Ethical Decision-Making: Navigating the Tensions of the Faculty Chair's Dual Role as Authentic Transformational Leader and Administrative Task Manager in Higher Education

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Authorization to Submit Dissertation

This dissertation of Michelle Bennett, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a Major in Education and titled "Ethical Decision-Making: Navigating the Tensions of the Faculty Chair's Dual Role as Authentic Transformational Leader and Administrative Task Manager in Higher Education," has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates below, is now granted to submit final copies to the College of Graduate Studies for approval.

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Abstract

This single-case study explores the ethical leadership and decision-making of the faculty department chair (FDC) in higher education. The FDC as entry-level leader is required to produce multifarious results at a high level, while operating in far-reaching contexts, and are appraised and culpable to a legion of diverse stakeholders. The FDC also navigates the dualistic dichotomy of their role as administrative task manager and faculty leader. Through the shared experiences of ten co-participants, themes emerge which illuminate the tensions inherent in this position as the FDC acts as an extension of administration and as a faculty leader to advance the mission of the university or college while also acting as a peer leader within the department. Authentic Transformational Leadership and consideration to ethics related to Ethics of Justice, of Care, of Critique, and of the Profession provide lenses examing how the FDCs make ethical decisions in this seemingly oppositional role. Careful analysis of results in the culmination of this study illuminate consistent themes of a Faculty Department Chair's lived experience, and inform an Ethics of Profession that may be applied by faculty who find themselves in this leadership role so that they may better navigate the challenges of the position.

Keywords: faculty department chair, authentic transformational leadership, ethics, higher education, decision-making, critical social justice theory, ethics of the profession, case study, ethical leadership

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Dedication

My graduate education began when my daughter was two and I was pregnant with my son. Both are adults now and have spent their entire lives watching me continue an educational journey. They unceasingly inspire me to be a better person.

To my daughter Alexis Bennett, who is one of the most amazing young women I know. Thank you for your coaching, editing, and for believing in me. I could not have accomplished this work without you.

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Chapter One: Introduction

This research examines the leadership and decision-making of the faculty department chair (FDC) in higher education with specific emphasis on decision-making framed by ethical consideration. There are few positions in any industry where entry-level leaders are required to produce such multifarious results at a high level, who operate in far-reaching contexts, and who are appraised and culpable to a legion of diverse stakeholders as the FDC in higher education.

Consideration of educational leadership theories and approaches directed toward transformative practice, as examined in the review of literature, are a touchstone for this study. A perspective is presented that Authentic Transformational Leadership Theory (TL) encapsulates the tenets linked to the success of the FDC to successfully manage conflicts and professional incongruence for self and others and make decisions in an ethical manner with care toward all stakeholders. Transformational Leadership strategies inform Authentic Transformational Leadership practices and incorporate doctrines of professional ethics through this inquiry, and are considered an ecumenical approach to praxis in the faculty department chair (FDC) position within higher education.

Background to the Study

The FDC position has always been complex. There are two primary pathways to assume the FDC role within higher education. Many universities and colleges designate the FDC position as rotational among faculty within a department. For those promoted from the faculty pool, the position description, responsibilities, and rotation sequencing are typically outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Within this context, the department chair is much like an empty chair at the front of a boardroom or a classroom: It is a particular leadership responsibility set apart from the vast duties of each faculty member, wherein faculty members rotate to fulfill the demands of the department and the broader college, school, or institution. In other instances, the institution recruits internally or externally to select a candidate who may or may not possess tenure, associate status, or FDC experience. This position is usually termed as department head rather than faculty department chair as the position is not rotational in nature and the person who fills this role is not chosen by faculty vote. In either case, the application for vacancy is competitive and the successful candidate assumes the position based on the consensus of departmental faculty, supervising dean, and other members of administration. This pathway is often for a specified period of time, but as is the case of many department head positions can also be relatively indefinite based on success in the role.

The socialization process that accompanies the transition from faculty member to faculty department chair varies in each institution; however, research findings suggest that many FDCs are promoted from faculty ranks with little experience in leadership or administration. Department chairs (Smith & Steward, 1999; Gmelch & Buller, 2014) find themselves between the role of faculty and administrator, with responsibility to develop interpersonal relationships aimed at accomplishing tasks that serve the department and the university. Over time, FDCs adjust to the duality of the position, yet in so doing they also realize that they are not wholly vested with one or the other. This inevitably produces internal conflict for the FDC, as s/he must bounce between both sides to do his/her job. It may also create tension for the FDC between his or her faculty and the administration whom s/he now reports to.

To learn to navigate the new position, an FDC may receive training, though most are not formalized sessions. Instead, informal training typically occurs when the dean, vice president, executive vice president, or president make decisions or rules, and then express the manner in which the FDC should conduct the work or communicate changes to faculty and students. The FDC is strategically positioned by the administration as an agent of enforcement (Smith & Steward, 1999). FDCs receive a variation of training from peers who have previously served as FDCs, or who are currently in other departments or at other schools, and are willing to share their experiences and advice. Because most training is informal and gained firsthand through experience, FDCs are often at a steep learning curve that may fundamentally limit their agency to produce positive efficacy when the individual initially assumes the position.

FDCs face a profusion of responsibilities that are often incongruous in nature as they navigate the middle-ground between administration and faculty (Gmelch & Parkay, 1999; Berdrow, 2010; Smith & Wolverton, 2010). Academics have considered this important work as performed by the FDC and conceptualized the functions of the role and division of work performed: 54 specific tasks and duties as described by Tucker (1992); 97 distinct activities are derived from Beyer, Creswell, Egly, Seagren, and Wheeler (1990) in research conducted at the University of Nebraska; and Carroll & Gmelch (1994) identified 24 tasks divided into clusters for consideration. The identification of FDC responsibilities are primarily categorized into dual roles of faculty oversight and task-oriented assignments as administrator (Lucas, 1994; Wolverton et al., 2008; Beyer, Creswell, Egly, Seagren, and Wheeler 1990; Berdrow, 2010; Smith & Wolverton, 2010; Gmelch & Buller, 2015).

Whether the tasks are categorized as broadly as 4 or as specifically as 97, researchers espouse that the work of the FDC requires vast and varied duties.

The decision-making practices of the FDC require consideration of several domains to holistically grasp how the position functions within the organizational structure of the academy, and the experiential practices of the person who navigates the demands of the position. By looking at both the textual accounts of the FDC position (i.e., codified, formal practices documented in handbooks and on other official academic documents) and various performances of individuals who occupy it, the organizational, rhetorical, and performative aspects are rendered more legible and clear. These considerations, both procedural and performative, serve to further enrich understanding of organizational and decision-making practices of which the FDC is a part.

Bolman and Deal (2013) discuss the frames of educational organization prominent within the academy, and Gmelch and Buller (2015) add to this perspective. A frame is a set of constructs that are learned through experience and education. Framing provides leaders with contextual consideration for making decision (Bolman & Deal, 2013). “Breaking frame” is a concept that addresses the leadership capacity to consider options outside of the normalized approach, and that an FDC may draw from. Finding new pathways to frame situations or to consider alternative points of view is rare, and in practice leaders seldom consider frames. Instead, leaders tend to focus on decisions that are frame-bound and that follow the status quo (Kahneman, 2011). Experience and practice allow the FDC to select the best frame or tool for the situation. Such consideration, therefore, allows for decision-making from an ethics-of-profession perspective that prizes ethical practice and Authentic Transformational Leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Five organizational frames espouse the framing expectation of the FDC position. The four primary organizational constructs that may be present within the academy are: structural (factories), human resources (families), political (jungles), and symbolic (temples or carnivals) (Bolman & Deal 1997; Berdrow, 2010; Bolman & Deal, 2013).[1] Each decision-making situation that an FDC encounters typically contains natural dialectic tension as institutional stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, administration, staff, boards, politicians, government, and community) are interdependent and outcomes of decisions may greatly affect any of these parties. A fifth structural frame, constitutive frame, offers insight into leader and stakeholders as creators of communication.

Structural Frame

The structural construct is metaphorically linked to the mechanisms of the organization. Productivity, output, structure, organizational charts, and role responsibilities are the primary concerns (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Miller, 2015). As result of developments within the Industrial Revolution of the 19th Century, the structural frame was born of Fayol's Theory of Classical Management (1949), Weber's Bureaucratic Management Theory (1946), and Taylor's Theory of Scientific Management (1911).

In particular, Taylor developed the metaphor of the organization as machine mechanism consisting of composite parts (e.g., people, practices, and even technology) that affected the whole, or the organization itself. Taylor's metaphor fundamentally shaped the idea of the organization as a production machine, and this view impacted leadership models within industries well through the early years of the 20th century (Miller, 2015). As a construct, the structural frame repositioned employees and employers around discrete and divisible practices within the organization. Yet, the structural frame also gradually shifted the focus of leadership from the well-being of employees (and even consumers) to the maximization of outcomes. Within this construct, organizational culture focuses on “the bottom line,” demanding standardization, specialization, and predictability in decision-making (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Miller, 2015). As a result, the structural frame occupies a rather precarious space in the capacity of the academy and may become problematic in its understanding of decision-making in the greater arena of stakeholders.

Human Resources Frame

The human resources construct focuses on people, relationships, and duties within the organization. In contrast to the structural frame, the human resources perspective emphasizes the employee and his/her well-being. This frame views the organization as a collective of human beings who will perform well and maintain loyalty to the organization when, and if, their financial and emotional needs are met. The individual’s ability to obtain the skills and resources to achieve success are continually developed toward reaching organizational health and vitality (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Miller, 2015), which incentivizes employees to invest in organizational culture. Yet, because it is often hard, if not impossible, to fulfill the financial and emotional needs of every single constituent of an organization, this construct is problematic. Additionally, leaders may inadvertently make decisions that harm the well-being of specific groups within the organization, leading to even greater difficulty to maintain harmony in the organization. This construct is therefore limited in its application because it does not fully account for the array of stakeholders for which an organization is implicated.

Political Frame

The jungle metaphor [A1] refers to the political construct, which considers public institutions of higher education where funding, accreditation boards, and state departments of education inform rules and responsibilities of the organizations and their members. As the name of this construct hints, it can be hostile. Individuals vie for power to fulfill self-interests, often resulting in greater competition within an organization. The social politics of the organization creates tension for employees around resources, advancement, and power. Political practices of bargaining and negotiating mediate engagements between individuals, but it does not free them of tension when emotions and attitudes are factored in. Within the academy, problems arise when the FDC is unaware of the power structure, power is concentrated inappropriately, power is disguised, or power is so broadly dispersed that inaction occurs (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Symbolic Frame

The construct of carnivals and temples is a metaphor for the cultural signs, symbols, and artifacts that produce order within an organization. This construct minimizes rationality in decision-making as organizational members are, instead, considered actors who play key characters in the organizational script (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Within this formation, everyone performs, but not everyone shares the same power or access to resources. In particular, “sacred cows”—practices, policies, groups, or people immune to question or criticism—exist and may inhibit leadership and decision-making. Naturally, problems occur when organizational members do not fulfill their roles and do not perform according to the organizational stories, rituals, heroes, or villains. Within the academy, this construct highlights the dramaturgical nature of various specific positions as they inform the organizational structure. It also fails to fully account for the dynamism of stakeholders, including FDCs, who occupy and perform more than a single role at a time.

Constitutive Frame (CCO)

The fifth and final construct is constitutive framing. Although not a construct in Bolman and Deal's work (2013), this concept is crucial to understanding the communication-centric nature of organization. Communicative constitution of organizations (CCO) is the theoretical notion that organizations are invoked and maintained through communicative practices (Cooren, Cornelissen & Clark, 2011). Unlike the previous constructs, which imply that organizational structure emerges from formalized directive, the CCO perspective considers *communication* the central means through which an organization exists and endures.

Communication amongst all agents creates meaning that dually shapes practices of organizing and the organization as a whole. For example, communication as constitutive of the academy as a whole, the collection of various institutions of higher education rhetorically represented by the term, and the singular institution of educational advancement within the college that an FDC is a part.

To develop the constitutive framing construct, Blaschke, Cooren, McPhee, Schoeneborn, Seidl, and Taylor (2014) consider the similarities and differences between the three major schools of thought related to CCO: the Montreal School of Organizational Communication (Cooren), the Four-Flows Model (based on Giddens's Structuration Theory) (Seidl), and Luhmann's Theory of Social Systems (McPhee). The collaboration of these scholars and the juxtaposition of similarities and differences between the schools of thought represented are not thoroughly reviewed in this analysis; however, their work provides insight into the *communicative* structure of organizations that the FDC necessarily co-creates and navigates. Cooren proffers that human agency exists in ventriloquism where policy is espoused in some circumstances, but not in others as we live and communicate in a relational world with various, often conflicting, contexts (Schoeneborn et al., 2014). Through this lens the leader (FDC) is the ventriloquist of both faculty and administration to communicate policy and expectations of both stakeholder groups. These are adaptive social constructs that develop the organizational frame. Seidle extends Giddens's Structuration Theory, which explains the development of the human psyche through formalization of practices that enact and reenact member rituals to produce and reproduce social order. Seidl highlights the idea that organizations themselves do not produce rituals, but instead that communication becomes ritualized as a crucial practice of organizing, which is fundamental to creating order (Schoeneborn et al., 2014). Thus, the human actors are not the organization itself, but are an integral part because their *communication* shapes the organization.

Researchers Iverson, McPhee, and Poole (2014) extend the communication-centric nature of the organization and consider four specific processes innate to organizing. They note:

> The key tenet of the Four Flows Model is that CCO is multiple: No single process, even as broad as text-conversation dialectic, decision making, or ventriloquism, suffices to explain organizations. Instead, we discern four sub-processes that embrace the paradox that communication is at once human and organizational. These . . . include [1] communication integrating people as members [membership negotiation], [2] communication structuring the organization [reflexive self-structuring], [3] communication contextualizing particular coaction [and

> transforming structural resources] [activity coordination], and [4] communication positioning the organization in larger social systems [institutional positioning]. (p. 80).

All three CCO perspectives ultimately share the similarity that the organization emerges and is perpetuated by communicative events (Schoeneborn et al., 2014).

FDCs' knowledge of these five constructs assists in understanding the decision-making frame and the correlation to stakeholders' motives, and may deepen understanding of the dualistic role that they occupy within the organization. According to Bolman and Deal (2013), "…they use more than one lens to develop a diagnosis of what they are up against and how to move forward" (p. 18). Bolman and Deal (2013) go further, and decry an over-utilized, narrow view in decision-making, and state that less-effective leaders often place blame on the faults of others, the faults of bureaucracy, or a thirst for power as reason for conflict and problems faced.

These constructs within an organization are created in time. FDC decision-making may be constrained by the communicative tensions that exist within the institution and may limit their ability to make decisions with a holistic incorporation of all frames. To analyze situations through multiple perspectives or framing lenses allows the FDC to consider the shortcomings and benefits of decisions made to problem solve and/or manage conflict. The FDC who understands that there is more than one approach, or multiple frames, to guide decision-making with the least harm and best possible outcome, may enhance the ethics of the profession. All five constructs are contextualized to varied degrees, and the FDC can carefully negotiate each to manage and make informed decisions in teaching, leadership, and management situations

Problem

The Dialectical Tension Experienced by Faculty Department Chairs. Navigating the various challenges of the FDC position is an ongoing requirement, and more than 96 percent of FDCs are unprepared for these demands, are not familiar with theoretical frames, or receive little to no formal training in higher-education leadership (Kearney, 2006). The FDC role as faculty leader requires morale maintenance through authentic transformational and decision-making means, as well as the execution of recruitment, hiring, and faculty-evaluative processes (Lucas, 1994; Gmelch, Sarros, Wolverton & Wolverton, 1999; Berdrow, 2010; Buller & Gmelch, 2015). Smith & Wolverton (2010) extend the work of McDaniel (2002) to identify four core higher-education leadership competencies. These are context, content, process, and communication. These competencies were defined with a focus on senior administration. But, because leadership competency and an understanding of the unique organizational components of institutes of higher education, including a heightened application of political frame, are among the expectations of a FDC, these ideas are applicable in this role as well.

Context as higher education leadership competency. Context refers to the unique external and internal factors that affect higher education and leadership. Higher education organizations are complex, unpredictable, and interdependent entities with boards, government, community, other higher education institutions within the district or nation, and faculty and staff who share in governance (Smith & Wolverton, 2010). Context informs the FDC's ability to make effective decisions.

Content as higher education leadership competency. The second competency outlined in higher-education leadership is content, which is associated with the functions that define organizational structure in higher education. The effective FDC benefits from expertise in academics and pedagogy and its interconnectedness between resources; institutional priorities; strategic planning; mission and goals at the college, school, and departmental level; and systemic consideration of other college-wide departments, such as student services, risk management, disability services, and marketing, among others (Smith & Wolverton, 2010).

Process as higher education leadership competency. The third competency is process. Process refers to the FDC's understanding of leadership and the processes necessary to bring about success. Through experience, education, and coaching the FDC creates process knowledge; there are also intangible characteristics that aid the FDC to apply process: integrity, focus on development and support of faculty and other leaders, amiableness, and ability to self-reflect and learn from experiences (Smith & Wolverton, 2010).

Communication as higher education leadership competency. Communication is the fourth competency in higher-education leadership, and is characterized by the communicative contexts of verbal, nonverbal, and written forms of stakeholder messaging and networking, which act to justify certain decision-making. Effective communication, using these three contexts, often reduces contention, furthers understanding, and creates dialogue toward ethical decision-making (Smith & Wolverton, 2010). An effective FDC learns to navigate the difficult task of morale maintenance through communication and ongoing faculty coaching to diminish undesirable surprises. For example, an FDC may faces challenges, such as a faculty member who does not perform at university-prescribed standards, an ill-received decision made by administration that creates dissention within the faculty team, faculty that is displeased with performance-based compensation increases, or a situation in which a student and faculty member are at odds with one another. Engagement in effective communication via the ability to listen, consider, and hold concern for all stakeholders may enhance communication competency, resulting in decision-making that successfully navigates the dialectical tension regularly presented in the FDC role. If an FDC struggles to create ongoing communication, as in a case of a low-performing faculty member, the annual evaluation process may become a negative experience for both FDC and faculty. Therefore, the communication of the FDC as ongoing coach, collaborator, and communicator affects faculty, students, administration, and ultimately the institution. The atmosphere of the department as a positive and productive environment, with effective communication, is an outcome of decision-making by the FDC.

The work of McDaniel (2002), as well as Smith and Wolverton (2010) that extends the four higher-education leadership competencies contribute to the FDC perspective and ability to successfully enact the management and leadership functions of their professional role. Additionally, Wolverton et al. (1999) state that

> … leaders [also] provide long-term direction and vision for the department, solicit ideas to improve the department, plan and evaluate curriculum development, plan and conduct departmental meetings, and serve as advocate for the department at the college and the university and with external constituents. (p. 334).

In addition to faculty oversight, administrative duties, and leadership responsibility, which impact the department long term, the FDC typically carries a teaching load, however reduced, and may also be required to produce scholarship.

Purpose of the Study

To meet the many challenges of his or her position within higher education in a global society, the FDC must develop ethical awareness by embodying professional standards that foster connections between administration and faculty. Elevated standards (ethics) strengthen higher education, benefit faculty, students, staff, and administration and reduce FDC-role conflict, leading to enhanced outcomes and reduced turnover in the position. This inquiry explicitly and implicitly manifests the components of authentic-transformational and democratic leadership toward creation of a socially just system of leadership.

This study informs educational leaders, stakeholders, policy makers, and those with influence, and whose support of social-justice leadership practice manifests in a harmonized statement of ethics as institutional and professional standard. Finally, this examination further justifies the need to implement a standard ethics-of-the-profession as a road map for decision-making to lessen inequity within higher-education organizations, both politically and discursively. The practice of professional ethics moves leaders and institutions from purely an intellectual-consideration approach to measurable action (Santamaria, 2013). The approach to consider educational leadership through this lens allows a glimpse of a reality where leaders are less focused on “looking good” and more focused on “doing good” (Noguera, 2003). The academy is positioned to lead outside organizations, educate future leaders, and care for stakeholders not only through formal education, but also as luminous example of an organization that seeks, fosters, and promotes ethics of profession.

Significance of the Study

In higher education, the FDC straddles a dichotomous bridge alternating between the dualistic roles of faculty leader and administrator. This effort requires appeasement of faculty and higher-level administrators, who often hold disparate perspectives of the everyday work and the overall function of the academy. Chairs are often utilized as the first-level manager who is responsible for deliverables to middle administrators, such as deans. From an administrative perspective, these deliverables are considered foundational to building institutional structure, as decisions are made that affect departmental direction or policy. Decisions made by those at the top are often disseminated as specific deliverable with deadlines, which create tasks that are distributed down throughout the organizational hierarchy. As the tasks are communicated down to the FDC, instructions and preferred outcomes are delineated. Deans delegate many tasks to the FDC. The FDC may complete some of the deliverables independently, but s/he is often the link between institutional leaders and faculty, and must seek the faculty's input to complete many objectives.

