirituality, values, and leadership, represents a point of departure from the extant literature. Articulating the interconnectedness between spirituality, values, and leadership is not overtly a concept that is present within the higher education literature as far as I am aware. However, there are tenets within existing literature that support the dynamics of those relationships. The concept of wholeness is one that transcends many definitions of spirituality (Estanek, 2006; HERI, 2010; Love & Talbot, 1999; Palmer, 2004; Tisdell, 2003). Wholeness connotes an integrated sense of self and an integration of identities. Speaking to the relationship of expressing one's spirituality through living out values, Chickering et al., (2006) stated "ultimately it is our character, our purposes, and the values inherent in the way we live these out in our daily lives that express our spirituality" (p. 9).

Values emerged as an important construct of interest at the intersection of spirituality and leadership. Participants described values serving as a bridge or mechanism to imbue one's spirituality into her or his leadership practices. Though a

direct link between spirituality and leadership likely continues to exist, findings

suggest that values appear to be the primary conduit of spirituality's influence into

leadership practices. Palmer (1990) and Vaill (1989) both connect values to

spirituality and leadership. Vaill (1989), in particular, stressed the important of

staying connected to one's values in order to successfully lead in times of change.

This study sought to examine spirituality and leadership and values was found to be

present at that intersection. Though spirituality greatly influences values, that does

not exclude the possibility (and likelihood) that values are also acquired from other

sources, including, family and professional codes.

In addition to considering what the results suggest about the critical influences

within the core category, the process that emerged, and subsequent metaphor of

walking the labyrinth, is found to be supported within the literature of spirituality.

Once again, Tisdell (2003) found that spiritual development is a process that is not

linear, instead a "process of moving forward and spiraling back" (p. 93). This same

finding is supported by the process equated to the circuitous path of the labyrinth.

More importantly, literature supports the spiritually-oriented leadership process as

one that is not a linear path but instead one that is primarily concerned with meaning-

making and therefore is organic, dynamic, and process-oriented.

Finally, the literature supports the role of the personal core as a destination

through which spiritually-oriented leaders seek congruence in their leadership

practices, a trajectory that emerged through data analysis. As referenced in Chapter 2,

a growing body of literature connects and highlights the need for congruence among

leaders' actions and philosophies within higher education. Literature on ethical

leadership (Kezar et al. 2006; Rost 1991) has begun to probe the role of spirituality within ethics in leadership. Spirituality has emerged as a subset and distinct facet of ethical leadership (Kezar et al., 2006). Ethical leadership is associated with character, authenticity, credibility, and congruency in the leadership literature. Though not all participants principally focused on ethical leadership, all mentioned the importance of ethics to them. The significance of the literature in this area is that ethical leadership is defined as being congruent with one's "principles, beliefs, assumption and values" (Kezar et al. 2006, p. 73).

As discussed in the findings, the degree to which spiritual identity was salient for each SSAA emerged as playing a role. SSAAs had varying degrees of awareness that spirituality was influencing their leadership. Some claimed "intentionality" in leveraging their spiritualty to enhance their leadership, while for others it appeared to be more passive. Walling (1994) examined spirituality and leadership among 10 community leaders in diverse positions (e.g., politicians, clergy, educators, entrepreneurs, business people, and medical professionals) and categorized their "awareness of connection" (p. 94) as "intentional awareness, reflective awareness, and nonawareness" (p. 95). This supports findings in this study, as participants various descriptions formed a spectrum related to their salience of spiritual identity and its connection to their leadership.

Findings reflected within the emergent grounded theory suggest that participants are engaged in the process of leadership as they journey towards their core, seeking congruence among their spirituality, values, and leadership. In essence, this process also describes ethical leadership within the literature. Gilliland (2005)

voiced that alongside vision, leaders within higher education need to assert values in order to guide those within their organizations to know how to act. The findings suggest that spiritually-oriented SSAAs are poised to cast vision, inspiring people to act, while informing that vision with clear values that encourage discussion about how to act (Gilliland, 2005).

Sustaining a Spiritual Orientation

Findings suggest that participants develop and sustain a spiritual orientation in their lives that then they employ within leadership. Elements associated with sustaining a spiritual orientation (i.e., identifying as a spiritual person; growing through questioning, trials, and maturation; connecting spiritual outlook to work; and nurturing spirituality) are consistent with definitional themes of spirituality and spiritual development related to the literature. Themes that describe the tenets of spiritual development include: an aspect of identity (Love & Talbot, 1999); developing connectedness to self and community (Estanek, 2006; Love & Talbot, 1999; Tisdell, 1999); seeking a relationship with a higher power (Estanek, 2006; Love & Talbot, 1999; Tisdell, 1999); and commitment to growth and on-going nurturing of identity (Teasdale, 1999).

Catalyzing Spirituality to Maximize Leadership Capacity

Leading with a spiritual orientation is characterized by leadership practices that are consistent with those that embody the postindustrial paradigm of leadership. For instance, findings suggest that a relational orientation (Komives et al., 2007) is present in spiritually-oriented leadership. Rost (1991) identified four characteristics of leadership including, "(1) a relationship based on influence, (2) leaders and followers

develop that relationship, (3) they intend real changes, and (4) they have mutual

purposes" (p. 127). Participants described components of all of these characteristics

of leading with a spiritual orientation. Analysis uncovered two primary characteristics

of leading with a spiritual orientation: catalyzing spirituality in leadership to

maximize leadership capacity and prioritizing people in leadership.