A chair may employ an ethical framework to create boundaries for effective decision-making. Ethical decision-making approaches assist the chair to navigate the tension between their intertwining role as leader and administrative manager. It is this dialectical tension that creates a need to consider an ethics of the profession. According to researchers (Valentine, Godkin, and Varca, 2010), role conflict occurs "when a job possesses inconsistent expectations incongruent with individual beliefs, a situation that precipitates considerable frustration and other negative work outcomes" (p. 455). The FDC faces stress from the multiplicity of requirements of the position. Stressors may also arise out of the conflict between the ethical framework of the institution (through collective policy or communication), the administration, the faculty, or the students and that of the FDC.

The ethical foundation may be covert and not openly discussed within the hierarchy of the organization. For example, an FDC may be requested to complete an administrative duty that s/he believes is not in the best interest of the department or for which the faculty will respond negatively to. But, the pressure to complete the assignment may compel the FDC to comply. Valentine et al. (2010) write that, “In the organizational setting, stressors occur when workers recognize that they cannot meet the demands of the moment and still remain within their role as defined by the institution” (p. 455).

The complex and intersecting components of the FDC work and the role conflict that arises may be navigated successfully through mindfulness. This requires the FDC to consider the dynamics of a given situation, including the stakeholders’ perspectives relative to the institution’s statement of ethics. When a statement of ethics is not evident, the FDC may alternatively draw upon core goals and/or the mission statement of the organization to surmise an institution’s ethics directive.

Diagram One (below) provides a visual representation of role congruency where organizational ethics match the ethics of profession (discussed further in chapter two) of the FDC. When both the organization’s and the FDC’s ethics of profession and role expectation are congruent, harm to stakeholders is reduced or nullified. When a lack of congruency exists between institution and FDC, role conflict is likely to ensue. A gap between the expectation and the reality of the FDC’s position, in approach or outcome, creates dialectical tension and causes stress to the FDC and by extension other stakeholders. Organizational research indicates that this stress leads to lower performance and outcomes for the FDC. Stress, and especially at inflated levels, also takes its toll on the FDC in the form of decreased personal health, efficacy, and desire to perform work, as well as a negative conflict orientation and increased chances of burnout (Valentine et al., 2010; Gmelch & Buller, 2015). The conflict or elimination of conflict that the FDC experiences in their dual role of faculty leader and administrative-task manager is illustrated in Figure One.

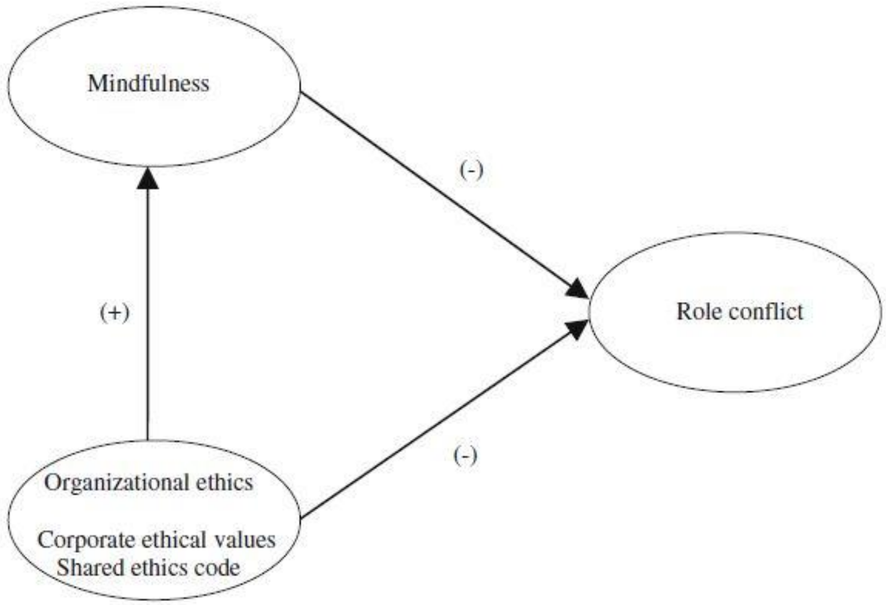

Figure 1. FDC Leadership framed by an Ethics of the Profession

Source: Valentine et al. (2005)

Research conducted by Valentine et al., moves the discussion of FDC ethics beyond the construct of organizational ethics to ethics of the profession as a pillar of FDC decision-making. Stakeholders benefit from an organizational statement of ethics; however, incorporation of a complementary FDC or organizational statement of ethics may moreover lessen tension. The mutual model of protocol that is based on ethics of profession protects and benefits the FDC, faculty, students, and other stakeholders from incongruent communication and decision-making. Congruency stems from the mutually-agreed-upon ethical framework as a rubric for decision-making. The agreed-upon ethical rubric, or framework, may eliminate incongruent outcomes that increase tension among stakeholders.

Negotiating potential variance between the FDC's ethics of the profession and an organizational ethics statement is also addressed in research (Valentine et al., 2010) research.

The organizational-leader model either lends itself to the voice of the FDC, or eliminates it. A hierarchical model reinforces the perspective of senior administration and typically diminishes the voice of those who ultimately complete the tasks (e.g., FDCs). This hierarchical, and often transactional model, creates narrowly-defined, intentional and unintentional directives. Organizations that employ a transformational-leadership approach seek the voice of team members prior to institution of mandates or changes to the constructs of organization or work at hand. Senior administration that intentionally seeks input and seriously considers the feedback prior to enacting changes that affect stakeholders under his or her leadership, is an approach of deliberative-democratic leadership (Woods, 2005). Leaders that utilize this approach understand the significance that decision-making impacts throughout the organization, and choose not to provide directives based solely on limited perspective. Democratic leadership invites discursive communication, with ethical considerations, toward decision-making. According to Woods (2005), ethical rationality is a critical element within this democratic-leadership model (see Figure 2).

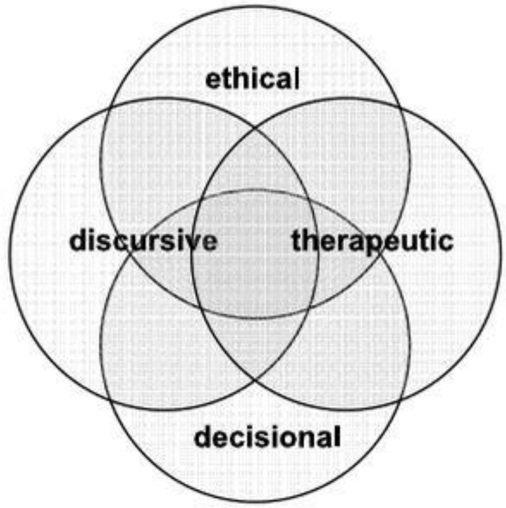

Figure 2. Rationalities of a developmental conception of democratic process

Source: Woods (2005)

Research findings provided by Woods integrate ethics of profession within the deliberate-democratic model as a rationale for the position. Woods' model complements Valentine et al.'s (2010) model and incorporates student, faculty, staff, and the FDC diversity, perspective, and experience into the decision-making process. Ultimately, dialectical tension is minimized as stakeholder input is valued and sought after in decision-making processes. Tension is minimized if an organization assumes a leadership model that is based on inclusion of deliberate democracy, transformational, social justice, critical social justice, and ethical leadership. Each of these leadership models contains tenets that are useful in framing the FDC's ethics of the profession. The ethics of profession aligns with ethics of rationality. The rationality should be purposeful and inhabit the organization and FDC alike.

According to Woods (2005) … "the ethical rationality is concerned with supporting and enabling aspirations for truth, and widest possible engagement of people in this" (p. 12). Woods (2005) elaborates that the well-rounded democratic actor, herein the FDC, engages in democratic leadership with a focus on four purposeful acts. Woods (2005) states that the four acts are:

1. Aspiring toward truth and enhanced understanding;
2. Making and contributing to decisions;
3. Discursive explorations of difference; and
4. Giving and receiving support, self-confidence, and respect. (p. 16).

The fabric of democratic leadership is woven with ethical rationality. Democratic leadership and decision-making maintain a focus on discursive input and contribution. Social justice leadership underpinnings draw attention to distributed equality in resources, opportunity, and alleviation of exploitation and inequity. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive as practices, but are different in the aims they address.

Decision making in the traditional-transaction model deviates from the democratic, social justice, and transformational-leadership approaches. As an added consequence of the transactional model, tasks and duties are often communicated between administrators and the FDC, as well as between the FDC and his faculty, in ways that largely create tension. Controversial tension occurs when dilemmas arise that give way to inequities of power, whether real or perceived. The perspective of the senior administration is forced on the FDC or faculty without consideration of voice (discursive communication); or, the FDC and/or faculty enact transactions without consideration of the senior administration's voice (discursive communication). The outcome(s), therefore, become less holistic and constrained to fulfill only the decision making of senior administrators who possess the organizational power over the FDC, faculty, and students. Or, the FDC undermines the value and input from senior administration and reduces or eliminates effective decision-making and ethics of profession.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following questions:

RQ1**:** How do FDCs manage and lead relative to ethics in the profession while surrounded by dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

RQ2: How do FDCs engage a process for decision making amid ethical dilemmas and conflict shrouded in dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

In order to discern appropriate outcomes from the rich and complex narratives provided by the FDC participants in this study, it is helpful to examine the philosophical frameworks that are implicated and that conceptualize the major features of transformational-leadership theory, social-justice theory, ethical-leadership theory, and practices in constellation. This research review is followed by a related overview of recent leadership research publication in the areas of conflict management, self-efficacy, and interpersonal communication.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provided for the purpose of maintaining clarity in this study.

Authentic Transformational Leadership: Researchers Weichun, Avolio, Riggio and Sosik (2011) infuse the authentic leadership theoretical model of Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) with the concepts of transformational leadership, first developed by James McGregor Burns in 1978 and later extended by Bernard Bass and his colleagues (Avolio, 1999; Avolio et al., 2004; Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Sosik & Jung, 2010). Following Weichun, Avolio, Riggio & Sosik (2011) I define authentic transformational leadership as:

> …focused on examining leaders who transform groups, organizations and even societies, in part by developing followers into moral agents and leaders in addition to maintaining their own high moral perspectives, behaviors and actions. They do not just lead followers to perform well; they also develop followers to lead themselves and others to perform well through four behavioral dimensions (i.e., idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) and are characterized by possessing moral character and having concern for self and followers; embedding moral values in leaders' vision, articulation, and program that followers can embrace; and establishing moral decision making processes and choices in which leaders and followers collectively engage and pursue. (p. 805).

<u>Dialectical Tension</u>: The central concept of dialectical theorists is the *contradiction.* A contradiction is the dynamic interplay between unified opposites. Three terms are important in understanding this definition: *opposites, unified,* and *dynamic interplay.* Central to the notion of opposition is mutual negation: Semantically, opposites are the antonyms of one another and function to nullify, cancel, undo, or otherwise undermine one another. Barbara Montgomery (1993) has identified three kinds of oppositions: (1) oppositions that are mutually exclusive and exhaustive (e.g., openness versus non-openness); (2) oppositions that are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive (e.g., connection versus autonomy); and (3) oppositions that are complementary (e.g., dominance versus submissiveness) (Encylopedia.com, 2016).

Dichotomy or plural dichotomies: This term refers to the division of two things that are completely different; a difference between two ideas or things that are completely opposite. Division into two mutually exclusive, opposed, or contradictory groups: a dichotomy between thought and action (Cambridgedictionary.com, 2016).

Dilemmas: As a noun this term refers to a situation that necessitates a choice between two equal, especially undesirable, alternatives or a problem that seems incapable of a solution (dictionary.com, 2016).

Discursive Communication: This term refers to communication with a focus on working toward mutually-agreed-upon understanding of signs and symbols in written and oral form to enhance relationships and resolve conflict.

Additionally it refers to a consideration of Jürgen Habermas's work on discursive ethics in the public sphere. For Habermas, clarifying the structures of communicative action requires the development of a universal pragmatics—an account of the basic structures of human linguistic competencies. This would identify the set of validity claims or normative presuppositions inherent in all speech (e.g., truthfulness), which are, in turn, the bases for both concrete attempts to improve understanding and for larger hope that improved communicative competencies will lead to better social organization. For this to happen, Habermas argues, life-world organization through communicative action must resist "colonization" by systems based on the nonlinguistic steering media of money and power. This can be accomplished partly through reliance on highly specialized communicative action in the legal realm and partly through the reinvigoration of genuine political discourse, understood as a process of unimpeded consensus formation or communicatively achieved understanding (Oxford Dictionary of Social Science, 2015).

Ethical Leadership: Ethical leadership is defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, p. 120).

Social Justice Leadership: Social justice in terms of education, taking into account situational features, can be defined as "a deliberate intervention that requires the moral use of force." Definition of social justice cannot be separate from the practices of educational leadership (Bogotch, 2002; Theoharis, 2007). The definition of social justice leadership concerns itself with power and influence. Social justice leadership applies social influence to ensure social justice in society or a certain organization. Leadership for social justice includes facilitation of moral dialogue that strives for high academic achievement and affirms relationships with students from all backgrounds and ability levels, and with keeping one's epistemological awareness, value orientation, and practice toward social justice. It has also been characterized as fighting and altering institutionalized inequities, discrimination, and injustices that benefit few students and harm many more. (Turhana, 2010).

Transactional Leadership: Defined by Bass and Avolio (1994) "as a contractual relationship between the leaders and followers, where the leader "rewards or disciplines the follower depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance (p. 4).

Transformational Leadership:

Defined by Bass (1990) Superior leadership performance — transformational leadership — occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group.

Transformational leaders achieve these results in one or more ways: They may be charismatic to their followers and thus inspire them; they may meet the emotional needs of each employee; and/or they may intellectually stimulate employees” (p. 21).

Limitations

Marshall and Rossman (2016) state that all studies have limitations, which provide boundaries to understand what the study is, is not, and how the results contribute to understanding within the specificity of the research. The limitations of this study are:

1. The results of the research are not generalizable to all FDCs in higher education; the findings are representative of this case study.
2. Although subjectivity is managed in collection and analysis of data in this study, the researcher as instrument influences the data that is selected to answer the research question.

Delimitations

The parameters that assist in providing parameters and defining the scope of the study are considered delimitations (Creswell, 2014). This case study is delimited by:

1. Selection of participants who reside within the case and who are classified as faculty department chairs. Participants who identify as an FDC must teach as part of their job description.
2. The study was limited to FDCs at one northwest university in the United States.
3. The study is bound by a single case, and outcomes cannot be generalized to all FDCs and cases in higher education outside of this case.

Organization of the Study

This section describes the proposed chapters for this dissertation. The next chapter outlines how the research is situated and how it relates to particular developments that may emerge. Therefore, this section provides a wider structure of this proposal within the broader frame of the dissertation.

The study is organized into five chapters. The first part of chapter one contextualizes the FDC role through a consideration of organizational frame, decision-making, and the complexity of the position in higher education. The second part of this chapter extends the rationale by further situating the role of the FDC within the challenging notions of organization, power, and decision-making through the lenses of social justice and critical theory. A general overview of the research context, statement of the problem, and the purpose of the study are provided. Finally, definitions, limitations, and delimitations of this case study are provided.

Chapter two presents a review of the literature, framing organizational communication, critical and social justice theory, transformational and authentic transformational theory, and leadership. The review also provides an overview of a FDC decision-making frame with consideration given to climate and context accompanied by dialectical tension, conflict, and ethical dilemmas, toward an ethics of the profession that enhances positive *affect*.

Chapter three describes methodological approach of this single case study. Description of research design including IRB; participant and document selection; methodological protocol; data security, collection, and analysis; and issues of reliability are included in the chapter. The chapter also details the thematic-coding procedures, and articulates justification of the believability and trustworthiness of findings through member checking.

Chapter four advances the results of the data collection through interviews, document analysis, and observation toward thematic analysis.

Chapter five draws conclusions, summarizing the findings of this dissertation to make connections between the ways that FDCs engage in the position, make decisions, and utilize an ethics of profession to forward positive *affect* in ethical decision making. The summary of findings from the case study are utilized to consider patterns that answer the research questions, frame implications, and provide recommendations for further study. This chapter clarifies how consideration of an ethics of the profession enriches the academy, the FDC, and stakeholders.

Summary

This research examines the role of the faculty department chair (FDC) in higher education with specific emphasis on decision-making that is framed by ethical considerations. Assumption of this important position within the academy charges the often-unprepared individual with responsibility to navigate organizational structure, power relations, tension, conflict, and stress; a task that requires impactful decision-making with ethical consideration. The research's framework suggests that the success of the FDC leadership and decision-making is enabled by an ethics of the profession that contains tenets of professional ethics, and which are considered, by the institution, to be an acceptable approach to praxis in the faculty department chair (FDC) position within higher education.

The human resources construct is also known referred to as “human relations”. The human resources term is used to represent human resources and human relations throughout this research because it not only highlights the historical development of organizational constructs, but it also illuminates how organizational culture historically itemized individuals as parts, or “resources,” of an organization.

It is important to note that while human resources today acknowledges greater awareness of relations; its historical development aligns closely with aspects of its predecessor in structural construct.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

The 21st Century higher educational context of globalization and increased accountability is challenging for the faculty department chair (FDC) in higher education. Institutions of higher education require more from the FDC than ever before, with nationwide budget cuts, increased oversight of curriculum, student learning outcomes, internalization initiatives, calls for social justice equity, student job placement upon graduation, reductions to time-to-degree completion, and shrink financial aid reliance that affects students across the USA. Non-FDC faculty is also taking on an increased workload with accountability levels greater than before.

The FDC maintains the bridge between faculty and administration while undertaking these increased responsibilities, but s/he should also consider his/her actions with ethical care and efficacy maintenance for stakeholders, focus on ensuring the best experience for students, and simultaneously attempt to maintain personal health and longevity while existing in the daily pressure cooker of higher education (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Roper & Deal, 2010).

Supporting this notion, Roper and Deal (2010) state:

> If you step back and think about it, deans and chairs are the key linchpins that connect the institution's mission with the faculty's teaching and research. But their authority is limited and their power constrained. Because of this they must rely heavily on relationships and an accurate read of everyday situations to get anything done. Amidst a tangled web of interests, voices, and issues they must cut through the complexity to grasp what is really important. (pp. 1-2)

An FDC position, therefore, requires a balance of multiple intersecting interests and tasks that, at times, creates conflict for the FDC as s/he manages the relationships between their department and the administration, as well as all of their faculty. As the central "linchpin" between faculty and administration, the FDC position can become wrought with tensions that may challenge the effectiveness and success of the FDC.

In light of these challenges, Roper and Deal's (2010) scholarship suggests methods for success to deans and chairs. In particular, this approach highlights aspects of the organization to mid-level leaders in order to help them make successful decisions in an environment where they are often not aware of the facts surrounding their decisions. For deans and chairs, this means developing the cognitive flexibility to look at their organizations through multiple frames or lenses. Roper and Deal extend the work of Bolman and Deal (2013), offering four critical frames for FDCs to consider:

The human resources frame emphasizes individuals and their needs. To this end, an effective organization creates a caring, trusting environment where people can learn and grow. Without such personal support, people rebel, withdraw, or get even. The FDC, therefore, becomes both a manager of his/her faculty and a custodian for the college.

The structural frame stresses accountability, clarity and results. In organizations, people are assigned to roles and held accountable for getting the job done efficiently. Plans, policies, rules, and formal meetings coordinate efforts. A chain of command gives some individuals authority over others. Top performance is the result of a rationally designed structure equal to everyday challenges. In many ways, this model is functionally bureaucratic.

The political frame sees authority as only one form of power. Authority is assigned, but power is negotiated between parties. Individuals and groups use power to advance special interests rather than to attain formal goals. The result is conflict, which the political perspective accepts as a normal byproduct that is best resolved through improved relationships, compromise and bargaining.

The symbolic frame accentuates the central role symbols play in life. Work takes on a greater role by providing meaning and purpose to an individual. Organizations, therefore, are viewed as tribal creations where a shared culture is expressed through history, values, rituals, ceremonies, sagas, and stories. Each person performs various roles and may take on more than one kind of role at various times. An informal network of people described as heroes and heroines, priests, storytellers, gossips, and spies determine how people behave and how well the organization performs (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Each frame provides insights into the ways an organization functions and the ways it measures success. Most organizations operate through one frame, though leaders at various levels may embody additional frames as part of the tasks they perform. The difficulty here, though, is that leaders must carefully balance the predominant frame of the organization along with any other frame they embody in practice. Also, because the predominant frame of the organization heavily structures the practices of leaders, most only rely on one or two frames to manage tasks (Roper & Deal, 2010). As a result, strategies for success become increasingly limited when leaders are either unaware of other options or unable to implement other frames in practice.

Structural and human resource frames are the predominant pillars of academic organizations (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). These more bureaucratic forms are classically aligned with institutions of education and, therefore, are usually the preferred forms of leadership. Among chairs and deans, these frames are also the most utilized, perhaps due to the almost embedded nature of their functionality within our understanding of organizations in general. Yet, because chairs and deans also manage various people with conflicting interests, the problems people in these positions end up confronting most often tend to be within the realms of the political and symbolic frames (Roper & Deal, 2010). Chairs and deans, therefore, must learn to understand and take on other frames to provide greater structure and cohesiveness for the organization.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

The FDC is involved in making decisions that entail ethical, moral, and emotional dynamics between interdependent groups, therefore this study makes an original contribution by extending the meta-theoretical dimensions of *affect*.

Affect is acutely described by Gregg and Seigworth (2010):

> *Affect* arises in the midst of *in-between-ness*: in the capacities to act and be acted upon. Affect is an impingement or extrusion of a momentary or sometimes more sustained state of relation as well as the passage (and the duration of passage) of forces or intensities. That is, *affect* is found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, and in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves. Affect is the name given to these forces – visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion – that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension, that can likewise suspend us (as if in neutral) across a barely registering accretion of force-relations, or

that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world's apparent intractability. *Affect* is persistent proof of a body's never less than ongoing immersion in an among the world's obstinacies and rhythms, its refusals as much as its invitations. (pp. 1-2).

Linked to reflexive emotion from a group as a whole, *Affect* is an element of communication that individuals, typically leaders, summon to clarify issues to others, navigate dilemmas, and convince others of actions or solutions to be taken (Barsade & Knight, 2015). Within the realm of this study, the FDC embodies *affect* intentionally and unintentionally as s/he navigates the various stakeholder groups of the academy in responding to ethical dilemmas; making decisions that affect faculty, staff, students, and administration; and managing conflicts that arise within teams and also across faculty and administration (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010).

Conflict is present in situations where dialectical tension occurs. For example, in interpersonal relationships (professional included) human beings have a need for autonomy and socialization. Tension exists when the needs are opposing and both are important. Faculty appreciate autonomy and also hope for the FDC to provide care, concern, and leadership. The FDC negotiates the dialectical tension when a decision has benefits for either administration or faculty, but not both. This tension is the precursor to conflict.

Conflict can be destructive or constructive (Deutsch, 1973). The FDC can, and does, affect the nature of conflict within their department. Conflict occurs when the stakeholders are interdependent and disagree on problem solving or decision-making. How the FDCs engages with conflict creates an environment where stakeholders may chose engage in constructive and collaborative conflict rather than avoiding, accommodating, or competing in these situations. By engaging in constructive conflict and argumentation and encouraging engagement in their department, the chair helps foster an environment where more voices are heard and where ethical decision-making may be enhanced (Deutsch, 1973).

Due to the intersecting interests, parties, and practices surrounding the FDC position, the framework utilized for this study proposes that the FDC operates as a central figure among competing discourses that shape his/her effectiveness and his/her abilities to balance the demands of his/her role. Below is an original conceptualized model (Figure 1) of the competing discourses in which the FDC in implicated on a daily basis. Decision-making intimately surrounds the FDC as s/he makes decisions daily that affect various parties and may lead to outcomes that support, challenge, or qualify the interests of the parties involved. Given the dialectical tension within the academy, the FDC's decision-making practices are also wrought with ethical dilemmas where the interests of certain parties, including that of the FDC, shape the decisions made by the FDC. For example, there are times when the FDC brings proposed departmental changes to the administration. In this instance, the FDC represents the interests of his/her department and must take on the responsibility of honestly and carefully communicating the interests and concerns of his/her various employees.

Moreover, the FDC is also the person most aware of the outcome or decision the administration is likely to accept or reject based on her/his interactions with deans, provosts, chancellors, and/or presidents. The FDC must, therefore, navigate the ethical dilemmas that will arise in how s/he represents herself to administration; how s/he represents her department; how she discusses the issues, problems, or concerns that require resolution; and how s/he represents the decisions of various individuals from administration to her department. Through decision-making and the ethical dilemmas that arise, the FDC also becomes a central figure in the ways conflicts are managed within the department, to the administration, and, at times, as a branch of the college or university within the public realm. The decisions that the FDC makes, therefore, entail deep considerations of social justice and *affect*, as various parties are represented or neglected, as the FDC must summon persuasive elements of communication to rally support for decisions from disparate parties in order for tasks to reach completion. This model was constructed to represent the work and affect of the FDC in the reality of the context of the position.

Additionally, as the central figure of the department, the FDC must embody leadership in the decisions s/he makes and the ways s/he communicates to others. The authentic transformational model tends to favor the embodiment of servant leadership (ethics of care) by the chair, which positions the FDC as a servant to the stakeholders s/he is responsible (Goleman, Bennett & Barlow, 2012; Hahn Tapper, 2013). Servanthood is a component of the authentic transformational leadership model. According to Weichun, Avolio, Riggio & Sosik (2011) "They [leaders]... are characterized by possessing moral character and having concern for self and followers; embedding moral values in leaders' vision, articulation, and program that followers can embrace; and establishing moral decision making processes and choices in which leaders and followers collectively engage and pursue (p. 805). This is the heart of serving and servant leadership Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015; Greenleaf, 1970).

The central problem with this type of leadership, particularly as it pertains to this study, is that it overlooks the agency of the FDC as both a crucial actor of the organization—as a central pillar, (Miller & Martin, 2015) and as an independent agent capable of inspiring others to do their best possible work. While servant leadership still serves an organization and may lead to positive results, this study focuses on authentic transformational leadership because it grants greater agency to *all* parties involved within the organization. By recognizing the potential of each actor—whether student, staff, faculty, chair, dean, provost, or president—authentic transformational leadership conceptualizes power as an ongoing negotiation of *affect* between key individuals and groups, which often leads to the outcomes desires by administration and supports a more genial organizational climate for most or all parties involved (Weichun, Avolio, Riggio & Sosik, 2011).

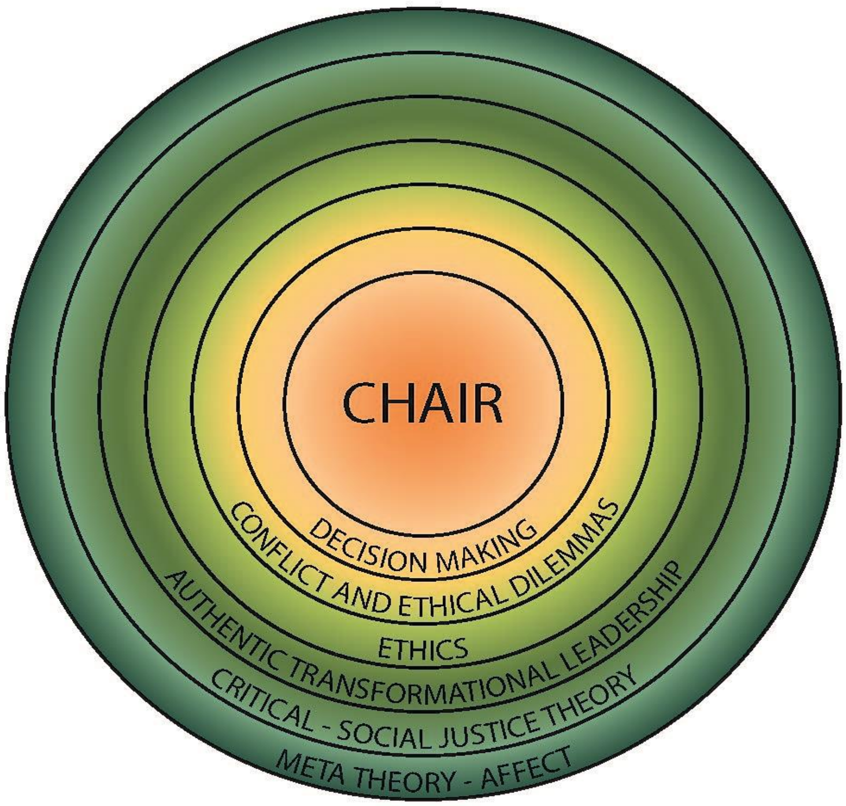

Figure 3. Proposed Model of Ethical Leadership Considerations for FDC
(Created by author)

The Ethical Leadership Considerations for FDC model above (Figure 1) illustrates the communicative components of the FDC's position within the organization. The model also links to Critical Social Justice as a framework. For an FDC to emancipate stakeholder and self, an awareness of the agency to create and model justice is evident in action. While students, staff, faculty, and administration affect the decision-making processes of the FDC, this model directly focuses on the chair as a central figure that navigates and negotiates the competing demands of the organization. The chair, therefore, is central in this model as his/her decision-making processes affect faculty, students, and other stakeholders in the organization. By focusing on the FDC as a central figure, moreover, this model is aligned with authentic transformational leadership because it is the chair who *affects* organization and members through her/his communication with stakeholders, and through his/her abilities to both ethically and effectively handle conflicts while representing often disparate groups.

The decisions of the FDC, therefore, are not insular; they have effects beyond the immediate situation, parties, and time in which they occur. Because different parties are represented through the FDC, moreover, conflict and ethical dilemmas are present in how the FDC communicates, takes action, and seeks resolution. When communicating the desires of the administration, for example, the FDC may experience intense conflict from his/her faculty. The specific desires of the administration may also entail ethical dilemmas that relate to actions to be taken by the FDC, which may appear unreasonable and even unethical to the FDC and her/his faculty. The FDC, therefore, must also be cognizant of the effects of his/her decisions, not simply for the morale of her/his stakeholders, but also because of the perceived morals of each decision as each action affects each party in particular ways with potentially serious repercussions.

Representing one group over another or both at once, then, entails social justice because the FDC invariably takes on the dual role of enabler and task-manager, as s/he grants power to her/his faculty, staff, and students, yet also makes sure they fulfill their duties as s/he fulfills hers/his to her/his faculty and the administration. In all of these actions, the FDC embodies *affect*, on a spectrum from less to more powerful, in her/his abilities to synthesize information, communicate the desires of administration to faculty, negotiate the concerns of faculty as a collective and to the administration, encourage faculty to follow through on tasks and do their best work, and generate possibilities in communication with the various stakeholders and/or of his/her own innate skills in reasoning and perspective-taking. Power refers to the overarching depth of impact on stakeholders. This proposed model, therefore, attempts to encapsulate the dynamic nature of the FDC position within authentic transformational leadership, yet also remains flexible enough to work within other paradigms of leadership, should future research extend its presence. The bodies of literature informing each dimension will be reviewed next.

Meta Theory – Affect

Each organization maintains a social environment or “communication climate” that affects how each individual participates within it. The communication climate is created by organizational stakeholders as described in the CCO example above. Historically, Gibb (1961) introduced and described categories of communication styles that affected relational and organizational outcomes. In particular, Gibb explained that climates vary in the defensive behaviors they may arouse in participants. Leaders can shape climates, whether supportive or defensive. Gibb described the defensive climate as one in which individuals feel threatened or anxious when engaged in communication with others. “A defensive conversation outwardly may appear normal while inwardly the person is putting mental energy into defending him- [sic] or herself” (Gibb as quoted in Czech & Forward, 2010, p. 436). There is a perception that there is always a perceived winner and loser in this communication exchange. The winner is typically viewed as the person in power, and power is related to one's position in the hierarchy (i.e., chair over faculty and dean over chair). When the communication event is not perceived as "safe," the climate becomes more defensive and may lead to incorrect perceptions about motives, values, and emotions of the sender (Czech & Forward, 2010).

Climate and context are important considerations in approaching conflict situations. Czech and Forward provide insight into specific climates through the emotional underpinnings of verbal and nonverbal, defensive and supportive communication, and how leaders navigate defensive and supportive communication instances. When considered within the framework of leadership as a series of practices, Czech and Forward (2010) and Gardiner and Tenuto (2015) offer that *affect*, or the ability to persuade and the emotive components of communication as persuasion, arise as a consideration of ethics, decision-making, and conflict management. Here, *affect* has resonating effects in the organization. *Affect* can be enabling or constraining. *Affect* can inspire people to be more participatory and engaged, and it can reinforce the climate of the organization as it echoes outward from leadership.

Although various stakeholders of the academic organization may have difficulty relating to one another, *affect* embodied in key individuals can help unite individuals and combat disassociation and cognitive dissonance that may come from the distance associated a higher position of authority within the academy. Leon Festinger theorizes that human cognitions are based on highly valued beliefs. When decisions or circumstances are inconsistent with personal beliefs dissonance is created. Festinger states that "The ratio between dissonant thoughts and consonant thoughts can also play a role in strong the feelings of dissonance are" (1964, p. 5). The degree of stakeholder dissonance occurs after a decision is made and the level of conflict involved prior to decision-making. Dissonance creates discomfort and stakeholder affect may consist of emotional, physiological, and psychological impact (Festinger, 1964).

Affect can be positive or negative depending on the level of dissonance. Through a lens of social justice with consideration to ethics that provides the least harm to stakeholders affect can be positive. Gardiner and Tenuto provide a consideration to social justice and ethics where affect may be positive (2015):

> Therefore, justice — specifically social justice — is a connector for ethical leadership. Ethical leadership and ethical leadership development in schools, university programs, businesses, and other organizations is a critical dimension of building socially just and equitable communities. (p. 3).

Affect, therefore, increases opportunities to collaborate and reminds stakeholders of the goals and desires of other participants. Engagement in shared leadership can work to emancipate the faculty, students, and administration by creating a collegial environment for decision-making with maximum input from stakeholders.

Leadership decisions vary in the level of dissonance and *affect*, and in the outcomes that result. Drucker (1966) proposed "two basic kinds of decisions- generic or unique". The generic decisions are similar to the low-stakes decisions addressed in this research. Low stakes decisions are occur daily and hold little impact for stakeholders; they include items such as providing students with support information, scheduling and budgeting work with limited change. High stakes decisions which are impactful to the health and vitality of stakeholders; this includes faculty workload, pay, or performance evaluations as examples.

They have occurred with enough frequency that the organization has established formal policy for handling the situations and decision-making. Unique decisions, however, happen with less frequency, or contain enough variables that policy is not established (Drucker, 1966). The unique scenarios are similar to the medium- to high- stakes decisions addressed in this research. In both cases, Hoy & Miskel (2008) provide that the FDC should avoid treating a low stake situation as though it is high stake and similarly avoid treating a high stakes decisions as though they are common situations and impose policy decision-making.

The FDC should be aware that, at times, organizational decision-making is not entirely rational and that people act before they think, leading to decisions without sound reasoning. Hoy and Miskel (2008) describe this as the "Garbage Can Model" of decision-making. When this occurs, stakeholders typically are not collaborating, and the means and the ends exist independently. This may be based on stress, time constraints, and a leader who is avoiding conflict with other stakeholders. In other instances, stakeholders are involved, but there is little desire to engage in the decision-making or participants do not want to "rock the boat" so they "go along" with the status quo or a member of the team who holds the most confidence in his/her perspective. As a result groupthink, where the participants do not engage in full discussion of possibilities and agree to enact decisions void of full perspectives, occurs. In this case, Hoy and Miskel (2008) suggests that a leader should ask him/herself four questions: "Are the risks serious if I don't change, are the risks serious if I do change, is it realistic to hope for a better solution, and is there sufficient time to search and deliberate?" (pp. 346-347). These questions provide the FDC the opportunity to consider whether the group is engaged in a harmful decision-making approach.

In addition, Roper and Deal (2010) provide practical advice for decision-making in educational settings. When a FDC is new to the position, in particular, new changes should be initiated slowly. Whether new to the organization or the FDC position, it is important to: (1) Build relationships; (2) learn culture, norms, and values of the school and department; and (3) receive input from stakeholders prior to engaging in immediate decision making beyond rudimentary issues. Educational leaders often make hasty decisions, which can be costly to them in both the short-term and long-term (Steeples, 1999, p. 19). Educational leaders investing time and energy navigating the demands of the position and the concerns of their stakeholders before decisions are made that carry far-reaching consequences. Gardiner and Tenuto (2015) state that legally mandated standards could integrate personal values and leadership ethics. The implementation of legal mandates would ensure that educational leaders and institutions consider ethics as an absolute of leadership.

Due to the nature of the FDC position and its rank and title, it carries innate power. Faculty and scholars that assume the FDC position hold the power that the position entails, but they must earn, create, and leverage authentic power by communicating with their stakeholders and earning their respect through their actions and behaviors. Relying on the power of the leadership position rather than cultivated power earned through respect from stakeholders creates pushback and can ultimately lead to leadership failure.

Spending time with faculty and students provides the opportunity to assimilate and to ascertain the value of each team member. Researchers (Wolverton, Gmelch, Wolverton, & Sarros, 2010) describe this as the “getting to know you phase”. Taking the time to get to know faculty, and letting faculty get to know the FDC sets the tone for the department and provides for greater team building. Time invested in building relationships not only helps establish a more communication-centric atmosphere aimed at the concern and well-being of each individual, it also allows faculty, students, and staff to recognize the resources the FDC may be able to provide to each of them. Thus, research suggests the perceived barriers to power within the department are lessened when relationships are developed and communication is open between the FDC and other stakeholders.

Critical Social Justice Theory

Navigating the various intersecting interests and practices is no easy task for the FDC. Brown (2004) suggests a framework for theory, research, and practice that provides a roadmap to transformative praxis with consideration to valuing faculty, students, and others whom the FDC engages, rather than marginalizing them. Within my study, Critical Social Justice Theory frames the transformational practice of ethical leadership for the FDC and stakeholders. Critical Social Justice Theory is supported by the principles of freedom and equality (Capper, 1993; Miller & Martin, 2015) which the FDC both enables and restricts based on her/his role as the mediator between faculty and administration. Although a concrete definition of leadership within social justice theory is not clearly defined for the role of the FDC, I argue that Critical Social Justice Theory influences the same considerations of inclusion and exclusion of various groups that the FDC interacts with and navigates daily. At its core, Critical Social Justice Theory is a theoretical perspective that evaluates and assess underserved populations due to factors of race, ethnicity, socio-economics, gender, and sexual orientation, among others. These factors are typically not traditional considerations of power dynamics within the structure of organizations (Shoho, Merchant & Lugg, 2011; Shoho & Broussard, 2003).

Critical theory does not hold uniform tenets to consider phenomenon, as philosophers perspectives vary. From Marx to modern critical theorists there are construct components that overlap and are applied to this analysis of participant experience.

The following tenets are derived from a consideration of critical theory and social justice; combined as a conceptual framework of Critical Social Justice (Dahms, 2008; Brown, 2004).

1. Advancing emancipation of human beings within their day-to-day lives, structures, and cultures from structural and systematic constraints.
2. Critical self-reflexivity regarding self as a contributor to define society, against both implied and publicly-stated intentions and interests of individuals, social scientists, collective actors, and society.
3. Examine how compounded layers of alienation alter our ability to discern and to shape societal conditions.
4. Nourishes the social aspects of individuality, the interpenetration of self and other, subject and object, theory and praxis.

Critical Social Justice Theory is important to consider within this study because it also highlights the gradual historic changes organizations have taken on in leadership, the nature of work, and the value of employees. Where organizations previously championed efficiency and bureaucracy, organizations increasingly recognize the collective power of the organization which resides in all its employees and what each derives from the work they do.

As such, Critical Social Justice Theory provides a powerful conceptual framework for a social justice orientation within educational administration (Kochan, 2002; Scheurich, 2002). It also serves as a useful framework for exploring issues of social justice in preparing educational leaders (Grogan, 2000). Educational leadership training that centers on social Justice provides a foundation for the FDC to realize the importance of empowering faculty to realize her/his potential, to actively engage in work of the department and college in a supported manner. The Critical Social Justice theory framework is also good for students as equality and justice within the academy is passed to students. Increased organizational focus on moral and ethical leadership responsibility reduces oppression and assists in creating an environment of equity for all stakeholders. Postmodernism, an underpinning foundation for Critical Social Justice Theory, challenges traditional notions of power and hierarchy and, as such, has played a significant role in examining the intersection of social justice and educational leadership (Sackney, Walker, & Mitchell, 1999).