Catalyzing spirituality to maximize leadership capacity describes how

participants leveraged their spirituality to deepen their leadership capacity. Hoppe

(2005) observed that spirituality within the context of leadership is primarily about a

search for depth in one's entire being. One of the principle ways this manifested for

the SSAAs was seeing decisions they faced from a spiritual perspective. By viewing

the spiritual dimension of a decision, SSAAs allowed their spirituality to inform the

decision-making process. Decisions are seen with a spiritual dimension because of the

need for congruency in decision-making. Thus, a decision could trigger the need to

return to one's core and ensure congruency.

Has the decision-making process of SSAAs been considered in the research

literature? Shapiro and Stefkovich (2000), who wrote about ethical decision-making

among K-12 administrators and within educational contexts, advocated utilizing

diverse approaches to solving ethical dilemmas. Advancing a framework that

involves approaching ethical dilemmas from multiple ethical paradigms, they

asserted, helps to address complex and difficult ethical issues in the educational

content. Decision-making among administrators is primarily concerned with ethics

(i.e., ethical decision-making; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2000). Findings suggest that

spiritually-oriented SSAAs engaged multiple ethical paradigms in decision-making.

In this way, the contribution of spirituality to the empirical literature in terms of ethics (Kezar et al, 2006), is reinforced by the findings of this study.

Prioritizing People in Leadership Practice

Prioritizing people in leadership practice describes the primary characteristic that emerged from the leadership practice of spiritually-oriented leaders. SSAAs possessed a strong relational orientation and ascribed to the ethos of "treating others as I'd like to be treated." The emphasis on being people-centric leaders is also one of the primary characteristics of postindustrial leadership (Rost, 1991). People were considered sacred within their organizations and the human resources of the SSAAs was consistently elevated in importance as compared to all other resources. Palmer (2000) summarized that spirituality prompts leaders to look inward and consider the shadows they cast on others. Being an effective SSAA, participants described, was about how you "show up." That is, participants described caring about people by being attuned to the characteristic of her or his "spirit" within the organization.

"Managing your Identity": Navigating the Academy's Socio-cultural Environment

The evolution of leadership theory within the past three decades has brought to light new assumptions about leadership. Two significant changes are the role of context and culture, as well as the role of values within leadership (Kezar, 2009; Kezar et al., 2006). Findings suggest that spiritually-oriented SSAAs have experiences of leading that underscore both of these shifts. Spiritually-oriented SSAAs respond to the socio-cultural environment of the academy and their campus pertaining to issues of spirituality and religion and hesitate to reveal their identity to

colleagues and students. SSAAs identified that there are expressed and unexpressed values within higher education that lead to this dynamic.

SSAAs described the importance of their roles as student advocates who remain accessible and approachable to all constituents. SSAAs expressed concern that students or staff may not perceive the SSAA as approachable or accessible, and as a result, hesitated to share their spiritual identity. This tension begs the question: by not revealing spiritual identity, is the spiritually-oriented SSAA being congruent or authentic (Jones, Kim, & Skendall, 2012)? That is, given what emerged from the findings concerning the need to find congruence between spirituality, values, and leadership, it seems paradoxical that the spiritually-oriented SSAA would not reveal a core element of their identity (i.e., not being authentic) in the spirit of building relationships with others. One reason suggested by participants is the tension within higher education between spirituality and religion.

There is an on-going debate in the literature about whether or not higher education should acknowledge both, religion and spirituality, within the larger conversation about spirituality in higher education. Both spirituality and religion are considered identities (Estanek, 2006; Teasdale, 1999). Teasdale (1999) advocated for a separation of these terms in the literature and in practice. Nash (2001) chided the dichotomization of these terms as he believes that both reflect different parts of the same journey. Estanek (2006) contended that religion and spirituality, in practice are united for many, but that for the advancement of dialogue within the academy about issues of spirituality, that the separation of church and state be promoted. Thus, Estanek (2006) implied that if higher education engages the conversation of

spirituality, associating spirituality with religion, because of the separation of church and state, the conversation would be inhibited, if not ignored. The context of the history of the United States comes to bear on the tension regarding the deep value for separation of church and state. Yet, some (e.g., Astin et al., 2011; Murray & Nash, 2011) advocated for careful continued engagement of these issues despite the legal landscape. The tension that SSAAs face is a serious one and requires them to reconcile their spiritual identities with their roles. This can be problematic.