The foundational work of John Dewey's social reconstructivist philosophy resonates with postmodern perspectives and has been useful in conceptualizing educational administration and issues of justice (Maxcy, 1995; Tooms, Lugg & Bogotch, 2010). Dewey's philosophy focuses on the importance of multiple perspectives. Further extending and connecting educational leadership with social, moral and ethical considerations, Bogotch (2000) writes:

> Social justice, just like education, is a deliberate intervention that requires the moral use of power. For that reason, we must challenge structures built upon the so-called neutrality of objective reality and acknowledge that the systems we have in place represent and, subsequently, reproduce the dominant culture and values in society (p. 3).

The reconstructive philosophy as the underpinning is not absolute (Bogotch (2000). The assumption provides that educational leaders should remove the conventional boundaries in education that bind faculty and students. Seeking social justice is the ongoing pursuit to remove inequity and allow multiple perspectives (voices) to resonate. The lens of Critical Social Justice is the ongoing idealistic pursuit of equity where leaders remain in tune to stakeholders' value.

Maxcy (1995) concludes that the academy should move beyond the transactional leadership approach to solve "our quandary" by considering leadership critically as well as pragmatically. The terminology is refocused from transactional (traditional) to authentic transformational or SJLT. The concept of moral or ethical leadership has also played a critical role in discussions of social justice within leadership preparation (formal and informal) (Beck & Murphy, 1994; Bogotch, Miron, & Murry, 1998; Greenfield, 2004; Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1998; Kramer & Enomoto, 2014; Leithwood & Duke, 1998; Sergiovanni, 1992; Frick, 2006; Wong, 1998).

Again, while not typically associated with the role of the FDC in the academy in the USA, Marxism as a foundation for critical and social justice philosophies assist as a lens to view the emancipatory power of leaders within organizations. Working within the pragmatic rather than the philosophical, Marx called for the mitigation of class. According to Crotty (1998, p. 118), "… (Marx) social philosophy has come to be known as both 'dialectic materialism' and 'historical materialism'." Dialectic refers to the social tension when inequality exists due to materialism that divides society or organizational members into categories of those who have (bourgeoisie or leadership) and those who have not (serf or followers). Dialectic, materialism, and historic materialism are based on interpretations of tenets from post-Marxist scholars. Crotty (1998) contends that, “In capitalist society Marx perceives a basic conflict between capital and labour, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and he believed there are analogues to this conflict in all earlier forms of society” (p. 118). Early critical thinkers, therefore, developed the Frankfurt School in Germany as a think tank to share ideas surrounding the impacts of societal norms associated with division.

Contemporary critical philosophy provides a framework in social science research to consider aspects of society that house oppression. Within the context of this study, reduction in stakeholder psychological, physiological, or environmental oppression is considered. This is not the same kind of overt political and economic oppression noted by hardline Marxists, but the localized organizational environment of the academy is wrought with tensions of the kind critical theorists are interested. In line with critical theory, this study seeks answers to ameliorate FDC, faculty, and student oppression through ethical decision-making and emancipatory practice.

Critical Social Justice Theory can frame the relational, political, and discursive elements related to the work of the FDC in higher education. This framework, therefore, provides a lens for critical examination of communication related to the FDC as an academic leader who occupies a crucial role in the academy. As a tool, it allows social scientists to consider the status quo (i.e., what “is”) and the possibilities related to social change (i.e., what “ought to” be) (Datta, 2009). A critique of the social and political norms of the status quo grants actions based on a relatively low position of influence within higher educational administration. The imbalance of power is likely to provide little leverage for the FDC to combat directives and plans that may be incompatible with reason, experience, and subordinate perspectives. According to Littlejohn (1992), “By definition, criticism involves the application of principles or values in order to make judgments for the purpose of bringing about positive change…. [and] understandably, criticism comes in a variety of forms" (p. 238). The FDC as educational leader must navigate the human resources, structural, political and symbolic frames of the organization to effectively manage in her/his role. The socialization process from faculty member to faculty department chair varies in each institution; however, research findings suggest that many FDC's are promoted from faculty ranks with little experience in leadership or administration. According to Smith and Steward (1999), "Department chairs often find themselves navigating the new role with demands of tasks, the role of faculty and administrator as well as developing interpersonal relationships" (p. 30).

Informal training occurs when the dean, vice-president, executive vice-president, or president make decisions and rules, and express the manner in which the FDC should conduct the work or communicate to faculty and students. Whether a new FDC or a seasoned FDC, each relies on their peers who are currently in the same position or those who have experience in the role previously. FDCs, who are in line with the empowering principles of the critical philosophy (see Capper, 1993, p. 15 regarding fundamental tenets of critical theory in educational administration), work to balance the demands of their positions and the expectations of the administration, yet also fundamentally seek to empower their faculty, students, and staff to achieve greater ends. FDCs also oversee the tenuous work of first-year faculty who are navigating the role of teaching, conducting research, and orienting to the organizational systems and relationships (Tenuto & Gardiner, 2013).

Specific to higher education, the new faculty support from the FDC is critical to their success. It is urgent that the FDC work with new faculty to mentor and ensure that they are utilizing their time carefully to fulfill the expected institutional demands of excellence in research, teaching, and outreach without burnout as s/he works toward tenure (Tenuto & Gardiner, 2013). The FDC is expected to facilitate the growth of new faculty and continue to coach experienced faculty while continuing to perform additional supervisory, administrative, and faculty duties.

Empirical findings from Tenuto and Gardiner (2013) confirm the challenge FDCs confront in faculty development:

> Factors identified as contributing to the complexity of the role included stakeholder demands, the serving nature of the position, institutional pressures, and time constraints. Department chairs are critical in providing opportunities, in some cases mentoring first-year faculty or guiding faculty to formal mentors, as they approve position descriptions, give financial support for research, and evaluate annual performance. (p. 5).

FDCs, therefore, operate not only as key linchpins, they also are central figures with the power to enable or suppress. Through communication with fellow FDCs, an FDC can begin to navigate the demands of her/his job. The FDC is responsible to higher administration to creatively and proactively act as an agent on behalf of the decision-makers (Smith & Steward, 1999). The FDC is tasked with navigating the functional demands of the position with little real power, while also adequately understanding and navigating the human resources, structural, political, and symbolic frames of the organization.

As FDCs navigate the position and interact with different stakeholders, s/he also has greater abilities to enact possibilities of change against the status quo (where oppressive or unclear), and carefully communicate and mediate relations between disparate parties. Although not all FDCs view their work within the enabling frameworks of Critical Social Justice Theory and Marxism, their work inevitably involves considerations of inclusion and power that they embody consciously and unconsciously. In communication, act, and deed, FDCs are fundamentally concerned with the wellbeing of their students, faculty, department; the university; and the various political factors that shape funding at the federal, state, and administrative levels.

In addition to navigating the demands of the position, social structures exist within higher education that organize individuals into groups with competing interests and needs. Naturally, these social structures are not immune to inadequacies. In particular, educational leaders, such as FDCs, are often seasoned scholars who are familiar with humanistic approaches to leadership, but organizational cultural norms may interfere or challenge some of the empowering practices they are familiar with and wish to enlist. The challenge within higher education, though, is to consider the reality of each group's experiences and to challenge existing paradigms and negotiate new social arrangements that can achieve greater good for all (see Turner, 1988 regarding critical theory in practice).

Additionally, critical theorists such as Horkheimer and Habermas (Crotty, 1998)) provide analysis that critical inquiry should consist of explanatory, practical and normative components. These components work toward pragmatic change. It is possible for humans to activate a desire in organizational members to enact positive social change, but each party must be involved in the process and be enabled to make changes. To achieve positive social change through critical inquiry, educational organizations acknowledge and incorporate critical social justice leadership practices within organizational culture so that all stakeholders in the organization benefit from collaborating on the incorporation of these practices. Horkheimer (1993) postulates that examination through a critical lens is expected to identify the problems in social reality, identify the actors to create change, and identify clear norms for criticism and achievable practical goals for social transformation. Thus, FDCs are crucially centered because they not only mediate between administration and faculty, they also must manage *affect* to unify both parties when their disparate interests are not aligned.

Democratic leadership can be a part of social change and critical inquiry as it seeks the voice from all stakeholders in directing the college through collaborative decision-making. Higher education institutions with a vision for democratic leadership exemplify a culture of inclusion and transformation. Most colleges and universities in the USA operate within a hybrid model drawing upon classical, cultural, and human resources approaches to organizational communication (Kezar, 2012; Buller, 2014; Shinn, 2014). Offering an example of lateral, rather than hierarchical, decision-making not only illustrates the importance placed on stakeholders' opinions, but also provides emancipatory practice.

Within the literature (Kezar, 2012; Buller, 2014; Shinn, 2014) and my own experience as a faculty department chair it seems that higher education institutions follow a hierarchical process with decisions ultimately being made by executive administrators and passed down to the FDC to initiate. Horkheimer (1982) contends that a society or organization can transform from a hierarchical, organizational structure to become more democratic—in the true sense of democracy. Horkheimer (1982) provides that this may occur only through real consensus amongst stakeholders. This develops, according to Horkheimer, by transforming capitalism into authentic and intentional democracy which aligns with Authentic Transformational Leadership. “By demystifying and questioning what is happening in society and in schools, critical theorists may help educators rectify wrongs while identifying key morals and values” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011, p. 15).

The goal of inclusivity at all levels is fundamentally in the hands of key leaders within the academy. We benefit by considering the ways that mid-level leaders, such as FDCs, may provide greater leadership that is more inclusive and empowering. Santamaria (2013) provides that “Educational leadership for social justice and equity is the primary leadership response to inclusive and equitable education” (p. 1).

Social justice leadership (SJL) may also be further conceptualized as inhabiting the perspective of all stakeholders in education, not only toward students, but also toward one another. The approach provides a critique for administrators as well as those representing the university or college in the classroom. According to Rintoul and Goulais (2010), SJL provides:

> …a moral purpose, a vision of the direction they [leaders] are heading, and guiding principles to direct their actions. They developed, and continue to develop, qualities of critical self-reflection, self-regulation, flexibility and a tolerance for ambiguity—all of which, we suggest, are critical aspects of an emerging moral literacy (p. 754).

“They” is a reference to leaders generally; for educators the focus on morality and ethical decision-making is elevated with the increased responsibility of providing education. Again, FDCs are uniquely aligned in their positions to enable others precisely because they must analyze, develop, strategize, and revise plans of action that bring disparate parties together toward common goals.

When leaders can tap into positive attributes of identity that enable others to find meaning in their work and meet various departmental, institutional, or even state goals, they can help strengthen the academy. Leaders must, therefore, strive to be aware of not only their positions, but also the intersections of power and practice that enable others to perform at their best. Embodied this way, leadership that is aware and culturally responsive to the stakeholders is beneficial to the vitality of the organization (Khalifa, 2012).

Additionally, Santamaria expressed the connective nature of actors in higher education and the "…need for alternative models of leadership as a response to diversity in schools and universities, and value in exploring connections between multicultural education and educational leadership" (2013, p. 1). Becoming or being a Social Justice Leader is about having your heart in the right place. This alignment is evident when authentic transformational leaders focus on the needs of others and assist in the actualization process for organizational peers and stakeholders.

Ethics

Within the academy, ethics become a matter of disciplined practice and careful navigation of interests and parties involved (Kramer & Enomoto, 2014; Langlois, 2011). Because leaders at various levels of the academy are called upon to make decisions daily, personal ethical frameworks may come into conflict with directives, departmental demands and the politics of the institution. As a result, ethics—the formal set of principles one follows to make moral decisions of right and wrong—may not align with these demands and ethical dilemmas occur. The FDC may make a decision to override ethical framework where functional decisions must be made to ensure productivity. For the purposes of this study, decision-making and conflict are discussed as central to FDC leadership. I frame both within the pragmatic aims they seek to accomplish rather than the theoretical aims they illuminate for leaders in organizations. However, all decisions have ethical consequences (Kramer & Enomoto, 2014).

Conflict and Ethical Dilemmas

The FDC makes decisions frequently and whether those decisions are ethical or not shapes the cohesiveness of the parties s/he is involved. Each administrative decision s/he makes echoes beyond the immediate parties involved, and these decisions may help or hinder the culture s/he fosters within her/his department and the rapport s/he creates and maintains with the administration (see Foster, 1986 regarding the vitality of administration through the FDC). With greater changes occurring within the academy, moreover, FDCs are tasked with developing more diversely representative departments that foster great inclusivity and tolerance for others (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Given these progressive demands and gradual changes to the intellectual landscape of the academy, ethics become more important in how the FDC handles various situations that arise. Typically research on ethics in decision-making for FDCs focuses on the ethical dilemmas that the FDC manages when confronted with opposing perspectives, permissions to share, and directives that differ between faculty and administration.

Ethical dilemmas are divided by researchers (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011) into four paradigms for consideration: justice, critique, care, and the profession. Each of these paradigms illustrates key principles that leaders engage to maintain order and harmony within their team, group, or organization. Through these paradigms, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) urge leaders in education consider their personal and professional codes of ethics and make sense of the organizational ethics that may differ in many ways from their own. Educational leaders benefit by drawing upon the tenets of collectivist cultures where the focus is on the group and understanding the needs of others. Leadership practices often focus on self and self-preservation in leadership, but ultimately consideration of the needs of others creates deeper ethical considerations. Shapiro and Stefkovich provide three pillars of ethics that are commonly used in education and provide a new paradigm that enhances ethical considerations.

Ethic of Justice The ethic of justice provides that all stakeholders ought to be treated with the same equity, dignity, and fair play. This includes policies and practices that pertain to organizational bylaws, state and federal laws, and even societal norms for behavior and actions (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Leaders who operate within this set of ethics may rely heavily on the inherent social and legal structures of the organization they are part; yet, they are not limited to ethical standards or codes of conduct communicated by the organization itself. Leaders can also rely on this set of ethics to consider more utilitarian understandings of justice that value collectives over individuals (see Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011 regarding communal values in ethics), which may allow leaders to see beyond the social structure of the organization and make more reasoned and inclusive decisions.

Ethics of Critique. The ethics of critique differs from the ethic of justice in that the rules, laws, and policies made by those in power are critically examined and scrutinized in terms of the value they add to the organization. Under this set of ethics, critiques are leveled against those in power to clarify decisions, values, and needs (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).

Aimed at discussion and debate, this set of ethics pushes various parties to contend with one another and make sense of their shared conditions within the organization. As such, the ethics of critique is an embodiment of critical theory with an emphasis placed on educators considering crucial moral and ethical considerations in schools (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).

Ethic of Care. Derived from a feminist perspective, the ethic of care is focused on justice but also fundamentally considers the well-being of individuals within decision-making. Educational settings are particularly apt for ethics of care because concern for individuals as students, staff teachers, colleagues, and leaders fundamentally infuses the aims of most college and universities (Tenuto & Gardiner, 2013; Noddings, 1992). As a result, this set of ethics is most heavily aligned with utilitarianism and the underpinnings of Critical Social Justice Theory. As Blackburn (2001) states:

> An ethic of care and benevolence, which is in essence what utilitarianism is, gives less scope to a kind of moral philosophy modeled on law, with its hidden and complex structures and formulae known only to the initiates (p. 93). Thus, the ethics of care does not oppress, and is therefore inclusive.

An ethic of care, therefore, helps educators recognize individuals within the greater collective of which they are part of and may help FDCs better communicate goals and directives to the various stakeholders involved. Because education is a place of growth, concern, and provides contributions to others in society, educational organizations benefit by exemplifying SJL and ethics of care to the community. This approach is counter to the guidelines that are traditionally evoked in higher educational institutions, which draw on military and business leadership models. According to Shapiro and Stefkovich, “Viewing ethical dilemmas through the ethic of care may prompt questions related to how educators may assist young people in meeting their needs and desires and will reflect solutions that show a concern for others as part of decision-making" (2011, p. 18). Educational organizations could extend the ethics of care further by including external and internal stakeholders' opinions in missions, goals, and decision-making.

Ethics of the Profession. Many scholars find that the ethics of justice, care, and critique are complementary and strengthen the ethical considerations when intertwined (Starratt, 1994; Starratt, 2011; Kramer & Enomoto, 2014; Langlois, 2011). Shapiro and Stefkovich agree with this assessment; however, they argue that there are specific professional decisions that require a fourth category: the ethic of the profession. Many professions consider ethics in decision-making and the concept is not new. The ethics of the profession takes into account the specific dynamics of culture, history, context, and structure that is inherent to each industry and organization. Ethics are not considered a "one size fits all" and consideration to tailoring specific standards associated with the organization is imperative. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) write that it is important to understand the context and structure of the decision; therefore, the ethics of the profession provides a necessary frame that considers the role personal ethics and expected ethics by the profession play in decisions made by key leaders within organizations. This paradigm places the development of principles and codes with the professional who is involved in the navigation of the institution, which is an authentic transformational leadership approach to considering and cultivating ethical parameters within the profession.

The ethics of the profession is something that the FDC may already be aware of and develops over time as s/he adjusts to the position. This ethical frame is personal and not necessarily based on the ethics or code that the organization has adopted. The FDC continues to grow her/his or his professional ethics over time through various interactions with multiple parties: students, faculty, staff, administration, community, and associations. Because ethics of the profession is generative by nature, it allows the FDC, as a key leader, to enact greater social justice when s/he realizes the potential s/he has to enable disparate parties within the organization. Not all FDCs maintain the ethics of the profession due to the organization they are a part of or their lack of experience in considering the importance of the ethics of the profession.

Begley and Johansson (2003) suggest the ethics of the profession:

> Should express principles so embedded in our personal and professional being, our practice, our culture, our practice of teaching and schooling that we actually have little need to refer to it. We would just know "how to do right" – at least theoretically-notwithstanding the inevitable human dilemmas, tensions, and human complexities that ultimately complicate the implementation of that "right". (p. 108)

This suggests a highly ideal set of ethics, but that does not mean that it is not practical and useful for understanding the nature of the FDC position and the ways that FDCs can eventually become forces of organizational stability and progressive in representing change for both faculty and administration.

Through a critical social justice framework, educational leaders work to increase positive outcomes for students, faculty, staff, and administration. Thus, the ethics of the profession not only operates nicely within my project, where decision-making shapes the efficacy of the FDC and the cohesiveness of the parties s/he is involved, it also helps extend decision-making practices into the realm of social justice that most educational organizations are a part.

Consideration of personal and professional ethics requires experience, making mistakes, and having the time to contemplate and evaluate outcomes. Given the various demands of the position and the difficult learning curve, this time is not always afforded to the FDC. Because the position entails so much on-the-job training through firsthand experience, the process requires that faculty members grapple “with their own personal and professional codes of ethics” and reflect “on diverse forms of ethics, taking into account the differing backgrounds of students enrolled in U.S. schools and universities today” as an ongoing process of becoming and being the FDC (Shapiro & Stefovich, 2011, p. 23). Developing professional ethics are also influenced by personal consideration, community networking, professional associations, and the educational organization (Shapiro & Stefovich, 2011); certainly the social influence of culture, norms, and values influence the FDC’s set of codes and principles.

Ethics of the Community

This work is extended by (Furman, 2004; English & Furman, 2007) with the notion of “ethics of the community”. Furman (2004) defines this as an ongoing process that asks leaders to move away from heroic (solo) decision-making and to move toward making decisions with the assistance of the community, which consists of students, faculty, staff, administration, and the citizens in the geographical area served. Taken as an extension of ethics of the profession, ethics of the community entails connections to transformative leadership because it seeks to bring disparate parties together to negotiate and navigate the ultimate outcomes of various actions.

Ethical Decision-making

The FDC is involved in decision-making daily. The classical model of decision-making articulated by Hoy and Miskel (2012) utilizes an optimizing strategy. Similar to the classical leadership approach, this model considers strategies and sequential steps to decision-making that are formulaic and are proposed to lead to best decision-making achievement. Educational leaders seldom rely upon the classical model, as most situations requiring decision-making are not packaged nicely for procedural protocol.

Most scholars agree that decision-making is process oriented; however, educational leadership theories vary in specific protocol and procedures during the process, as well as the potential outcomes of each. Wisdom in decision-making should be based on rationality, and ethics and should not be separated (Begley, & Stefkovich, 2007; Evers & Lakomski, 1991; Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Willower, 1993; Willower, 1999). Some decisions that the FDC must make are low-stakes, which provides the FDC relative comfort as s/he relies on knowledge and experience that allows her/him to extrapolate the best decision. Conversely, in high-stakes situations, the FDC isn't afforded a "safety net". Making a "mistake" by opting to immediately engage in high stakes decision-making without input from faculty or the dean may prove to be professionally fatal for the FDC. When approaching and considering these difficult situations, input should be gleaned from as many stakeholders as possible within the time available to the FDC.