As discussed in Chapter 1, I highlighted a number of hypothetical situations that SSAAs could face that require complex decision-making. The challenge of the spiritually-oriented SSAA involves situations that necessitate that s/he manages her or his spiritual identity and reconciles spiritual identity within the role as an institutional leader. Managing and negotiating identity (Jones, Kim, & Skendall, 2012) is not a new concept discovered in this study. Managing and negotiating identity calls to the surface issues of evaluating one's authenticity or living authentically and considering how the context influences identity and how identity influences context (Jones, Kim, & Skendall, 2012), all issues salient for the participants in this study. Consider the cases that have been reported on campuses recently that illuminate the need for spiritually-oriented SSAAs to manage their identities and reconcile their roles as institutional leaders with their identities: (a) Michele's example (outlined in Chapter 4) that involved the Bio-Ethical Reform Movement on campus and the subsequent tension between pro-life and pro-choice students, staff, and faculty; (b) tensions over pro-Israel programming (c) the denial of recognition to a Christian evangelical student organization, whose constitution is interpreted as non-compliant with an

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institution's mandatory non-discrimination clause, because the group's constitution requires leaders to affirm Christian faith and to support evangelical beliefs, therefore excluding protected classes of students; or (d) the presence of an on-campus open-air evangelist that makes students, staff, and faculty feel uncomfortable. So, despite real issues within the academy that can be informed by spiritual identities of higher education administrators, why has the conversation about spirituality "been conspicuously absent from widespread higher education [and student affairs] discourse?" (Astin et al, 2011, p. 139).

Turning to the field of counseling psychology may shed some light on the implications of this finding. Schlosser, Foley, Stein, and Holmwood (2010) conducted a content analysis of three major counseling psychology journals spanning 13 years of publication to answer the question why counseling psychology excludes religion. They proposed nine factors that "contributed to the subtle, yet consistent message that religion is not an important factor in the theory, religion, and practice of counseling psychology" (p. 458). The factors that apply to the findings of this study include: (a) Christian privilege, (b) problems with the definitions of multicultural terms, (c) psychology's relationship with religion, (d) the invisibility of religious identity, (e) problems with religious identity development models, and (g) the complexity of religious issues" (p. 458). I will briefly explain each in context of this study's findings.

Christian privilege is a powerful force on American campuses (Johnson, 2006). When one does not identify with a given religion, s/he is assumed to be Christian (Schlosser et al., 2010). Christian privilege contributes to the invisibility of

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religion. Multicultural terms are confusing and can confound issues of identity. For instance, there are groups (e.g., Jews, Muslims) that can be termed religions, but also appropriately termed ethnicities (Schlosser et al., 2010). The discipline of psychology has sought to be a hard science and viewed as rigorous within the academy. As a result, psychologists have divorced themselves from religion in order to position their scholarly identities as more consistent with those in the hard sciences, and therefore, deemed to be valid scientists (Schlosser et al., 2010). The invisibility of identity is another complicating factor of religion. Few religious developmental models exist and those that do are not contemporary. Finally, as noted in Chapter 2, religious issues are complicated because they are difficult to define (Schlosser, 2010).

Though the content analysis was conducted within the field of counseling psychology, there are valuable findings that can inform the dilemma that spiritually-oriented SSAAs face within the academy. Student affairs itself is closely aligned with counseling psychology as a discipline. Schlosser et al. (2010) identified three reasons why counseling psychologists should embrace religion as a "critical component of cultural competence in…research and practice" (p. 461). As applied to student affairs, the three reasons include: (a) the importance of religion in the lives of students, (b) the psychological or developmental impact of religious minority status on student development, and (c) the role of religion in the work of SSAAs and their own personal lives.

Implications for Future Research and Theory Development

The findings of this study offer several implications for future research and theory development as it pertains to examining the intersection of spirituality and

leadership of senior student affairs administrators. Key areas that emerged within this study that deserve more attention in the future as it relates to research and theory development, includes gaining a deeper understanding of the influence of salience related to spirituality; examining the emergent theory by considering the inclusion of more identities reflecting a more intersectional approach; studying SSAAs on religiously-affiliated campuses and evaluating how their experiences may be different; using a case study approach to understand the influence of spiritually-oriented leadership practices on the organizations they lead; considering the socio-cultural environment of student affairs as a profession; and learning how this process of leading with a spiritual orientation may be different for student affairs professionals who hold various ranks within the student organization.

The emergent theory suggests that the salience of spirituality may have a role within the process of leading with a spiritual orientation. The role of spiritual salience identified within the relationships among spirituality, values, and leadership, demonstrates that the salience of spirituality in one's life can impact how consciously a spiritually-oriented leader infuses her or his spirituality into her or his values and leadership. Though a dynamic with salience of spiritual identity was identified within the emergent theory, future research ought to consider the role of the salience of spirituality in a more direct way. Does salience of spirituality influence leadership practice? Does salience of spirituality change the manner in which the spiritually-oriented SSAA manages her or his identity within the socio-cultural environment of higher education?

Responding to the limited amount of research on the intersection of spirituality and leadership, particularly among SSAAs, I made the decision to design this study in a way that focused on the consideration of the intersection of spirituality and leadership, understating the influence of other identities within this process. Evolving understanding of identity demonstrates the intersectional nature of identity (Shields, 2008). As demonstrated by the participant profiles, I sought a diverse sample of SSAAs because of the importance to consider how feminist and multicultural conceptualizations of leadership have added depth to the leadership literature (e.g., Arminio et al, 2000; Astin & Leland, 1991; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Komives, 1991). Though evidence exists in the findings that participants' multiple identities do interact with their spiritual identity, I did not focus on the multiple intersections within data analysis. Future research ought to address and examine the intersection of spirituality and leadership while emphasizing various multiple identities and their influence within the process of spirituality influencing leadership.

Participants were selected on a series of criteria, including being an SSAA at a non-religiously affiliated institution. This decision was intentional as part of the research design to gain an understanding of the experience spiritually-oriented SSAAs might have within the socio-cultural environment of higher education related to reactions towards religion and spirituality within the campus environment. Nonetheless, the academy is home to many religiously-affiliated institutions. The socio-cultural environment is likely different for spiritually-oriented leaders there and future research ought to consider how those environments may be similar or different. Future research could also interrogate the experience of SSAAs at religiously-

affiliated institutions who do not share the same religious or spiritual values of their institution.

Understanding how the leadership practices of spiritually-oriented leaders influenced their organizations, staff, and students was likely the most difficult question to answer. Participants repeatedly commented that it would be more appropriate to ask their staff that question. Data sources were limited to the SSAAs themselves and did not consider interviewing direct reports or students with whom the participant closely worked; however, future research ought to consider how to better understand a response to this inquiry. A case study approach would give access to others who engage in the leadership process with the spiritually-oriented leader and may give more insight into the influence of their leadership practices wihtin their organizations.

Though the socio-cultural environment of the academy and the campus of the SSAA were considered in this study, the socio-cultural environment of the student affairs profession as it pertains to spirituality, faith, and religion was not explicitly addressed. There are many customs, values, and practices present within the student affairs profession and SSAAs have a strong identity as a student affairs educator. Future research ought to consider how this socio-cultural environment adds to the dynamics of being a spiritually-oriented leader within higher education. Finally, the population sampled within this study was the SSAA. Future research ought to consider the spiritually-oriented leadership practices of student affairs educators of varying "ranks." Particularly as it relates to managing identity, mid-level managers or entry-level professionals may have a different experience that is worthy of

exploration. Again, doing so would provide a more complete picture of spiritually-oriented leadership.

Implications for Senior Student Affairs Administrators

Broadly, SSAAs should consider their professional development, training, and socialization in light of the findings of this study. For spiritually-oriented SSAAs, the findings suggest that spirituality is likely influencing their leadership. Gaining an understanding of and reflecting about the influence of spirituality on leadership practice is a valuable tool for growing in self-awareness and fully understanding how one might influence others within her or his organization. First, I discuss how the findings of this study suggest that SSAAs could gain resources in deepening their leadership capacity by considering their spirituality. Decision-making is a key role of the SSAA. As issues facing SSAAs grow in complexity, SSAAs are called upon to make difficult decisions. Possessing inner resources to face difficult situations on campus can aid the SSAA in their work. Thus, the findings suggest that SSAAs could benefit from understanding their inner selves more fully.

What types of professional development opportunities exist within student affairs that aid the SSAA in growing in awareness of their inner resources or spirituality? Findings of this study suggest that SSAAs would benefit from conversations about the intersection of leadership and spirituality within their professional development. Training of the SSAA should include learning on how to engage complex situations that require decision-making. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2000) encouraged that the case study approach be used in training educational administrators. They suggested that considering difficult paradoxes, such as

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individual rights versus community standards; the traditional curriculum vs. the hidden curriculum; personal codes versus professional codes; and equity versus equality, can spur helpful conversation for educational administrators. Within our own field, case study books (e.g., Magolda & Baxter Magolda, 2011; Stage & Hubbard, 2012) exist and can be used. Findings, however underscore the need for specific case studies that explore paradoxes that emerge on a college campus. Finally, the socialization of the SSAA is important to consider. As was evident by Josh's reflection on his generation of SSAAs, spirituality is not openly spoken about in relation to leadership, if at all. Including conversations about spirituality alongside other identities in SSAA institutes or presentations should be considered. Socializing student affairs graduate students to consider their spiritual identity can have an influence as a new generation of SSAAs is trained.

Implications for Student Affairs Graduate Preparation Programs

In addition to implications for future research and theory, findings from this study offer implications for student affairs and higher education graduate preparation programs. The findings of this study prompt the question: how is spirituality considered in the curriculum of graduate preparation programs, particularly pertaining to leadership development? Exploration of identity is the hallmark of many student affairs and higher education graduate preparation programs. Understanding identity helps developing student affairs educators think critically about student development. Understanding identity also helps the emerging student affairs educator to gain insight into how her or his identity will inform her or his approach to working with students and to inform her or his leadership development. As issues of race, sexual

orientation, and gender, among others, are discussed, these issues allow the graduate student to find a voice to express her or his identity within their emerging leadership practices. Spirituality should be included in discussions of developing leadership identity among students enrolled in student affairs and higher education preparation programs.

Graduate preparation programs can play a role in empowering budding student affairs educators to articulate their spiritual identity. If master's students are encouraged to speak about their spiritual identity alongside other identities, they can be socialized early that conversations about spirituality are not any less important than other identities. This may encourage a more lasting impact on the way conversations of spirituality are perceived within the academy. Sharp, Riera, and Jones (2012) offered a viable model for graduate students to explore their identities using autoethnographic methods. In their study, the process of autoethnography was effective in empowering student affairs graduate students, in concert with faculty, to voice and engage conversations about their multiple identities (Sharp, Riera, & Jones, 2012).