Administrators cannot separate themselves from their values, just as various other stakeholders are rooted to their own values and beliefs. The decision-making process, therefore, is value-infused at all levels. According to Hoy and Miskel (2012):

> Decision-making is a general pattern of action found in the rational administration of all major tasks and functional areas in organization…and those with responsibility go through the following: recognize and define problem, analyze the difficulties with the situation, establish criteria to satisfy situation, initiate plan of action, and evaluate the outcome. (p. 327).

This process is cyclical and each step may be reconsidered or readdressed.

Being consistent with the ethics of the profession in decision-making also requires a consideration of organizational culture and history. Considerations of cultural norms beyond the FDC's immediate organizational perspective also adds value, particularly when it takes into account federal and global perspectives. For example, as a leader from an individualistic culture, an FDC may err by making decisions on his/her own. This lack of collaboration may lead to increased conflict, lack of buy-in from stakeholders, and may also decrease the stability and trust between the FDC and stakeholders (Miller, & Martin, 2015; Tapper, 2013). Conversely, a FDC subscribing to a collective model may consider utilizing a varying approach to decision-making similar to a style shared by a vast number of the group. With consideration to this paradigm, the best outcome for the group is emphasized and a focus on the self is diminished and a leader considers potential outcomes based on ethical reasoning that meets the greatest good of the whole. This approach is not without potential pitfalls in the decision-making process; however, more people gain from this process than lose. Thus, this form of engagement is more collaborative and may ameliorate greater tensions between the FDC and the parties s/he interacts.

This collective model should not be confused with the administrative model forwarded by Simon in 1947 and also described as the satisficing strategy according to Hoy and Miskel (2008). When developing the model, Simon acknowledged that decision-making is a process; the interesting assumption, that is also true in conflict resolution, is that a satisfactory solution is utilized rather than the best outcome. Administrators do not have the resources to fully vet all possible resolutions; therefore, the decision may solve for the problem, but create additional problems from the outcome (Hoy and Miskel, 2008). In this model the stakeholders, including administration, “satisfice” rather than optimize; providing solutions that are “good enough” (Gigerenzer, 2004; Hoy & Miskel, 2012). Decisions, therefore, carry both the perils and pleasures of work described by Deetz (2012) in that they offer chances to involve others and reach resolution, also incur a ridicule, distrust, and exclusion, among others, that might detract from the generative nature of the process. My project seeks to navigate these tensions, approaching them a dialectical tension of the organization based on communication, decision-making and ethics.

As previously mentioned, the FDC must be aware of the social, political, and power relations within the organization (Gosling, Bolden, & Petrov, 2009). An FDC may be involved in a task germane to his or her role, such as scheduling. Organizational norms associated with this seemingly low-stakes task may appear to be without risk; however, multiple stakeholders are involved. For example, the assigned instructor selection, budgetary concerns, student access, and facilities, among others. In each of these, the FDC determines that another section of a high demand freshman level course should be opened to meet student needs. The FDC locates an available space early in the morning. This may appear to be a simple, low-stakes decision-making, but the FDC should consider all of the stakeholders who are affected and consider: will this time and location meet student needs (traditional or working); which instructor is available to teach (full-time faculty or adjunct faculty); will student services and advising find this section a suitable option to direct students (time, location, seats available); are there funds available in the budget to open another section to meet demand (dean, provost, AVP); are there competing disciplines who need the space, and so forth. If answers to these questions are not obtained before and during the process, then the FDC has violated social, political, and power relations within the organization, which may lead to grave repercussions. Each institution is not uniform and this is where the experience of the FDC developing an ethics of the profession complements decision-making (Gosling et al., 2009).

Applying Decision-Making to Models of Leadership within Organizations

In exploring the decision-making process within an organization, Deetz (2012) notes that there is a growing shift from the "owner/manager" model to the "stakeholder" model in various organizations. This shift not only challenges the classical models of leadership within organizations, it also expands the distribution of power to allow more parties to be involved in the decision-making process. A shift to this model will allow many groups to make investments and hold a stake within organizations. This model can also lead to satisfying the diverse social and economic goals of the organization itself. A stakeholder model promotes multiple forms of ownership, and its "…core processes involve several simultaneous goals" (Deetz, 2001, p.39). Deetz (2012) provides a communication-centric approach to explore the foundation of organizational communication. By drawing attention to particular individuals, teams, and groups, this emphasis also affirms Furman's (2005) and English and Furman (2007) perspectives regarding ethical decision-making with input from the community. This process is time consuming for the FDC, as the example of scheduling or opening a course section is only one of numerous decisions that s/he engages with daily. This is especially important as decision-making stakes increase.

Shared leadership theory and practices are a contemporary trend within P-12 leadership in USA schools (Wilhelm, 2013). The approach links the faculty to curriculum and policy decision-making. This work has traditionally fallen on the desk of the principal and/or higher education department chair. A shared leadership approach was adopted to enhance curriculum, teaching, and student learning outcomes (Wilhelm, 2013). Wilhelm cites the work of Waters et al. (2009) to provide evidence of the necessity to move the work to teachers to meet the needs of stakeholders not only to enhance education, but to reduce the massive task required of US principals. According to Wilhelm the shared leadership model is often referred to as a professional learning community and adds, "…all adults continually learn together so that every student achieves the highest levels" (2013, p. 62). Some pushback from transforming from the classical or bureaucratic model to the shared leadership surrounds role responsibility. Faculty have been conditioned to see the role of generating policy in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as administration's role and responsibility, but are overwhelmingly against administration creating or contributing to curriculum or instructional design (Wilhelm, 2013).

Collaborative decision-making conditions followers to focus on role specific duties rather than the global health of the stakeholders and organization. Hoy and Tarter (2008) provide that faculty and administrators should vary how decisions are made and who is responsible for making decisions based on the nature and circumstances of the problem. For example, a committee serve as a distribution of power and a dissemination of duties for various tasks. Such distributions of decision making duties and collaboration have led to changes in how faculty communicate about their jobs, the community, and their students. Wilhelm (2013), for example, found that the language became less detached and more inclusive. Faculty began referring to “our students” when discussing decisions, as opposed to “my students” or “the students”. Thus, the distribution of power allowed faculty to be more involved with each other, connected to the power structures of the department, and have greater ownership over their status and positions in the department. Wilhelm found during decision-making collaboration regarding curriculum development and student learning assessment, instructors were commenting that language changed from my student to our student; the power shift and decision-making created macro-level organizational ownership from faculty (2013).

Distributed power and shared leadership are, therefore, crucial for the academy. Shared leadership or distributive leadership has been relevant for some time and refers to an approach that focuses on disseminating leadership responsibilities throughout the team, rather than leadership work solely completed by the chair. Gosling, Bolden, and Petrov (2009) question whether higher education institutions contain or enhance academics who take on leadership roles. They contend that distributive leadership assists leaders in rhetorically making sense of their actual experience and what they believe that it should be as well as mediating conflicts between the dual roles of academic and manager (Gosling, Bolden & Petrov, 2009).

Finally, understanding the culture and history of an organization is also an important component of leadership. The knowledge of organizational norms that have been cultivated allows the leader to enter into discussions with faculty to collaborate in the creation of new norms when appropriate. These changes should be discussed collaboratively, rather than the

FDC implementing changes unilaterally without input. Such a move breeds distrust, and it may also challenge organizational culture and history (Roper & Deal, 2010). It also may lead to increased tensions between faculty and administration, which might disrupt the authority and agency of the FDC.

Prior to engaging in decision-making, the FDC should reach out to the dean for guidance and to make sense of the expectations for this role. When making decisions that will have major effects, the FDC should reach out to the dean for guidance and gain as much insight and advice as possible before executing a plan of action. Strong connections between FDCs and deans are especially important in higher education, as a FDC functions in a position to serve two disparate parties that rely on each other within the organization. On the one hand, deans, chancellors, provosts, and/or presidents manage the FDC, often delineating tasks and expectations that the FDC must do for the college or within their department. On the other hand, the FDC is accountable to her/his faculty whom s/he represents to the administration and whom s/he must navigate on a daily basis. Obviously, the goals of these parties differ due to the needs, desires, and aspirations of the individuals involved. The dean receives directives from the provost or assistant vice-president to disseminate to the FDC's. The FDC is expected to work with faculty to accomplish these goals. It appears as if there are two sides to the story, but as Tucker and Bryan (1988) note, "…most academic stories actually have 11 sides" (p. 92). To ensure that the FDC has the support of the dean, especially in decisions that are high stakes through written communication that acknowledges approval from administration throughout the process (Roper & Deal, 2010).

Summary

It is well documented that Faculty Department Chairs (FDCs) in Higher Education face many challenges within this entry-level administrative position. FDCs are often promoted to this position from faculty rank and learn from challenges that arise within their dual roles of faculty member and administrator. Navigating the demands of administration and then translating these demands to faculty, while simultaneously attempting to reduce tension, remain ethical, and enhance efficacy for self and faculty in this “key linchpin” role are the hallmarks of an authentic transformational leader. Dialectic tensions exist for FDCs as administrative and faculty demands often conflict. FDCs face high burnout rates, and high attrition.

Stakeholders often differ on perspectives of the FDCs role. Research supports authentic transformational leadership, which includes a serving faculty and students as a potential model to enhance faculty and FDC performance, efficacy, and ultimately learning outcomes for students. The top-down, transactional leadership approach continues to overshadow authentic transformational leadership models in many universities and colleges. The FDC inhabits a career filled with dialectical tension and conflict.

The FDC works to create credibility with administrators, often emulating or taking instruction from supervisory administrators and those in a similar role as to the means of satisfactory enacting performance. In conjunction with the fulfillment of higher administrative directives, the FDC simultaneously attempts to inspire faculty and students, reduce tension, make ethical decisions, and enhance efficacy in their role as authentic transformational leader.

Dialectic tensions exist for FDCs as administrative and faculty demands often conflict.

Building on the Body of Knowledge

It is well documented that this tension exists, that FDC's face high burnout rates, and high attrition. Organizational training is helpful to the FDC. To enhance effectiveness, student experience, and morals within the organization, institutions of higher education may benefit from embedding and rewarding an authentic transformational model including an emphasis on social justice into their core values. At a higher level, the buy-in from executive administrators to consider adopting an ethical decision-making model to utilize throughout the organization. The core value(s) is/are mutually agreed upon approaches and guidelines to leadership and organizational level decision-making based upon a foundation of the ethics of the profession. Implementing an ethics of profession may assist FDCs in navigating the dialectical tension of the position as the ethical foundation provides the boundaries of leadership and decision-making agency. It is important to include outcomes of the way that relational, political and discursive change must occur rather than simply pointing to the injustices inflicted upon FDC's in their positions as the least empowered administrative task manager in higher education.

A robust body of work also establishes meaningful consideration of leadership ethics, but the lack of specific empirical research, drawn from the rich experiences of FDCs in decision-making related to a professional framework of an ethics warrants further investigation. This research provides an opportunity for higher education stakeholders to consider how an ethics of the profession linked to leadership and decision-making may provide enhanced outcomes

Chapter Three: Research Methods

This qualitative, descriptive, single-case study focuses on the perspective of participants in their natural organizational settings to answer the research questions. As a qualitative case-study the three legs of the method include interviews, observations, and document analyses. Participants' lived experiences were observed; two-hour, semi-structured interviews were conducted, evaluated, and triangulated alongside participant; and organizational documents related to leadership, ethics, and decision-making were added to strengthen and reinforce accuracy of results. The method utilizes several qualitative data collection strategies and is consistent with the case-study approach that blends and balances perception of reality toward consideration of ethical approaches to FDC decision-making (Yin, 2014; Creswell, 2012).

The purpose of the study is to ascertain the shared experiences that are unique to the Faculty Department Chair position in higher education within the framework of ethics of the profession. Specifically, the research considers maintenance of professional ethics while navigating decision-making in this leadership role.

The data gathered represents the shared and lived experiences of FCDs who lead academic departments in a northwestern, metropolitan university, in a mid-sized city in the USA. The research illuminates the complexity of communication within the dialectically-tense role as faculty leader and administrator, and draws upon theory as well as participant perception and experience, to cultivate valuable insight that furthers educational-leadership consideration within the academy.

Research exists that considers dimensions, functions, and tension that a FDC faces while s/he conducts his/her work. Authentic Transformational Leadership framework provides the theoretical roadmaps to enhance decision-making for the FDC and the organizational structures that support leaders and other institutional members traverse.

Research Questions

This research provides context, depth, and guideline to enhance praxis by answering the following research questions:

1. How do FDCs manage and lead relative to an ethics of the profession surrounded by dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?
2. How do FDCs engage a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

Research Design

The qualitative research design guided the process to select a case and participants, data-collection processes, and coding and analysis processes (Yin, 2014). Theoretical and methodological consideration was addressed prior to selection of case study as the method in the research design. This included consideration of Critical Social Justice Theory, Authentic Transformational Theory, and an ethics of the profession as discussed in the review of literature. Seeking answers to the research questions of “how” FDCs make ethical decisions, required in-depth investigation to describe a complex phenomenon, with co-participants in their natural environment utilizing empirical data collection. Therefore, case study was an appropriate method for this study (Yin, 2014).

To fully understand the ethics of the profession and decision-making strategies employed by FDCs, the qualitative case study was utilized to allow for collection of empirical evidence in a realistic setting. According to Slife and Williams (1995) “The thrust of qualitative research methods is to reject the philosophical assumptions of traditional methods…. Researchers avoid measurement and quantification, allowing subjects [co-participants] to describe their own behaviors and experiences in language native to their experiences” (p. 199). The case study method also provides the flexibility to consider design adjustments to ensure that the appropriate goals are met to seek answers to the research questions (Yin, 2014).

The realities of the co-participants’ perceptions are central to this investigation. A subject’s reality is constructed through symbolic interaction of cultural values and norms within the FDC position and day-to-day experiences of managing personal life and work. Crotty (1998) states that “…truth, or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world” (p. 8). The meaning constructed by the research co-participants is presented in this research through their lens and voice for authentic consideration. The experience of the FDC as either processor or engager could only be understood if the meanings are assigned to the dual-approach realities by actors within their natural environment. Therefore, empirical data collection via studying participants in this environment, where leadership occurs, provides the opportunity to capture nuances of the lived experience (Creswell, 2014).

A participant’s responses are made in context of their experience and constitute a sociological explanation (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993). This inductive approach seeks meaning from the symbolic interpretation of subjects’ assignment of meaning, and the researcher’s interpretation of those meanings. According to Hamel et al., meaning

"…enter[s] into the actors' interactions, and define their points of view on these interactions." (1993, pp. 19-20).

The concepts of leadership, ethics, and decision-making are all important considerations in this research. These concepts frame the research approach, consideration of others, framework selection, construction of methodology and methods, as well as analysis of the expression of others. It was important to be mindful of these considerations to avoid potential harms, such as researcher self-deception, bias toward outcomes, and even revelation of private opinions or facts by participants. In qualitative research design, bias is acknowledged as the researcher is the instrument to gather data. Throughout the process co-participants reviewed findings to ensure that her/his intended meaning is captured properly for summary of findings. The process of member checking occurred as each participant reviewed and approved final interview transcripts prior to coding.

Consideration to "bounding the case" was utilized to select appropriate individuals who have experience related to the study and who also have the experiences to answer the research questions within the span of time under investigation (Yin, 2015; Creswell, 2014). Bounding included consideration to the number of participants, access to observation that is allowable to the institution, and appropriate documents for analysis. Yin (2014) provides "Bounding the case in these ways will help to determine the scope…of data collection, and, in particular, how you will distinguish data about the subject of your case study (the phenomenon) from data external to the case (the context) (p. 34). Considerations of bounding also included time interval of data (e.g., article dating) to provide date restrictions on documents. In this case, the documents under observation were posted to the university website with publication dates from 2010-2016. As the research questions do not seek a comparative consideration of FDCs between varied institutions, a single-case study provides adequate analysis to answer the research questions.

Systematic consideration of approach and method to organize and engage in the steps of the research process were considered to ensure thoughtful design and function during the research process. “Case study design relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion…” (Yin, 2014, p. 17). Comparison of multiple types of evidence, and participant review of transcripts provides for triangulation where data may be compared to reach conclusions. Triangulation is critical to an effective case study. According to Yin (2014), “Too many times, a case study researcher has been sloppy, not followed systematic procedures, or allowed equivocal evidence to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions (p. 19). The researcher must be aware of subjectivity as the research instrument, and as a FDC herself, and work to avoid influence of participant answers (Yin, 2014; Macquarrie, 2015). By collecting documents, participating, observing, and interviewing participants, and by member checking, this study aims to meet the demands of triangulation and derive rich analysis related to the FDC leadership position and ethical decision-making.

Reflexivity

As qualitative research is interpretative research, and interaction with participants and data requires interpretation, the researcher was aware of the potential for personal bias in the research design. As a FDC of four years, the researcher has experienced the challenges of professional ethics in navigating the dual role as faculty and administrator. With over 20 years of experience in leadership roles, the researcher finds that to navigate the FDC role in higher education presents unique challenges. Acting within an authentic transformational leadership framework, the FDC's daily work to motivate faculty to fulfill their goals toward personal and professional growth is bound within the often-tight time constraints of administrative deliverables that often steer the ship toward a task-oriented leadership model. The continuous effort to straddle and navigate this dichotomy was the primary frame for which to seek answers to the research questions. Creswell (2014) provides that these experiences may potentially shape how the interactions take place between participant and researcher, the development of interview questions, and the analysis of the data. These concerns were at the forefront of the researcher's consideration during the research process.

The relationship between an ethics of the profession and decision-making were considered within the theoretical lens of Critical Social Justice Theory. Again, seeking answers to the research questions involved a research design, which included individual FDC interviews, analysis of individual and organizational documents, and observations of FDC interactions. As well, application of Yin's (2015) five components to case study method, which include: 1) developing case study questions; 2) considering propositions; 3) selecting units of analysis; 4) linking data to the propositions; and 5) selecting criteria to interpret the findings (p. 37) was applied.

Participant Selection and Setting

The purposeful selection of the Northwestern University for the case was based on proximity, depth of participant pool, and less familiarity between the researcher and co-participants. The northwest university selected for this study is referred to using the pseudonym Northwest University to protect the confidentiality of the organization. The northwest university has situated itself as a research institution and serves the largest number of students in the state. As with many higher education institutions, the FDCs oversee tenured and tenure-track faculty, lecturers, and adjunct faculty who serve their department. The state's board of education has reformed general education and competencies for its higher education institutions. Demographic shifts in enrollment, changes to workforce needs, graduate school acceptance rates, and course enrollment caps continue to create alignment shifts, and ratchet up the FDC's leadership responsibilities. According to the Northwest University's facts and figures information sheet (2015), the university employs 44 FDCs within seven colleges and most are ranked at associate or professor. The FDCs oversee approximately 650 full-time and 525 part-time faculty cumulatively, and serve over 22,000 students who are currently enrolled either full or part-time.

Participants were sought from those who serve in the role of FDC at the Northwest University. The selection criteria required that the FDC have been employed at the Northwestern University for at least one academic year and carry a teaching load. Any FDC who was a department head or who did not teach as a part of their role was culled from the participant pool. A case study sample typically ranges from 1-12 participants. Creswell (2014) states that, "…to purposefully select sites and individuals means to select individuals to best help them understand the research problem and research questions" (p. 246). Dean permission from five schools, or colleges was secured prior to approaching the FDCs who participated in the study. The participants were purposefully selected from the list of candidates in the colleges or schools where dean approval was given, and who had responded with willingness to participate in the research study.

Ten participants agreed to participate and each engaged in two, one-hour long interviews. Some participants chose to complete both interviews on the same day; others completed the interviews over two days. Seven male FDCs were interviewed and three female FDCs participated and thus, the gender sample also reflected the faculty ratio at the Northwest University. The ratio of male to female FDCs is 7:3 in the study and at the case university. To protect the co-participants' identities, pseudonyms were employed. Participants are aware of their pseudonyms so are able to recognize and own their stories, but identification remains unrecognizable to others. Subject confidential identification (pseudonyms) were randomly generated through a naming generator. Anonymization also occurred through transcription. Where participants expressed identifying information of others, institution(s), or gender, wording was altered to neutralize and anonymize the data. Gender and naming identification was altered in the transcripts to inclusive pronouns of s/he or him/her to further ensure confidentiality related to participants, or to others described in the interview responses. This process was approved by participants. The names are representative of traditional gender identification in the US. Additionally, where necessary, co-participants elected to have certain information be kept "off the record."

Prior to engagement in data collection, ethical considerations were reviewed to ensure that the benefits that the research seeks to provide also benefits the body of knowledge of co-participants while mitigating harm to them or to the institution under investigation. Taking the incorrect path or justifying unethical means to obtain data was mitigated to protect co-participants. This bias can occur when a researcher justifies actions as being acceptable, and resists their inner voice (moral compass) or the position of others who oppose the research. All interactions and accounts within this case study were considered with ethics as a foremost consideration. If a method was deemed potentially harmful or a co-participant's identity was potentially at risk, the method or interview data was dismissed.