Implications for Professional Associations

Professional associations, namely ACPA and NASPA, have done a lot of work in recent years to bring attention to the issue of spirituality as it relates to student development. Less attention has been given to the spiritual identities of student affairs educators and how that influences our student affairs and leadership practice. Findings of this study suggest that spirituality does play an influence in leadership of some SSAAs and ought to be discussed alongside of other identities.

More forums to advance the work of considering the intersection of spirituality and leadership for all student affairs administrators would be of import. If discussions begin at lower ranks of student affairs administration, eventual SSAAs would be socialized to integrate discussions of spirituality alongside discussions of race, sexual orientation, and gender as the intersection of leadership is considered.

Implications for Student Affairs Practice

Though constraints of being a spiritually-oriented SSAA were reported, so were opportunities. Participants described the opportunity to connect with a student for whom spiritual identity is resonant and encourage that student along their spiritual journey. Exploring how the value-laden leadership approaches of SSAAs may have implications for student leadership and spiritual development is useful. Nash and Scott (2009) contended that without engaging the discussion of religious and spiritual difference that the work of multiculturalism will be sorely lacking, particularly in our ever expanding global society. When student affairs educators heeded the call to begin facilitating cross-cultural conversations among students in higher education, student affairs educators noted that without engaging in the conversations themselves, their ability to do this work was in fact limited. A similar evolution is occurring in reference to working with students around their spiritual development. Murray and Scott (2011) unequivocally asserted that student affairs educators "have a role to play in attending to students' religious and spiritual needs" (p. 347) by modeling authenticity, opening the door to religious and spiritual dialogue, creating a mentoring environment, providing resources, and understanding nuanced institutional contexts and audiences. As spiritually-oriented SSAAs are empowered to find their voices

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within the academy, this may encourage other student affairs educators to consider religio-spiritual mentoring (Murray & Scott, 2011) of students.

Though the rationale for this study centered on understanding the leadership of SSAAs, implications exist for the leadership development of students. Leadership practices in higher education have remained rather traditional, yet the expectation of educators is for college graduates to implement progressive and postindustrial leadership practices at their places of work. Despite what student affairs educators say, students learn what student affairs educators do. Astin and Astin (2000) affirmed this idea: "If we want our students to acquire the qualities of effective leaders, then we have to model these same qualities, not only in our individual professional conduct, but also in our curriculum, our pedagogy, our institutional policies and our preferred modes of governance" (p. 4). In short, SSAAs have the capacity to serve as models for students. As the former president of Yale University, Bart Giamatti (1988) asserted, "…an educational institution teaches far, far more, and more profoundly, by how it acts than by anything anyone within it ever says" (pp. 191-192). The results of this study may provide insight into how spiritually-oriented SSAAs influence students' leadership development.

Finally, given the title of this study I would be remiss not to note the influence spiritually-oriented SSAAs can have on the spiritual development of students by shaping campus environments to support spiritual growth, discussion, and maturation. For example, labyrinths are being installed in various public gardens and even some campuses to encourage people to practice spiritual contemplation, prayer, and mediation. A centerpiece, such as a labyrinth, can then be used to support a number of

programs that draw attention to a student's spiritual development and the importance of holistic development generally.

Limitations of the Study

When reviewing the findings of this study, it is important to note several limitations. Acknowledging the boundaries and intent of qualitative research will aid readers in understanding the appropriate application of the study's findings. Generalizability is not the goal of qualitative research (Jones et al., 2006) and results should not be applied universally. I did not intend for this study to represent all senior student affairs administrators, or even all student affairs administrators who possess a spiritual identity. Instead, these findings should be considered a trustworthy (Charmaz, 2006; Jones et al., 2006) account of 14 spiritually-oriented SSAAs at a particular point in time.

Though there was diversity present in my sample, it would have been ideal to have a broader spectrum of recognized spiritual and religious identities. The overwhelming religious and faith identity was Christian. As evidenced by the views expressed by the participants, an identity of Christian does not manifest the same for each individual. As I mentioned in Chapter 4, the table of participant profiles does not do justice to the diversity present in the sample; however, it would have been beneficial to have more religious and faith backgrounds represented. It is challenging to parse out how a particular faith or religious orientation influences the conceptualization of the intersection of leadership and spirituality when the sample is limited in its diversity. And, as mentioned above, addressing this diversity in the findings would have been beneficial.

A key finding was how the spiritually-oriented SSAAs in this study manage their identities and reconcile their spiritual identity with their roles as institutional leaders. One must acknowledge the power that exists within the SSAA role relative to a mid- or entry-level professional. Finding one's voice (as described in Chapter 4) may look substantively different if one did not possess the privilege and power that is associated with a person in the SSAA role. Therefore, that finding in particular is limited in that the process by which a spiritually-oriented leader manages her or his identity may look and be experienced differently at other levels of the organization.

Student development literature continues to reinforce that social identities are experienced intersectionally (Jones & McEwen, 2000). Findings from this study suggest that spiritual development intersects with leadership development. Yet, by isolating spiritual identity and development as the focus, I denied the inclusion of considering how other identities intersect with leadership. Other identities, such as gender, race, and sexual orientation, also intersect with and influence leadership development and leadership practices. Given the scant research on the intersection of spirituality and leadership, I determined that isolating spirituality within the design of this study was a necessary decision, yet recognize that it is also a limitation of this study because of the evidence that other identities also influence leadership and spirituality.

Finally, a limitation of this study is the method of data collection limited to interviews. There are two implications of this data collection limitation. Much of the data collected were retrospective in nature. As participants described their spiritual and leadership development it was all in retrospect and none of this was observed in

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person. More significantly, SSAAs in this study were only able to speculate how their spiritually-oriented leadership practices impacted their organization and the colleagues with whom they jointly engage in leadership. The study was designed to maximize acquiring stories that provided insight into the intersection of spirituality and leadership; however, observing the participants' leadership practices first-hand would provide rich data to inform the grounded theory.

Strengths of the Study

In addition to limitations, this study also reflects a number of strengths. First, the study was designed to respond to the increasing calls for research examining the intersection of spirituality and leadership within higher education (Chickering et al., 2006; Dalton, 2006; Kezar, 2009; Kezar et al., 2006; Schwartz, 2008). Next, this research also responded to these issues by generating a grounded theory that describes the process of leading with a spiritual orientation, providing insight into the intersection of leadership and spirituality. As noted in Chapter 2, much of the research conducted examining the intersection of leadership and spirituality primarily focuses on affirming the influence of spirituality or describing the characteristics of spiritually-oriented leaders. This research does that and also focuses on describing the process by which spirituality influences leadership practices among SSAAs, a unique contribution to the literature. Additionally, the study explores how the socio-cultural environment of higher education as it pertains to spirituality and religion influences the lived experiences of SSAAs within the academy.

Finally, a strength of this study is that it empowered spiritually-oriented SSAAs to share their stories. Voice can be a powerful tool (Sharp et al., 2012) for

spiritually-oriented SSAAs to make meaning of their own experiences within the socio-cultural environment of the academy. There are no publications, of which I am aware, that spiritually-oriented SSAAs have been able to relay their experiences within higher education. This study allows others to begin gaining an understanding of how spirituality influences leadership practice among spiritually-oriented SSAAs. The study provided an opportunity for seasoned leaders to consider how their spirituality influences this leadership. Though the SSAAs in this study have spent considerable time reflecting on their leadership, some had not reflected on the intersection of their spirituality and leadership. By reading this study, other SSAAs may begin to also be able to articulate the influence of spirituality within their own leadership practices. This will hopefully continue to add to the "conversation" that has been called for within the literature as it relates to understanding the intersection of leadership and spirituality among higher education administrators.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reintroduced research questions and a review of the theoretical and empirical literature was provided in order to demonstrate where the findings of the study are congruent with and divergent from the extant literature. I also offered implications for research and practice, as well as limitations and strengths of the study. The emergent theory is insightful in that it provides understanding of how spirituality influences the leadership practices of the 14 SSAAs involved with this study. The findings of the study provide a robust springboard for further research in this area.

Through the course of the research process, my own perspectives about the intersection of spirituality and leadership were informed and in many cases shifted. I have come to understand this process as much more fluid and dynamic than I once thought. I came to realize the many points of congruence that spiritually-oriented leaders have with working in the academy, despite a socio-cultural environment that often marginalizes conversations about spirituality. There is still much to be discovered within the labyrinth. My hope is that research within student affairs continues to examine the intersection of spirituality and leadership.

APPENDIX A: CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

DATE

Dear _____,

I am writing to solicit nominations of senior student affairs administrators for my dissertation research. Senior level student affairs administrators are also encouraged to self-nominate themselves for this study. The purpose of this study is to understand how spirituality influences the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. Senior student affairs administrators for the purpose of this study includes administrators who serve at the senior level of student affairs administration on their campus (e.g., vice president, dean of students, associate vice president, assistant vice president, associate dean of students) and who work at non-religiously affiliated institutions.

As you identify potential participants for this study please consider that I am interested in participants who are able to: 1) reflect on the beliefs and practices that shape their spirituality and leadership, 2) affirm that spirituality informs their values and their leadership practices, and 3) speak openly about and reflect upon their leadership practices and the organizations in which they lead. I am interested in a sample of senior student affairs administrators who are diverse across social identities (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, or ability) with a particular emphasis of diversity among their spiritual identity (e.g., organized religion, personal spiritual identity). I am also interested in diversity among the non-religiously affiliated types of institutions in which they are employed (e.g., private or public).

Please send the names and email addresses of senior student affairs administrators who come to mind by [date two weeks from date sent]. You can provide this information to me via e-mail at jriera@umd.edu. The senior student affairs administrators will be informed that you personally nominated them unless you would prefer that you not be identified.