Upon approval from the Northwest University and the University of Idaho's Institutional Review Board, the research process began. A research protocol guide was developed which outlined each step of the research process for reference. Each co-participant received a formal electronic invitation to participate, which was delivered to the institutionally designated email account and was accompanied by the IRB approval, protocol, and approval from the Northwest University dean over their program. Upon receipt of communication indicating participant's willingness to participate in the study, the interviews were scheduled. Each participant received an electronic copy of the Informed Consent Form and Interview Protocol to review prior to the interview meeting. Upon arrival at each participant's office, the Informed Consent was signed.

Interviews

Within the single-case study methodology, the qualitative interviewing method, which is both descriptive and inferential, provided the opportunity to ascertain participants' perspectives via semi-structured, open-ended questions in a face-to-face environment. This provided a rich and unconstrained experience of the participants to be explored, which elicited views and opinions toward answering the RQs (Martin, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2015). In-person interviews allowed the interviewer to create rapport, observe and consider nonverbal cues, and ask follow-up questions (Lichtman, 2010). The interviews emulated a conversational tone that Martin (2011) provides, allows the researcher to reduce ambiguity and to direct and redirect questions. Participants were asked if they had a preference for their pseudonym; if no preference was provided, a pseudonym was provided to guard identity and ensure confidentiality. The qualitative interview provided the flexibility to adjust questions as needed, in an environment where the participants appeared comfortable to express their opinions and perspectives. Case study protocol was strictly followed leading to the interviews, during the interviews, and after the interviews. Protocol examples, included avoidance of leading verbal questions or nonverbal cues that may have led the participant responses (Yin, 2015). In an effort to avoid this reflexive threat, the interviewer remained cognizant of the potential risk and remained neutral during the interviews. Each interview was conducted face-to-face in the FDC's professional office to enhance their comfort, and ranged in length from 90 to 180 minutes. Each interview was video-recorded, transcribed, forwarded to participants for member checking, and coded.

Field notes were collected on note cards. Interviews were captured with a video-recording device, which allowed for additional viewing for transcription accuracy and as reference during data analysis.

Observation

Participant observation was an opportunity to gain evidence during the daily work of the FDC in their work environment. According to Yin (2015), "Such observations serve as yet another source of evidence in doing case study research (pp. 112-113). Observation is the second leg of a case study and allows for additional triangulation. Observations occurred during business hours. Some participants were observed interacting with staff and deans. The observation environments included personal office space, university conference rooms, and department areas where interactions between FDCs and staff took place. The observation data was collected utilizing a casual-observation approach of the FDC's work and interactions with a variety of stakeholders within the organization. Observation occurred prior to, and immediately following the participant interviews. Detailed notes were taken, including location, date, time, and actors involved. The verbal and nonverbal communication which occurred during the observations was noted. Again, each individual, whether a specific co-participant or a member of the university involved, is protected by confidentiality measures described above in "Participants."

Document Analysis

Documents from the Northwest University were analyzed alongside other research methods to enhance triangulation. As document analysis provides the third leg of triangulation, documents which were available to the public in an online format and relate to FDC decision-making, leadership, and ethics of the profession were acquired. An Excel spreadsheet was created to identify document categories, key terms, quotations from the documents, and document location. Proposed categories included decision-making, ethics, transformational leadership, and democratic and social justice guidelines. Document quotations will be copied directly for coding in in data analysis. The documents were primarily extracted from the university's publically-accessible links to the human resources and leadership resource center pages, which contain formalized performance, management, and coaching items. The university pages also provide a mission statement and framework that leaders are encouraged to employ, and which align with the transformational leadership model.

Researcher as Instrument

The researcher is the instrument to gather qualitative data from co-participants in this study. Poggenpoel and Myburgh (2003) state, "It is through the researcher's facilitative interaction that a context is created where respondents share rich data regarding their experiences" (p. 418). The researcher facilitated communication, worked with co-participants to select times and locations for interviews, and observed nonverbal cues during interviews and observations. Reflexivity and consideration to preparation as a research instrument was considered prior to and during interaction with co-participants.

According to researchers (Pezella, Pettigrew, & Miller-Day, 2012), given that the researcher "*is* the instrument in semi-structured or unstructured qualitative interviews, unique researcher attributes have the potential to influence the collection of empirical materials" (p. 166). Consideration of the influence is important to work toward uniform approaches in interacting with co-participants. The researcher considered the additional element of participant-observer during data collection; the researcher is the counterpart of the subjects, therefore, moving to the participant observer role or co-participant took place in this study. Merriam (2015) further explains the importance of reflexivity and awareness as a researcher, "Your level of personal involvement as a participant observer – as a peripheral, active, or complete member during fieldwork filters how you perceive, document, and thus code your data" (p. 7). The researcher sought to provide uniform data collection, neutrality, and reflection on actions in the field in relation to co-participants.

Data Analysis Plan

The institutional documents, interview transcripts, notation documents, and observation notes were stored on a secure personal computer system, inaccessible to others and protected with security codes by the researcher. Data was uploaded to Atlas.i qualitative data analysis software as a holding system. The data was coded through Atlas.i and secondarily coded manually for comparison. A codebook was created, which identifies primary and secondary words and phrases to set aside categorically. Saldaña (2009) states “A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 3). The word(s) are code that the researcher reflects on and decodes to organize into themes. The actualization of the decoding allows code to be set aside for further consideration and triangulation which occurs between data sets.

Coding is an interpretive act wherein the researcher considers each word or sentence and the repetitive nature within the data set. Given (2008) states, “As a record of the codes and criteria used to classify observations, it [coding] contains the definitions of concepts and categories that mediate the translation of raw data” (p. 89). Saldaña (2014) provides that first cycle coding may consist of a single word, a sentence, or a paragraph. These sets of data were placed in quotation marks and set aside for second-cycle coding. Coding is similar to washing produce in a colander; the goal is to continue to sift out the undesirable (less relevant), or in this case, insignificant substances around the produce, and in the case of data the unnecessary words, sentences, or phrases that are not repetitive across participate interviews, documents, or observational datum. According to Saldaña (2009), “In second cycle coding processes, the portions coded can be the exact same units, longer passages of text, and even a reconfiguration of the codes themselves developed thus far” (p. 3). Although this process is time intensive, it is critical to realization of the outcomes of participant experiences and perspective.

Upon completion of the first and second cycles of coding analysis, the research questions are reconsidered, data read again, and the third cycle of coding begins. The researcher looks for the datum’s primary content and essence (Saldana, 2009). Each participant's data is coded separately to ensure that they did not influence the coding of data sets from other participants. At the conclusion of fifth cycle coding, each participant's data is copied and combined for overall cycle coding. Coding is based on pattern characterizations, similarities, differences, frequency, sequencing, correspondence, and causation as per the systems utilized by Saldana (2009).

At times, coding may summarize rather than reduce data. Merriam (2015) adds, "All coding is a judgment call since we bring out subjectivities, our personalities, our predispositions, [and] our quirks to the process" (p. 7). The judgement calls remain consistent as the single researcher collects data, transcribes, inputs data into the electronic database, and completes coding. Therefore, variances due to involvement of multiple researchers is limited. According to Lichtman (2006), "…most qualitative research studies in education will generate 80-100 codes that will be organized into 15-20 categories, which eventually synthesize into five to seven major concepts (pp. 164-165). The researcher utilized Lichtman's coding suggestions for cycling and thematic analysis.

Summary

This research study was conducted using a qualitative case study research design. A semi-structured, in-depth interview protocol was used to collect narrative data from the identified participants. Questions were developed based on the research questions and the review of literature, and will emerge or expand according to participant responses. Participant selection was purposeful, and includes FDCs who are employed as academic leaders and who teach as an element of their contract. All FDCs in the case institution were invited to participate and those who agreed became participants and were interviewed. The interview protocol contains questions that pertain to their experiences and perceptions in the role of

FDC; specific questions were focused on decision-making and ethics. Upon completion of each interview, data was considered to identify emergent themes that altered or added questions to subsequent interviews. The FDCs were observed during the duration of time that interviews were held (two months) in their professional environment. Observation data was reviewed immediately to consider emergent themes. Document analysis was based on an in-depth research of the Northwest University's publicly accessible Web pages. Additional documents emerged in this process and were coupled with the institutional documents from the Web. Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously throughout the research period. Chapter Four provides an analysis of the research data and the results. A summary of empirical case study findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research are provided in Chapter Five.

Chapter Four: Presentation and Synthesis of the Data

Introduction

This study explored the shared experiences unique to the Faculty Department Chair in higher education within the framework of ethics of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011). Specifically, the research considered the maintenance of professional ethics while navigating decision-making within this leadership role. This qualitative, descriptive, single-case study provided the opportunity to focus on the in-depth perspectives of participants in their natural organizational settings to answer the research questions. The research illuminates the issue of the FDC in navigating the leadership and management challenges of their position. The research was compelled by the following research questions:

1. How do FDCs manage and lead relative to an ethics of the profession surrounded by dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?
2. How do FDCs engage a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

Chapter Four introduces the pivotal findings and evidence substantiated from the ten Faculty Department Chair interviews conducted at the Northwest University. The use of a semi-structured interview protocol generated first-hand responses that were interpreted within the lens of an FDC as interviewer. Chapter four begins with a composite profile of the participants' demographic information. A detailed interpretation of the interview responses, observations, and document analysis is organized to correspond to the appropriate research question. Leadership approaches, which include authentic transformational leadership, are considered by each participant, and thematic data is considered and participants' responses are provided. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Composite Profile

Ten Faculty Department Chairs took part in the study. Three participants identified as female and seven as male. The participant ratio of men to women 3:1 is roughly congruent to the gender representation of the FDCs at the Northwest University, of which 29.65 percent are female. The researcher faced challenges to recruit female FDCs for participation in the study. This may be based on the relatively small pool of female FDCs at the university. This selected pool of FDCs who were interviewed are tenured-faculty who chair departments within Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and Public Policy.

Participants' range of experience in the FDC position is 1 to 17 years. One of the FDCs identified as Asian and a second as southeastern European. All of the participants are FDCs who serve as faculty and were elected by faculty within their department prior to assuming the position. Specific discipline identities are omitted from this report to protect the identities of participants and the university. The majority of FDCs (post Ph.D.) have worked only for the Northwest University; one participant has worked at three other universities and a second participant at one additional university.

Motivation to Become a Faculty Department Chair

Four years ago the researcher entered the role of faculty department chair and found that few faculty were willing to step into the position. Berdrow (2010) compares the role of FDC to actor for the institution and agent for the department and faculty. Agency spurred the researcher's decision to accept her position as FDC even as the role of institutional actor was present as a deterrent.

Each participant accepted the role of the FDC under differing circumstances. Figure 4 provides the narrative of each participant as to how s/he came to the FDC position. None of the participants sought the position or entered the academia with a goal to become the FDC.

Bruce	I didn't really want to take over because in my first year. What we basically had to do, because of the Dean's interpretation, the faculty interpretation, and my interpretation was that it was decided that it was time for me to step in and run for election.
Gabe	I didn't want to be the department chair but others sort of identified that leadership quality in me. So, we moved in that direction and now I have embraced it. I don't hate it, which I think is perhaps unique amongst department chairs. Most hate what they do, or that is my experience; they can't wait to be done with it. I don't hate it…which I think is good.
Haana	We have a rotation. I became a full professor and I am interested in leadership. There are certain visions or strategies that the department had that I also had. There are very few people who are interested or available, so I was asked and I was also interested.
Josh	When I became chair in this department there weren't too many options to turn to for a chair; it was my turn and I am trying to do the best I can with it.
Lee	I think that …compared to previous department chairs that I could do a better job. That is a benefit to the entire department. At other times there was nobody interested and I had some experience and did not have any competition. That could benefit the department and financially I makes more money.
Melanie	There were multiple factors. Like many of us, I never imagined that I would be a department chair. I have always been interested in leadership, but I never sought it. I had a great mentor and shadowed him/her. We problem solved together. When s/he was finished, some faculty cornered me and asked that I run. Management was like a slippery football for me. I was flattered and nobody else wanted to do it.

Patrick	I was forced to become chair, and I went to the Provost and honestly said, Look, you've invested thousands of dollars in training me in other areas, but they're about to ask me to be chair, and s/he told me, "Be chair." It's more important to the university to have a good leader in an important department. It was out of that sense of "servant-hood," and that's the only reason I am chair. I didn't want to be chair at all. I think that that, ironically, was making me a pretty good chair, because I didn't want to be the chair at all.
Robert	The Dean lined us up, and said, "Whoever would like to be chair, take a step forward and everybody else stepped back." I was the person left.
Stephanie	A lot of it was that no one else would do it. There were several people, who are certainly senior to me as far as how long they've been here, but most of them won't do it. I did it because no one else would do it.
Todd	Well, mostly because we needed a chair and I was at the right career stage. It is in our department history to just rotate that responsibility across the faculty. Everyone else who was at that right career stage had already done it. It was my turn, so to speak. I was willing, so that is how it happened.

Figure 4. FDC participant's motivation to take the position

(Created by author)

The participants work on a 10-month contract and were not on contract when the interviews were conducted. Most arrived on campus for the interview and were also present to complete work that required their immediate attention. All of the FDCs expressed that the position often requires them to work when they are off contract.

Gabe explains the situation:

> I am on a ten-month contract, but the President doesn't remember… the Dean doesn't remember… nobody else seems to remember that I am on a ten-month contract and so you have to find ways to deal with that.

The participants unanimously expressed that the job requires a year-long commitment, but few expressed interest in moving to a 12-month contract as it would limit their ability to work from home or engage in some rejuvenation outside of the office during the two months that they are off contract. Melanie shared what many participants expressed in their interviews; that it is difficult to relax and unplug from email or phone messages. According to Melanie, “It is always work, you get things done, and that is the top priority. There was commonality in feeling that leaders (beyond the FDC position) are not fully cognizant of the importance that the FDC plays as actor in academia.

Bruce states:

> The administrators pay lip service to the importance of chairs because in many ways chairs become the vital link between administration and the faculty/students. At this university the compensation to chairs is very low…it's hardly worth it…especially with all sort of stressors. Faculty chairs are also expected to be middle-management and continue their research…continue their teaching… it's a hard balance and we need them. I think people would burn out even faster if they didn't do any of the teaching, but there needs to be sort of better compensation strategy (teaching load or annual contract length). If you are on a 10-month contract and you add up the hours the chair they are actually “volunteering” hours. The other thing to being chair is an opportunity cost that is not recognized…the chair is paying back the department and that is why people do it…you’re taking a loan because others took it before you. I have lost research opportunities… I lost money from other outside grants and consulting that I could have done…it cost me a lot of time. By the time you become chair your teaching is really dialed in and there’s not as much prep…it is much easier to do than when you are beginning…that is also a loss of opportunity to continue as faculty while chair and not have as much prep time. This is not recognized in peoples’ careers.

FDC training primarily takes place on-the-job; however, some universities are working to models of formalized training related to task management, leadership training, and mentoring opportunities from experienced FDCs to new chairs. The Northwest University has recently implemented a Shared Leadership Program for first-year FDCs to provide continual professional development. Although the program is in its infancy, several participants commented on the benefit of the program.

The participants described their work as divided between task management and leadership. The Human Resources Department of the Northwest University also defines

FDC management and leadership as the primary divisions of FDC work and acknowledge the difference between these functions and provide the following definitions:

> Managers facilitate team members' success by providing them with the tools and resources needed to encourage productivity and success. Leaders can be any member of a team, regardless of title or authority. Good managers encourage team members to be great leaders, think creatively, and capitalize on their strengths and talents. When leadership is shared among team members, including managers, teams are more productive, efficient, nimble, successful, and able to handle unforeseen challenges.

The Northwest University's Human Resources Department (HR) provides a toolkit for FDC's professional development (online). A component of the toolkit allows the FDCs to complete a questionnaire to ascertain their natural leadership style; leadership dimensions are also provided within each style for FDC review. The Northwest University's toolkit information suggests that all leadership styles and approaches are appropriate in various situations; however, the transformational leadership style is held in high regard according to the training material. Two participants defined components of Transformational Leadership similarly to Bass (2008), as leadership that "Raises the followers' level of consciousness about the importance and value of designated outcomes and ways of reaching them, gets the followers to transcend their own self-interests for the sake of the team or organization" (p. 619).

FDC View of Authentic Transformational Leadership

Authentic leadership was at the heart of the participants' perspectives on being a good leader. The similarities derived from the interviews related to being authentic (self) as a leader, knowing what your strengths and weaknesses are, understanding faculty and their strengths and weaknesses, and creating common and heightened vision for the students, the department, college, and university.

As Patrick mentioned when defining Transformational Leadership:

> Authenticity is required to be truly transformational. Transformational leadership means you'd have to have a very strong vision that is going to better the organization, to transform the organization. I think you can't be transformational unless you are being authentic. I can't just adopt the Dean's vision or the President's vision and say, 'Yeah, let's go!' unless I believe in my heart and in my head, and the direction, then I can be an authentic transformational leader.

According to Bruce:

> It means leading by example. I try to do that by working hard to make sure that I have been able to maintain the dynamic-research agenda that I have and to show (it to) the junior faculty.

Haana adds:

> I have always thought leadership is about others, so, an authentic leader should focus on the well-being of others…they may want to be good teachers…, researchers…, or community engage (rs). Authentic leadership is developing others and making sure that they are getting fully what they want for their careers, and secondly articulating and understanding a vision for the department and championing that vision. It is not just the department, of course but it also has to fulfill the vision and strategy for the college and the university.

Lee shares:

> Authentic leadership …means that you need to lead by example. You need to do the task that is assigned to you well. You need to know the people who you are leading… the people's strengths and weakness. (Also), be fair and responsive, have a good vision, and often keep that vision in the background of your daily tasks. Try, even though daily work is kind of routine, keep the big picture in the background and try to achieve the strategic goals.

Melanie shares:

> Authentic transformational leadership means not simply taking orders from up above. It is about dialogue… to look for ways to meet our mission…not restricted by what we have always done. It is about supporting and facilitating….in innovation, in teaching, in the way that we think about learning, and what we think about being faculty members. Authentic leadership is not about the leader; it is about the community and the goals of the group, maintaining and supporting the principles on which that is based. I couldn't do this job if I couldn't believe in the work of this department and the work of higher education. In order to do the job well, you have to have something that can sustain it; you have to have something beyond the desire for power, control, recognition, or reward of any kind.

Patrick states:

> You have to be who you are. You can't be playing a role. Honestly, the first time I was chair I think I was playing a role more than just being myself. I didn't want to be chair. If they take it away from me tomorrow, I'll be fine, which gives me a bit more freedom just to be me. I try to do the right thing. I'll listen to everyone's voice, which I didn't do the first time, honestly.

Todd adds:

> Being authentic means being yourself, not hiding things, being up front, and doing what you say you're going to do.

Based on these comments the participant FDCs puts a great deal of emphasis on the importance of authenticity and this is a significant component of transformational and ethical leadership frameworks.

Thematic Analysis

Data was manually coded. Some codes were created as a priori constructs. The a priori constructs are the themes that may assist to answer the research questions. Additional codes arose from concepts that emerged during reviews of the interviews, observations, and institutional transcript documents. Additionally, Atlas.ti qualitative data management software was used as a holding site and used to compare electronic coding with the manual coding. Data was input and code families were created. Code families arose as overarching themes with subthemes within each code family. Operational definitions of each code were created within Atlas.ti and through manual coding and presented in the following findings.

Seven a priori thematic families emerged from the qualitative data. The theme families are: (1) FDC ethical framework, (2) FDC ethical dilemmas, (3) FDC view of ethical leadership, (4) Ethics of the profession adds value to the profession, (5) FDC decision-making, (6) Conflict and decision-making, and (7) Making decisions in tough situations.

Within the thematic families, 14 subthemes emerged during data analysis. The sub-themes are derived from the lived experiences and narratives of the FDCs in their professional role. Figure 5 represents the salient theme families and sub-themes that emerged from the data.

Research Question #1 How do FDCs manage and lead relative to an ethics of the profession surrounded by dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?	Research Question #2 How do FDCs engage a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?
FDC ethical framework ● Ethical framework related to policy ● Ethical framework related to Utilitarianism	**FDC decision-making** ● Evidence-based or weighted approach to decision-making ● Utilitarianism and inclusion as an ethical approach to decision-making
FDC ethical dilemmas ● Related to lack of time and resources ● Related to tenured-faculty ● Related to administration	**Conflict and decision-making** ● Decision-making, conflict avoidance ● Decision-making, conflict engagement
FDC view of ethical leadership ● Buy-in and compatibility between the DCs ethical framework and that of the Dean or higher administration ● Ethical accountability from students and Faculty ● Specific ethical training for the FDC and other stakeholders	**Making decisions in tough situations** ● Evidence-based approach to decision-making surrounded by conflict ● Utilitarianism and consultative approach to decision-making surrounded by conflict
Ethics of the profession adds value to the profession	

Figure 5. Emergent theme families and sub-themes categorized under the research questions (Created by Author)

To protect the identity of participants, easily-identifiable personal information has been excluded and participants are discussed with pseudonyms. Northwest University is also a pseudonym for the university in this single-case study.