If you wish to contact me with questions or for any other reason I can be reached at:
Phone (with private voicemail): 732-267-5514
E-mail: jriera@umd.edu

I look forward to hearing from you and thank in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

José-Luis Riera   Dr. Susan R. Jones
Doctoral Candidate   Associate Professor
University of Maryland   University of Maryland
College Student Personnel   College Student Personnel

APPENDIX B: LETTER TO NOMINATED SSAAs

DATE

Dear _____,

Hello! My name is José-Luis Riera. I am a doctoral student at the University Maryland conducting a research study on spirituality and the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. Through this study I seek to explore the intersection of spiritual and leadership development and consider how spirituality may influence leadership.

You have been nominated by [Name of Nominator] who believes that you have thought about the relationship between leadership and spirituality as a senior student affairs administrator. It is my hope that you will consider being a part of this study, as you have the potential to make an important contribution.

The study will consist of two face-to-face or phone individual interviews, each approximately 60-90 minutes in length, to be conducted over the summer and throughout fall semester 2010. During these digitally-recorded interviews we will have a chance to discuss your leadership development, spiritual development, and the relationship between the two. If you are interested I can send you some of the initial questions in advance. Your participation will remain confidential as you will select a pseudonym for the purposes of this study.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may choose not to participate at any point in time. If you are interested in participating, please complete the attached interest form and return it to me. I will select participants based on sampling criteria after all forms have been turned into me and then be in touch with selected participants about scheduling an interview. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you wish to contact me with questions or for any other reason I can be reached at:
Phone (with private voicemail): 732-267-5514
E-mail: jriera@umd.edu

I am very excited about this project and pleased that you would consider participated as well! I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

José-Luis Riera   Dr. Susan R. Jones
Doctoral Candidate   Associate Professor
University of Maryland   University of Maryland
College Student Personnel   College Student Personnel

DATE

Dear _____,

Hello! My name is José-Luis Riera. I am a doctoral student at the University Maryland conducting a research study on spirituality and the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. Through this study I seek to explore the intersection of spiritual and leadership development and consider how spirituality may influence leadership.

Thank you for nominating yourself for this study and being willing to reflect upon the role that spirituality may have in your leadership practices as a senior student affairs administrator. It is my hope that you will consider being a part of this study, as you have the potential to make an important contribution.

The study will consist of two face-to-face or phone individual interviews, each approximately 60-90 minutes in length, to be conducted over the summer and throughout fall semester 2010. During these digitally-recorded interviews we will have a chance to discuss your leadership development, spiritual development, and the relationship between the two. If you are interested I can send you some of the initial questions in advance. Your participation will remain confidential as you will select a pseudonym for the purposes of this study.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may choose not to participate at any point in time. If you are interested in participating, please complete the attached interest form and return it to me. I will select participants based on sampling criteria after all forms have been turned into me and then be in touch with selected participants about scheduling an interview. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you wish to contact me with questions or for any other reason I can be reached at:
Phone (with private voicemail): 732-267-5514
E-mail: jriera@umd.edu

I am very excited about this project and pleased that you would consider participated as well! I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

José-Luis Riera   Dr. Susan R. Jones
Doctoral Candidate   Associate Professor
University of Maryland   University of Maryland
College Student Personnel   College Student Personnel

APPENDIX D: INTEREST FORM

Name	
E-mail Address	
Telephone #	
Street Address	
City, State, Zip	

Will you be available for interviews during the:
Summer of 2010? (y/n) _____
Fall of 2010? (y/n) _____

Participants in this study will be selected to represent a wide range of social group identities and spiritual identities. Any information you can provide with regard to the areas below will be helpful in identifying participants for this research study.

Current Title	
Name of Institution	
Areas of Responsibility	
Years in current position	
Years as a senior student affairs administrator	
Years in the student affairs profession:	

Please provide a brief description of your leadership development and leadership philosophy (feel free to use more space):

Please provide a brief description of your spiritual development and your spiritual identity (feel free to use more space):

Demographic Information

Gender	
Race	
Ethnicity	
Sexual Orientation	
Religion	
Disability	

INTERVIEW 1
Interview Process:
1. Welcome participant.
2. Introduce myself and the research study.
3. Explain the interview process.
    a. The interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes.
    b. The conversation will be kept confidential.
    c. I will be digitally recording the interview and taking notes, but individual identity will be kept confidential. Explain that the identity of all participants will remain anonymous in materials or deliverables written and associated with this project. The data gathered will be used for publication purposes but will not associate participants with identifiable information.
    d. Explain that participant will be provided with a transcript of the interview in order to clarify, add, or edit our interview (if interested).
    e. Participant should select a pseudonym to keep this as confidential as possible.
4. Have participant review and sign the informed consent form. Explain risks, benefits, and means to minimize risk to participants
5. Clarify and review if they have any questions.
6. Begin interview.
7. At end of interview, stop recorder.
8. Thank participant and confirm next steps (review of transcripts, next interview).

Interview Purpose:
- To establish trust and rapport with the participant
- To introduce the topic
- To begin to understand the leadership practices of the individual and how their leadership/spiritual development inform one another

Interview Questions:

Getting Acquainted and Establishing Trust and Rapport
1. I would like to begin by understanding more about what you do here at [insert name of institution]. Please tell me your exact title and more about what your current position entails.

2. I'd like to learn more about [insert institutional name here]. Please tell me about the institution at which you work. How would you describe this institution to a colleague outside of this environment? How would you describe the institutional context and environment? What are the priorities of the institution and of the Division of Student Affairs?