Introduction to Participant Perspectives Related to Research Question One

How do FDCs manage and lead relative to an ethics of the profession surrounded by dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

Ethics of the Profession

The Northwest University's HR department provides a statement of ethics and decision-making in the online leadership toolkit. The information introduces a decision-making process and offers guidelines to implement ethics in the workplace. The Northwest University has a Statement of Values and Standards of Conduct that includes words such as honesty, integrity, fairness, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness, which imply consideration to ethical conduct. Several of the participants acknowledged the Core Values as an implicit ethical prescription set forth for the Northwest University.

Each participant was asked to identify the Northwest University's code of ethics and most felt that the Core Values were the most closely related written guide to ethics. Three participants share their perspective related to Northwest University's ethical statement.

Northwest University Code of Ethics

Lee states:

> I think that ethics are embedded in different documents of the university, like a strategic vision, and there are different university policies that are expressly or embedded in the entire strategic vision in the university policies. These policies are concrete. [You learn] what the procedure is and you follow the policies. Sometimes they will specify the policy that you need to follow, and when they are not clear you make your own judgement based on ethical [decision making]. You ask, 'is doing this allowed…is this good for the benefit for the department…is this good for the development of the individual faculty?' I would say that ethical framework is there…it may be implicitly…but, it is embedded. I am not sure if there is a specific document that says 'ethical standards.' But, ethical framework is big in implicit things…your university's strategic vision, and the college's goal, and underneath of those you have many policies to follow and ethical framework is embedded.

Melanie shares:

> I keep thinking about it in terms of our statement of shared values and code of conduct. It is based on treating people with respect and our primary emphasis is based on learning and educating. I refer to it often and it is reflected in a lot of other places. When we revised our mission statement we looked at the statement of shared values to see how our sense of our purpose and goals meshed with some of these behavioral expectations. It emphasized more in the way we interact with each other and that had not been in our mission statement.

Patrick states:

> We have code words, like integrity and responsibility. They don't call it the code of ethics, but there are more than six. It is just something that we look at and you either do it or you don't do it.

Based on these anecdotes from participants, the Northwest University's code of ethics is not labeled as ethics per se, but is embedded into the shared values, strategic vision, and code-of-conduct statement and are related to integrity, responsibility, and treating people well.

FDC and Supervisory Dean

All of the participants report to a dean as their immediate supervisor, and meet individually and in groups with other FDCs at least once a month. The FDCs seek advice from a dean on a variety of issues. Participants were also asked if their supervisory dean has an explicit code of ethics, or discusses ethics in leadership meetings. Some of the participants shared that ethics are implied, and other cases articulate that ethics are clearly discussed in meetings or within college mission statements.

According to Bruce the Dean's position is:

> Thinking broadly. I engage the Dean more on the broader issues regarding directions that we are going, or when we are trying to set up research projects in the community. The ethics are there, but not labeled as an ethics discussion.

Josh states that:

> We discuss policies, initiatives…, (and) occasionally may discuss cases…. I'd say mainly (areas) dealing with policy. We are looped into policy revision at the university level so we continually look at policies before they are instituted. We have shared values, and I think that applies to all stakeholders across campus. It's a good starting point of a set of common values.

Lee discusses ethical discussions that occur with the Dean:

> Occasionally the topic comes up, or some question is inherently related to the issues. When it comes up, sometimes with discussions, (we ask), 'Is this ethical?' Or first, we hear the questions…'is this legal to do this?' 'Is this allowed?' (Or) 'Is there any policy for this?' If there is no clearly written policy, (we ask), 'Is this good, or bad?' which is probably on the moral level. I think (ethics are) addressed sometimes by the Dean during the council and monthly meetings with the chairs. (There are) many discussions along the lines of civility; the culture of civility and those discussions relate to ethics. That helps the chairs make informed decisions around the lines of ethics. There are discussions among the chairs, among the colleges, in the meetings with deans.

Melanie contributes:

> The Dean frames everything in terms of ethical decision-making, which I greatly appreciated. For example, when we were developing the college policy for workload allocation and making adjustments for faculty, s/he used the Principle of Local Optimality. We have adopted it into our own departmental workload policies. It is very much an ethical weighing mechanism where you don't want to disadvantage any one person or stakeholders. Ethics are inserted into policy. If we complain, the Dean always models what is the best course of action; asking us to consider our outcome(s) and how it is going to affect the various people. Students are the top priority and we consider what this means for the decision.

Patrick states:

> I discuss dilemmas with the Dean quite often. The current Dean is a moral philosopher, so s/he is all about ethics. We've had a couple of sticky situations regarding some students and faculty issues. Ethics is always on the table whenever we talk with the Dean.

Stephanie states:

> The Dean's focus on leadership has been really good and in fact s/he's having all the chairs go through leadership-development training. S/he hired a consultant and we completed DISC assessment as professional development. We talk about leadership in that context quite a bit. I don't know if I could say that we have an ethical

> framework, but I do know that along with the Dean we went through a strategic planning process and we have developed values. The Dean runs all of our decisions through what the college values. S/he does it constantly while we're talking about things. *S/he's asks…how does that fit within our vision… how does that fit with what we value here at the college?*

Todd adds:

> We talk about things that relate to that [ethics]...being open and fair, acting with integrity, and transparency. The three key values that we have adopted are Relevance, Respect, and Responsibility. Each of those has a component of ethical leadership and ethical attention. For example, under Respect, we are committed to integrity and ethical behavior. Under Responsibility, we are dedicated to accountability, transparency, and fairness. The Dean brings these up regularly when we are having our meetings asking *are we staying true to our valu*es.

Gabe states

> I think the Dean emphasizes it. I don't think s/he ever uses the word ethics, but s/he emphasizes the concept that surrounds ethics and ethical behavior. S/he emphasizes being very inclusionary… you should include… you should have these discussions with people about valuing everyone's opinion equally if you can. We recognize those who recognize everyone's opinion about something as equal and then take those comments and make an informed decision.

Haana provides:

> Our ethical framework is not necessarily only a leadership framework; it applies to all of us. Yes, the administrative team has it, but the respect, responsibility, and relevance applies to all of us as an ethical value. There is a greater burden or responsibility on the administrative team to act on those values, but it applies to everybody including the students.

According to Robert:

> It seems like every year there are ethical questions that come up and our Dean is very clear about putting that context on the table in front of us. S/he is very willing to stand up for those issues s/he believes strongly in, but s/he always allows department chairs to voice our own concerns or disagreements. Our Dean has shown me time and again, and I think among the other chairs, that s/he is willing to stand up to uphold what I believe are the true ethics within a given situation. But there comes a point where you cannot ask for more from whatever it happens to be, or whatever entity is involved without it having the disruptive influence on another part of your administration, your college, or your department. S/he is very willing to draw the line and say, *we cannot go any further with this, because it is going to disrupt the quality.*

Stephanie states:

> I think it's really important to the Dean. The Dean has his/her personal code of ethics and integrity is one of them that s/he talks about. S/he has three words and s/he can just cite them at a meeting.

Each participant shared that they believe that their dean does values ethics and that ethics are a part of making decisions. The values are inserted into university or departmental themes and core values rather than as an overt statement of ethics.

The FDC Ethical Framework

The research also considers whether the participant FDCs follows an ethical framework and whether a personal ethical framework assists with their work in the dialectically tense position. Each of the participants expressed their perspective on a proposition of ethics and how a frame, or their ethical framework, aligns with the university and their deans' consideration of ethics. The participants were asked to consider how an ethical frame may assist to navigate the tension of their dual role as administrative manager and leader. During the interviews, this question posed some of the longest delays as participant seemed committed to providing a well-articulated response or that participants had not considered how their ethical framework is utilized in their work. Yet, the participants consider ethics an important for higher education and should be required of all FDCs and stakeholders in general.

Two themes arose from the ethical framework discussion: ethical framework based on policy, and ethical framework based on Utilitarianism, which means leading and making decisions with the most good and the least harm to stakeholders. Participants share their perspectives.

Ethical framework related to policy.

Lee states:

> It’s probably considered on a legal level and even policy that says you can do this and you cannot do that are considered with ethics. Sometimes the policies are not clear and when making a decision I would consider the outcome from all perspectives.

Ethical framework related to Utilitarianism.

According to Bruce:

> I think it would be holding myself to the same standards that I hold others. It is setting high standards and then working to achieve them. You treat faculty fairly… trying to treat others fairly.

Gabe states:

> That is hard because when you take over as chair, in most cases… at least I didn't…even think about what that question meant. I didn't know what that meant, but I think that means in a lot of ways my personal code of ethics is responsible and predictable. I want the faculty to be able to predict and the Dean to be able to predict how I am going to act in a particular situation. That doesn't always work out that way because with faculty it is a little more difficult because they don't have the big picture. I try to get information from people who have experience and run ideas past people who have had experience in their role as a dean or chair and talk through ideas. I also want the faculty to know the decisions that I make are made out of benevolence and not malevolence.

Lee states:

> The code of ethics…trying to balance the need of the department as a whole and the need of the individual – the faculty’s needs. It is hard sometimes to seek a balance as individuals may ask that they want or need something, but you need to seek the best for the department. It is subtle. Sometimes it is subtle because the balance between the individual and group needs is subtle.

Melanie shares:

> This has been a priority of mine to have transparency in how we make decisions. When I present a decision that my faculty affairs committee has recommended and I have decided to act, I will start by asking …Why make this decision. What are the goals that it reaches? What are the principles in which it is based? Over time we’ve all adopted that approach more and more and I see that in committee meetings. Sometimes it doesn’t happen and it drives me crazy. Another ethical decision is how

> much do I push? Faculty have some autonomy, but if the consequences are negative to the department as a whole I will step in. If our reputation on campus may be affected then I will step in.

Patrick states:

> I just heard something that one of my students was saying in class this week that really resonated with me. You know the old adage, "do no harm"? That has never really lit me up, but this person rather used "do good." I think that's a good summary. I try to do the right thing. I try to make things better for individuals, and through that, for the group. In a faculty meeting we were brainstorming and strategic thinking, and the department was all around making lists of what their goals were. There were buzz words and goals being discussed and I just wrote down 'have fun'. They all looked at me like I was an idiot. I said, *look, if you guys don't like coming to work, and there have been stretches when we haven't, you're not going to be productive, and it's not going to be fun*. We are very productive, we have great evaluations, we produce research, and we bring in external grant money, so we can do that within a welcoming environment.

Stephanie states:

> I suppose what matters the most to me is that things feel fair. You can't always make it fair. There are lots of things about this job that aren't fair. New hires get paid more than the rest of us and that's not fair. It's not fair, but what are you going to do? I can't change that. It is trying to be fair and then trying to explain to somebody why that decision is actually fair when you're often stymied by personnel and confidentiality.

The FDC participants describe their consideration to personal and professional ethics as being either policy-based or utilitarian-based. These perspectives are present, in the absence of a specific, codified ethical framework that has been captured in a formal document or shared with other stakeholders.

FDC Straddles Administration and Department (Dilemmas)

Two themes arose from the discussion and document review that relate to the dialectical tension and dilemmas specific to the FDC position: tensions related to lack of time and resources, tensions with tenured-faculty, and those related to administration. Straddling the roles of administrative manager and faculty leader creates tension that surrounds the everyday experience of the FDC. Drawing upon the ethical frame to approach the dilemmas may create framework boundaries that benefits the FDC as well as administrative, faculty, and student stakeholders. These are the perspectives of participants in how they approach dilemmas, whether or not they utilize an ethical framework to bridge the tension experienced in daily work, and whether or not constrictions exist between their frame and those of administration and faculty. The dilemma of leading ill-behaving, tenured-faculty and satisfying stakeholders as the manager of limited resources are at the forefront of those tensions experienced by many of the participants. Many chairs commented on the fact that the FDC has little actually power in budgetary decisions. The funds are allocated by senior administration to each department, and the FDC distributes and records allocations within the department.

Dialectical tension and dilemmas related to lack of time or resources to meet expectations.

Patrick states:

> We have 11 different programs associated with our department. I oversee about two dozen faculty members. I am incredibly busy, and to lead in the way I think I am to lead depends on relationships. We self-evaluate for scholarship, teaching, and service. In my evaluation last year for scholarship, I didn't publish anything. I wasn't going to pussy-foot around. I tried to make a case where there wasn't one. That's a dilemma I personally struggle with. I am trying to maintain my academic productivity, or scholarly productivity and be the chair I think the department needs. I haven't figured that out. That's something I really do struggle with, just having the ability to focus. When I've got 17 things coming at me, I can't focus on my scholarship. So that's my biggest one, actually.
>
> Lee adds:
>
> Many times it is related to the limited resources. Resources always causes a dilemma. I have to make a decision related to office space needs. How do you make a decision there related to space? How do you assign a new position and you need to find space and you do not have space. You find non-existence space and think about how you assign the space and shuffle offices and this is related to resources most of

the time. Because of the resource constraints you are constrained to the existing resources to make decisions facing this dilemma. If you have limited money you decide how you spend it. Should you allow for more to travel this year or replace the faculty computers this year? Sometimes maybe it is course offerings. Should you offer this course this year? You offer a course this year with very low enrollment which might help the students graduate earlier, but on the other hand because the enrollment is too low then it might not be economical to the university; so you face a dilemma in these situations. Course offerings is related to the resources. If you have lots of money you don't have to worry about it. Because of the resources you face dilemmas.

Melanie shares:

> I had one of those just recently. We have a faculty member who is really amazing and has been recruited by other places where s/he can make a lot more money which he would really like to do. He is more assertive about what he wants and needs than other faculty which can rub those faculty the wrong way. But, he got offers and s/he wanted me to negotiate a higher salary. I said I want you to stay here and I think that is true for the entire department. I am going to see what I can do, but you need to know from the onset that the Dean doesn't have the power, nor do I (I don't have the power period with salaries) but our Dean does not have the power to increase your salary. I will talk to him/her, but we are really conscious of the compression and inversion for salaries; we are not going to boot you all the way up because it has that effect on the rest of your colleagues. Even though it really stinks that we don't have great salaries, but again that is a dilemma. I also talked about resentment…the potential resentment and that we don't want that to happen either…that we wanted to keep him/her and at the same time respect that s/he has these other offers. We talked through it; the Dean was able to give him/her some travel money. It was things that s/he would have given any other faculty member and I appreciated again the way s/he handled it. The Dean didn't just say listen we aren't going to lose him/her, so I will take him/her and create some special thing. It wasn't like that. And s/he stayed because s/he likes the community here and me which is something that I have worked hard to develop in this program.

Todd states:

> At times conflict occurs when we want to hire a faculty member. We know what the market salary is in our discipline and I feel like we are much more in tune with that than what maybe some of the higher levels of the administration are. Our Dean gets it and s/he is very supportive, but I don't know that the next level up does. It is not that the Provost doesn't understand at a certain level, but of course, s/he's got competing demands on him/her too, right. As far as making sure, as a university, we are staying on budget and where the funds get allocated; I understand s/he has competing demands, and yet I guess I've classified those as somewhat of a conflict. This issue is not true in all colleges. In this college and I think it's probably true in some other colleges as well, but some of the other colleges, it may be less true. When

> somebody retires and you need to hire a new person, the new person is going to get paid more than the person who just retired. You can be a full-tenured professor who has been here 25 years, and all that should be in retirement, raises, and money from a promotion and so on, but that is still going to be less money than a new young “right out of school” assistant professor. We call it salary inversion in the business. All of my new faculty have higher salaries than I do. I suppose none of us in the college like that. Market salaries go up faster than raises do in education. Market salaries are going up, so when a new person comes in, you have to pay them whatever the current market rate is… so they are going to make more than the people who are already there.

Robert shares:

> Probably the biggest issue these days is quality of the education and how you maintain the quality of the education to serve the students while at the same time trying to balance the needs of the budgets, and personnel matters, and the questions that seem to arise in politics these days, and what is the purpose of higher education, and aren’t they just liberal hotbeds just trying to transform and cultivate all these young minds and turn them into liberals, and go out there and be against guns and everything else. It’s a tough wrestle these days. But at the same time, I feel comfortable here, that we, and when I say we, I mean most of my colleagues and certainly our Dean tend to look at these ethical issues and indeed know that there is a right and a wrong involved here. The line can become very narrow at times, at the same time, there is a line and you can only go so far without losing the quality of education which is really our main purpose. Our Dean makes very clear to us that our purpose here is to provide the very finest education we can for our students.

Dialectical tension and dilemmas related to tenured-faculty.

According to Bruce:

> It really has to do with the problematic students and the problematic faculty. The reason I decided that I no longer wanted to be chair was that I had one faculty member who caused consistent problems over the last three years. Of the thirteen faculty members…twelve other people not counting me, have very few problems. I had one faculty member that was just difficult. The sort of dilemma where tenure is designed to protect academic independence, but ends up being used by faculty to misbehave and act unprofessionally. That is actually the biggest challenge.

Melanie shares:

> It was also an ethical principle when I came in. It was not a department that I wanted to stay in when I first got here. When I became chair… the first things I asked my Dean at the time was…what authority do I actually have to hold faculty accountable for their behavior? Because if I have no authority I don’t want this job. They [faculty] can be jerks…they can be petulant…I have been the victim of that. S/he

> explained the process. I said how frequently does this actually lead to anything? S/he gave me some examples of when it did, and I said okay then I am willing to do this. I have modeled that to the faculty that there are certain behavioral expectations and I will address the things that get outside of the lines just to try to be productive. I try to be productive about our tensions so we have gotten better.

Stephanie states:

> Tension is created when work needs to be done. People in my department will step up and volunteer and do the work. It's the high performers; the good citizens are the ones who end up being overworked because they say yes to everything. I will ask the same people to do the same things because I know that they'll do it and they'll do it well and I don't ask the people who are ill-behaving that I don't want to work with at all…and it's unfair. I am rewarding them for being ill-behaving. I don't even know if that's a fixable problem. Part of the problem is making sure, and it's really hard, that you hire decent people to start with. People turn when they become tenured and you don't know. Now I look at people and I wonder if they're going to be the same next year when they get tenure. We've just hired two new people in my department and we're going to hire a third as tenure-track faculty. My big thing is I'm not terribly concerned about their ability to get their research done, because they can, I'd rather know if they're going to be good teachers and if they're going to be good citizens in their department… that's the bigger thing.

Todd adds:

> The college and each of the departments within the college have been doing some curriculum reviews this last year, and as a department we talked about some things that we thought needed to be modified. The college had a committee that was trying to develop some proposals around items that we would change about the college curriculum. As a college there are certain classes that all majors have to take and then, of course, every major has their own additional classes that only their major takes. There are some basic discipline classes that everybody takes regardless. The role of this committee was to look through that list of college requirements and see if there were curriculum and requirements that ought to be updated or changed. Several proposals were made and that generated some conflict because various faculty didn't necessarily agree with all of those proposals. We had a couple of faculty meetings as a whole college that got a little testy.

Dialectical tension and dilemmas and administration.

Bruce adds:

> One of the most frustrating things for our faculty is that we are a higher performing department, but we get paid a lot less than other lower performing department. It is because of overall market value of the faculty outside of academia is lower in our department than the lower performing departments. Everybody here gets the logic,

> but it is still a frustrating situation.

Josh discusses:

> In student-faculty dilemmas, the Dean will usually go to bat for faculty. There's a process that we follow that's scripted in policy and we follow that. If it goes up to the Dean's level or higher, then there are committees who look at the issue and we just follow the recommendations of the school as close as we can.

Stephanie states:

> We've had this organization in my department for 10 or 11 years, which is great and a lecturer has been their advisor forever; s/he has grown it and it's been great, but s/he's done and we're done because it's a lot of work. I said last year that our department is done with the advising as there are majors from all of the departments in our college. We want to be done now… we want to find a new advisor for this year. They had the opportunity to do that and we're just finished. We were finished a year ago and here we are still doing it again. Our admin asked what s/he should do if asked to help again. I said we would probably end up helping out…so there's an example.