3. Now, I'd like to learn more about you. What led you into your current position today? What has your "journey" as a professional been since entering the field?

Probing Reflection on Leadership Practices

1. Describe your leadership practices as a senior student affairs administrator.

2. Now that you've identified a list of your leadership practices, I'd like to learn more about your leadership practices in action. What are some stories of your leadership and professional practice that demonstrates your leadership practices in action through your position as a senior student affairs administrator?

3. What guides you in your decision making as a senior student affairs administrator?

4. Describe your core values and how your core values shape how you lead. Please think of a time in which your core values were salient to you in your leadership? Please share this illustration with me.

5. How does your spirituality influence your leadership practices?
   a. If a colleague asked you to share an illustration from your work that captures this influence, what would you share with them?
   b. What happens in those moments?

INTERVIEW 2
Interview Purpose:
- To understand the spiritual dimension of the participant
- To understand the intersection of spirituality and leadership.
- To understand the influence of spirituality on leadership practices of the participant.

To do: Remind participants about risks, benefits, and means to minimize risk.

Interview Questions:

Probing deeper into the role of values and spirituality in leadership:

1. Describe examples of time when you faced competing values in making decision in your role as a senior student affairs administrator.
   a. Do you see your sense of spirituality connecting with aspects of your leadership practices when you are faced with making decisions that involve competing values?
   b. How did your spirituality guide your leadership/leadership practices through these times?

2. What times that you really struggled on the job… Describe examples of times when things were difficult – did your spirituality inform your leadership? If so, how?

3. Are there ways in which you might identify your leadership practices as infused by your spirituality? What illustrations from your work can you share that demonstrate how you view this relationship between your spirituality and leadership practices?

4. Did you ever feel like you were "going public" with your spirituality?
    a. How did this revelation to your staff, supervisor, or colleagues influence your leadership practices?
    b. Did this happen once in your career or have you found yourself experiencing this phenomena multiple times throughout your career?
    c. Do you have opportunities to discuss your faith/spiritual feelings/concerns with anyone on campus? (CSBV)

5. How does the institutional context that we spoke about during our first interview promote or inhibit your expression as a spiritual leader?

6. What influence do you think your spiritual leadership has on the organization you lead?

APPENDIX F: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Title	**The Influence of Spirituality on the Leadership Practices of Senior Student Affairs Administrators**
Why is this research being done?	This is a research project being conducted by José-Luis Riera (under the supervision of Dr. Susan R. Jones) at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are a senior level student affairs administrator and have expressed an interest in participating in this study. The purpose of this research project is to gain an understanding of the influence that spirituality has on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators.
What will I be asked to do?	The procedures involve two semi-structured, individual interviews with senior student affairs administrators face-to-face or over the telephone. Each interview will be conducted using a list of open-ended, intentionally sequenced questions. Questions will ask participants for basic information, reflections, and interpretations about their overall thoughts about the intersection of spirituality and leadership. Each interview will last approximately 60-90 minutes.
What about confidentiality?	We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, data will be stored on a password-protected computer and hard-copies of data will be kept in a locked storage area. Also, (1) your name will not be included on the surveys and other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the survey and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your survey to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. The identity of all participants will remain anonymous in materials or deliverables written and associated with this project. The data gathered will be used for publication purposes but will not associate participants with identifiable information. Participants will choose pseudonyms and these will be used to protect the identity of subjects in all reports and manuscripts. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. This research project involves making digital recordings of the interviews with you. The recordings are intended to assist the researcher in accurately representing your viewpoints. Recordings will be transcribed and analyzed. The researcher will have access to them; however, they will be stored in a locked cabinet. Recordings from this study will be kept until May 2012 when all recordings will be destroyed. ☐ I agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study. ☐ I do not agree to be digitally recorded during my participation in this study.

Project Title	The Influence of Spirituality on the Leadership Practices of Senior Student Affairs Administrators
What are the risks of this research?	There are no known risks associated with participating in this research project. This process may impact participants' perceptions of themselves and inform their future personal and professional decisions. This process may impact your perceptions of yourself and inform your future personal and professional decisions.
What are the benefits of this research?	This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the investigator learn more about the influence of spirituality on the leadership practices of senior student affairs administrators. We hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of leadership practices in higher education administrators
Do I have to be in this research? May I stop participating at any time?	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you withdraw from the study, I will destroy transcripts, digital recordings, and fieldnotes of your data or give originals and all copies of these documents to you. If you choose to withdraw, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.
What if I have questions?	This research is being conducted by José-Luis Riera (in conjunction with faculty member Dr. Susan R. Jones) from the Department of Counseling and Personnel Services at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact José-Luis Riera at: The University of Maryland, 2118 Mitchell Building, College Park. MD, 20742; 301-314-9151; or jriera@umd.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) irb@umd.edu; (telephone) 301-405-0678** This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.
Statement of Age of Subject and Consent	Your signature indicates that: you are at least 18 years of age;, the research has been explained to you; your questions have been fully answered; and you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.

Signature and Date	**NAME OF SUBJECT**	
	SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT	
	DATE	

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