These are some examples of how the FDCs works through dialectical tense situations. At times there is assistance from the Dean; in other cases the directives, such as the curriculum example, invoked at the administrative level creates tension with the faculty who then becomes contentious with the FDC. Many of the FDCs expressed that tenured-faculty are often culpable for creating tension and conflict. Although the tenured faculty are also under appraisal for work and conduct, there is an attitude that they have reached tenure and have become less accountable to the FDC in attitude, actions, and mentorship of junior faculty. The limited resources, administrative support, and friction with faculty creates many challenges for the FDC who often works as mediator within higher education.

FDC View of Ethical Leadership

The FDCs continually face dilemmas as described in the previous section. Each participant was asked how they view ethical leadership and if an ethical framework may reduce tension to face these dilemmas. The ethical framework may need to be codified, overtly-stated, and agreed to by deans and senior administration, and faculty to result in reduced tension for the FDC. The ethical framework and ethical leadership model may provide parameters for tolerance and mutually-agreed-upon understanding of expectations and boundaries. Several participants discuss how s/he views ethical leadership.

Buy-in and compatibility between the FDCs ethical framework and that of the Dean or higher administration, ethical accountability from students and faculty, and specific ethical training for the FDC and other stakeholders were the themes that arose related to FDC's view of ethical leadership.

According to Bruce:

> At times it's a process of ensuring students are protected from overbearing faculty members, and at the other times it's protecting faculty from students who are making unfounded claims about them. It's trying to find that balance in looking at the case. It is trying to figure out how we should treat these cases and sometimes it's a matter of holding students accountable. Like most other people, students often prefer an easier way to do something than a harder way. They often times prefer a shortcut, but I think it is a part of how a lot of us act. The hard part as the chair is realizing that students are less likely to act professionally and are more likely to shortcut. Faculty are more likely to be overbearing and too demanding. I'm sort of trying to figure that out. I think that the ethical part is really sort of going through and trying to think about patterns of behavior that you begin to see, and how you handle them. This year…a student was being disrespectful in a consistent way toward female faculty members and it escalated (to) towards other faculty members. From my perspective, the student was making a series of unsubstantiated claims and trying to put his claims in this broader context of this long line of activities. You sort out how valid his claims are and at what point he is actually beginning to harass the faculty. For most people it is just simple problem solving. Here, it's pretty straight forward process. But then there is an escalation and it's really where I think Deans and Associate Deans need to step in because, really chairs don't have much authority and there needs to be some sort of external check. In the context of this University, having an Associate Dean play that role is important, but it's all very muddled because you have the ombudsman, you have compliance, you have the HR, you have a variety of different departments and it's sort of this… most relationships work well and then you have this sort of poorly functioning bureaucracy that's not really designed to handle interpersonal relationships and a lot of that bureaucracy is setup to comply with state and federal law, so there's this disconnect. I'd say that that's the most difficult part of practicing ethical leadership. It works until there's a problem and then it breaks down because there is not the support structure to support the

> chair. There are also a couple of major divisions. Our university faces this really tough dilemma between being a revenue generating state agency and one that provides quality services. There is a major tension at this is a public university where sometimes the administrators, because they deal much more closely with the financial bottom line, have to make decisions about allocations of resources that aren't very positive. That's one problem I think of ethically.

Gabe states:

> I think you should be taught [about ethical leadership]. I don't think it comes naturally because I don't think it is on the front of people's minds and it should be taught. I think it should be probably taught at all levels, but when somebody is asked or takes on the role of a chair I think they should be taught in very specific ways. When I think of ethical leadership the first question I have to ask myself is, what sort of ethical framework am I talking about here? My initial reaction with ethical leadership is whose interest am I, as a leader, serving? Am I serving the interest of the university, the department, or the faculty member? Am I speaking from a chair's role? I have to straddle two very precarious lines. The first is, that I am looking out for the interest of faculty. I see myself as an advocate for the faculty, and so I am going to behave in a way that I advocate for the faculty. When you think about it there are institutional ethics versus individual ethics. When I put on the role of chair, my ethical framework is to get the most for the department without doing it any harm or minimizing the damage or harm. The upper administration is looking from a more global perspective and so don't think of ethical outcomes. I don't think there is a linear relationship there.

Haana provides:

> [An ethical leader] needs to have honesty, integrity, and be earning (of) trust (the main pillars of being an ethical person and doing the right thing… always), and those kind of qualities affect the decisions that I make as a leader. I assume that we all have our ethical framework in our minds through our culture or who we are, or a combination of all of that, and we put that in our leadership. Evidence is a big deal for me. There may be some suggestions and people may want to move forward on things that I may not think there is enough evidence provided to make the decision. They are the leaders; they may make that step even though we have had that discussion. It is not alignment or contradiction with my own personal code of ethics, but a different set of standards of those ethics or beliefs. I do have high standards for a lot of things and that may sometimes be the conflict. If I don't think the standards of decision-making elsewhere match my standards that's an alignment issue.

Josh shares:

> I consider ethical leadership to be making decisions in ways that are consistent with what we consider in the department and the university to be proper behavior. I try to

> not making decisions to spend money on things we should not, or assign someone more classes then they should be teaching.

Lee states:

> I particularly agree with a good moral stance. You need to have concern for yourself and for the faculty. You need concern for self. I do not have enough time to do the things that I want to do. For example, I want to spend time on research. Once you become department chair you do not have that kind of luxury. You need concern for faculty. I know everyone's salary and I saw a very low salary for a particular faculty member in the past and I tried to increase it. I started to consider the reasons of why the particular faculty was low. Most of the time it is because of when you were hired. At that particular time the resources were lower, so they were hired at a lower salary. Other years somebody was hired in the same kind of position with same type of education at a higher salary. Sometimes I have the resources to change the situation. I have a particular concern for individuals. That is one example. Individual faculty have different performance at times. If I feel that someone has a specific problem I talk to them individually, not publicly. That is how it works.

Melanie states:

> Having a set of core principles that you work from and that includes the human beings that you are working with. Some leadership literature is called encouraging the heart; the other thing that I have really emphasized. Part of this is emotions and ways of knowing how to include emotion as a way of making knowledge and building community. Ethical leadership is also about being willing to make the hard decisions. Often when people will ask me about that I will say, If I feel like I have explored every avenue, I have looked at all consequences, have done my research, and I make a decision based on that weighing of worst case scenarios, then I can deal with whatever it is that people throw my way in terms of objection. It doesn't mean it is easy, but I am willing to do that to make a decision that may be unpopular whether it is with up there (gestures upward) or with faculty, or students. I have been a part of firing professors for poor behavior and some things that got me nasty mail, but those ethical principles are what always guide me. There are situations where I have had faculty members who have been horribly egregious and bullying to me and to others even while I am chair. My own ethical code is that I am not going to let them see that it is getting to me. My other ethical code is that they should be held accountable. When it is directed at me and when other people know that I have to be extra careful that it is not perceived as retaliation if something has to be done. I consider what to do when a faculty member has treated a junior faculty members in a way that is bullying. I put it in his or her performance evaluation. I would have done all of the things that you are supposed to do, but when it is me, I asked the Dean to assign another supervisor just to be sure that everything is above board. In one case I felt that I was doing everything ethically, even though it didn't make it any more pleasant. I think my supervisor should have stepped in and done that and I think that

> is the part that there were some things that happened that were beyond acceptable and I didn’t feel like anyone had my back.

Patrick states:

> You have to be an honest and trustworthy person. If you’re not that, you’re not a leader, you’re just a jerk with power. I had somebody tell me once, you can’t care more about them than they care about them professionally. Sometimes you’ve just have to let go. Do what you have to do, and move on. The first time I was chair, I couldn’t let go. Now, I’m, well I don’t want to say more mature, but I am. I’m a decade older and a little bit wiser.

According to Stephanie:

> What I see happen, over in central administration. Many times decisions get made that have an impact on us over here that are baffling to me, that’s for sure. As an example, we have this new college right now and, a lot of what they do is the same thing that happens right over here in this college. I feel it is weird and, so there’s a contradiction. There very well may be lots of things going on that I don’t know about that are not being duplicated. We used to have a center on many of the same topics that was here and that’s gone away. S/he thinks s/he’s never gotten any support, but in my opinion that’s just so inaccurate. A lot of why we’re not over there, why we have less of a partnership I think is because of that. That’s a huge missed opportunity, in my opinion, and I think that the Dean would agree with that. It seems like, s/he makes a lot of decisions that are outside decisions, that don’t involve, lots of things that s/he’s decided that have an impact on us here at the college. We weren’t really involved in or even told about the situation until afterward and that doesn’t feel right to me because we’re a huge college.

Todd adds:

> Ethical leadership means to be unbiased, treating everyone equally, being confidential, keeping things confidential that should be confidential, being consistent, reacting and responding in the same way to the same thing on different occasions, so people know what to expect. (It also means) telling the truth and being open. It means not asking others in the department to do things that I wouldn’t be willing to do and following through.

The participants viewed ethical leadership as a framework that all stakeholders in higher education should value. The usefulness would require mutual agreement between stakeholders that would allow FDCs to make decisions knowing that they have support from higher administrators and faculty as to the construct.

Haana provides:

> Even if you are not an official leader you should practice ethical leadership all of the time as a faculty, dean, or chair. If you are running a class then you are a leader of that class. If you are running a meeting then you are potentially a leader of that meeting. Ethical leadership should be practiced in any instance of teamwork or any kind of a setting where people are working together.

Lee states:

> Everyone needs to do things ethically. If I make a decision that affects the department then it should be based on all kinds of factors and take all kind of considerations into account to make decisions ethically. Faculty are expected to perform their professional duties ethically. Many times it is kind of subtle. Especially with faculty. They are expected to perform their professional duties professionally and ethically. We receive complaints from students. We examine all of the facts and expect that we conduct business ethically. I expect that we do things ethically and for faculty to do the same professionally and ethically.

Patrick states:

> If you are not acting ethically, you shouldn't be here, period. I'll fire you today if you do something unethical. You can probably tell, that's where you hit my button. You don't act unethically. You can make mistakes, but if you personally act unethically, I've got no patience for that. With tenured faculty, it's a lot harder, but they don't act unethically, period.

According to Stephanie:

> We have, and you've probably seen this a lot too, the view of students and how people view students here. There's a big diversity of opinions of the way that people look at students and we have a lot of students here who struggle. They struggle with their grades, struggle with their ability to do well in class, and so I feel that I should do whatever I can to make sure those students get help. That person should not be in their job. There are some people here who think their research is the most important and it's where they find the most value in themselves, in their research stream, and their publications are really high quality, and that's very important, and this whole teaching is sort of a secondary - something they have to do. This is an example where I'm thinking about code of ethics. You have that conflict or dilemma of that student over here who maybe needs that extra time, they have a hole in their knowledge that you're trying to fill and get them up to speed, versus …the stupid… the perspective of somebody being stupid… and I need to consider how to resolve that dilemma if the person's working for me. The whole thing about teaching and how you evaluate teaching, that's so hard too. We're talking about that at the college, when you do performance evaluation and how we do teaching, right now it's all

> based on student evaluations. I don't know how I would resolve it. If I heard somebody say that in a meeting I would probably say something.

As the participants share, they continually face dilemmas within the role of FDC. Their application of ethical framework and leadership vary; however, they all agree that congruent ethical practices of the FDC, Dean, higher administration, faculty, and students would enhance their efforts. The ethical framework and leadership modeling may provide parameters for tolerance and mutually-agreed-upon understanding of expectations and boundaries to navigate tense situations.

Ethics of Profession Adds Value. Each participant was asked if an Ethics of the Profession would add value to their position and/or profession.

According to Bruce:

> I am trying to imagine what that would look like because of so many different roles we have as a chair and there are so many different audiences: you are tending to students, faculty, deans, and occasionally provosts. If you had to have a particular code for each of the interactions, it would be too big to be useful. If you tried to narrow it down then I can see how it might become too generic. What might be useful, is just the one visive faculty. I think faculty members aligned with chairs would be a two-way street, especially when you have chairs opposed to a department head that is appointed and figuring out that the chair is one among equals. FDCs are really just filling in, doing some work, and they can build something if they have the energy or they can stand back if that is what the department needs. What would probably be most beneficial is understanding the relationship between faculty and the faculty chair, and then I think it may be useful.

Gabe states:

> I think that it varies across professions. Some of them are formalized: attorneys have an ethical code, medical doctors have an ethical code, and I think there is an ethical code amongst faculty too. It is very similar in that you, do no harm, do your research, that you are not plagiarizing or anything like that in your research, and that there is a degree of transparency that is expected amongst faculty and their research. That may not be the case in other environments. With chairs, to my knowledge or memory, I never signed a code of ethics that I would be fiscally responsible, or I would treat faculty with respect and fairness. I just think that would be implied. I think ethics needs to be taught and not to just department chairs. I do believe the chairs need to be taught how to be a chair and part of that is the ethics of being a chair. I think that

> if we had a seminar that was titled *Ethics and Being a Chair* that it would be very valuable.

Haana provides:

> It is probably good idea. I like to believe that everybody has an ethical framework. They know what they are doing and it is just a common knowledge that people are ethical. Maybe having it explicitly discussed is a good thing…a reminder. Just doing that step of putting the ethics on the forefront of what we do may be a good step.

Josh shares:

> It would add value to the profession because there is some self-monitoring. Some things that people did in the 1960's were appropriate for the ethics of that time period, but maybe there wasn't the same ethical framework as today and so we can't go back and say that those people were unethical. We probably would not do that same research procedure today given today's ethical framework. I think that is good for the profession because we want to make sure that the public sees the value in higher education.

Lee states:

> It would be guidance in daily work. You have certain professional standards that you need to follow. Ethical framework is related to your professional standards. You conduct business professionally, you treat people with respect, you treat everyone with respect, you do not discriminate against people based on standards, you treat people with respect and dignity, and you control your resources wisely. These are related to the ethical framework.

Melanie shares:

> I love that idea because a lot of other professions have that. I am pretty sure that my professional organizations have the principles and I go back to those all of the time. We use them in our promotion and tenure decisions. We ask, what are the codes? What the expectations? Our performance of tasks is one measure of our effectiveness, but we are more effective when we are aware of what those ethics are…can talk about them…be transparent. I think that would be hard to develop, but introducing the idea and having us come up with some would be huge. It would be interesting. I can imagine it mitigating an awful lot of conflict. We have enough conflict that we need to spend our attention on. Some are created because people are not being ethical or not being explicit about it or they get caught in the drama. Having those principles would free up some emotional energy for us to do some other things.

Stephanie states:

> It is kind of interesting. We've been talking a little bit about faculty relationships with students and does that violate the Northwest University policy. I think there is a Northwest University policy and this is just an example, but I don't need to even look at a policy to know whether that's okay, because it's not. For a faculty to have a relationship with a current student. It's not a professional, it might be embodied in some professional code of ethics, but to me it's just, wrong and we should all know that. I don't think we have a professional code of ethics.

Todd adds:

> It would be more likely to be successful and move team cohesiveness forward if those principles are being followed because under that environment you are able to have that trust and that ability to work together, which is what I think it takes to move forward. If you are not united and not cohesive, you've got people pulling in different directions or not willing to do their fair share of the work because they are disgruntled, unhappy, or whatever, and then you're not going to accomplish as much. I think those morale problems, or unhappiness and unwilling to work, those are much more likely to happen if you don't do those things.

The consistent sentiment is that an ethics of profession would be a positive addition to the work of the FDC, and would add potential cohesiveness and direction. The participants expressed that there were no formal ethics of the profession agreements or statements; however, the Northwest University, many of the colleges, and the FDCs do have ethics embedded into vision, core principles, and personal ethical standards.

Introduction to Participant Perspectives Related to Research Question Two

The second session of the participant interviews asked how FDCs make decisions surrounded by competing tensions. The observations of the participants indicate that most categorize decisions into low-stake and high-stake. Participants view many management decisions as low-stake and leadership decisions as high-stake. The data collected answers the second research question.

How do FDCs engage in a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

Decision-Making Expectations from Supervisory Dean

The FDC is accountable to their supervisory dean, and in many organizations, the method or policy related to decision-making is defined. To learn how the FDC makes decisions surrounded by tension or conflict, it is prudent to first examine if the supervisory dean influences the FDCs approach to decision-making. Each participant was asked if their supervisory dean prescribes a decision-making method or policy, or if expectations exist from other organizational administrators.

According to Bruce:

> Because we are a bureaucracy there's a certain decision process and we follow the rules. The chair is basically a position with very, very limited power, and very limited resources. I sort of see the Chair as doing the grunt work and that sort of service on behalf of the department.

Melanie shares:

> It depends on the issue. We are generally expected to consider multiple sides of an issue or a question. I always try over prepare when I meet with the Dean and I don't know if it is his/her expectation or my practice. With my previous Dean I learned very quickly that in one-on-one meetings if I needed something, or I was requesting something from him/her that I had better have the data and have considered all of the benefits and drawbacks because the first few times that I went in I felt that I was 12 walking out. S/he taught me a lot about what s/he needed for the decision-making. My present Dean appreciates that as well. I have always been someone who prepares for my meetings because I don't want to be caught off guard. As a female, am only the second female department chair in this department and I think I was the 3rd or 4th in the college, I felt that and I don't know if others projected that onto me or not, I felt it and didn't want to come across as flighty or not knowing my stuff. Now I am sure that I over compensate. They tease me about this all of the time. They say, well I'm sure that [participant] has done the research on that or she probably has a folder. I am always raising my hand and saying I have a folder of all of the research that I have done on that question, or I have policy that I have developed.

If decisions are low-stakes the FDC can handle them easily. If decisions are high-stakes then faculty and administrative input should be considered to mitigate harm and ensure that stakeholder voices are heard.

Lee shares that:

> For a particular question usually the Dean starts by giving a topic to consider. The Dean usually gives a background and some related policies. Then each chair gives an opinion and then the Dean summarize the conclusion. There is usually a vote. Most of the vote is just a raise of hand. No secret ballot. Sometimes there is no vote and just opinions. Most of the time it is a democratic process for decisions that need to be made.

Stephanie states:

> The Dean certainly talks about the process as far as what happens upstairs and s/he basically says that the two Associate Deans speak for him/her and s/he stands by their decisions. What happens up there? I don't know. But that's her/ his forward-facing and that seems to me to be very military in a way, but it's great. S/he's also though just assumes that the same thing is true for us. You decide, but there's always been a question about how some of our classes get scheduled because it used to be much more top-down with faculty scheduling. In our department it was always just assumed that these particular classes were scheduled by someone upstairs and we just got the rest of it [schedule]. The previous chair would say, I can't schedule. I have to wait until they pick the faculty for this particular program and then I'll fill in the blanks. Our Dean is like no, chairs schedule. You decide the schedule…. end of story. It's kind of nice. I think this role as chair is tricky to know.

Gabe adds:

> We don't discuss the process of decision-making so much. The Dean is quick to say that s/he is not going to drive this…s/he wants it to come from the department level and so we don't per say have discussions with him/her on what the steps are going to be, or what process is we are going to follow. The Dean pushes that down onto the chair…to me, and then in my case, in most situations, I include the faculty.

The participants discussed the expectation of their supervisory dean or other administrators regarding their approach to decision-making. The participants identified variance in required processes related to low- or high-stakes decision-making. Each participant provides a glimpse into how s/he approaches professional decision-making within these expectations.

FDCs Make Decisions

The response are categorized as evidenced-based or utilitarian (for the greater good of the department, college or university rather than the individual). This approach relates to a Utilitarian perspective or inclusion as an ethical approach.

Evidence-based or weighted approach to decision-making.

According to Bruce:

> I think a lot of my [decision-making] is trying to expose evidence based in comparative analysis. For example, when we were trying evaluate and assign new service responsibilities to faculty we go back to the annual reports that faculty filled out regarding how they allocate their time. We could see who was way over and who was under on service. That was gathering the evidence and we did that with grades too. We noticed that some faculty members give really, really generous grades and then their evaluations reflect that. Ironically, students said, *I like this class* (if they had lots if high grades), but they didn't find the class challenging. Using the comparative methodology was really useful to get faculty to think about that. It's the same process when going out comparing us over the years to the Dean. It's been comparative. For example, when we were trying to set up this graduate program, we compared publication records of our faculty versus two other main public universities in this state and it's clear that our department was way, way, better and then even within this university it was a process of trying to show the Dean that we publish a lot and that requires a lot of research. This relates to how the positive evidence should link to rewarding our faculty through the evidenced comparative based approach.

Josh shares:

> I collect as much information as possible and come up with an idea. That could be diverse kinds of quantitative and qualitative information. Then I talk to my faculty members individually, or informally in small groups. If I see a couple of them together, I'll say…hey, look at this idea, what do you think? If there seems to be consensus I would bring it up and make it an agenda item on a faculty meeting agenda.

Lee states:

> Sometimes the decision making process is laid out in the department or university policy. You follow that in the scenario. For example, if it is a salary increase in a given year then the rate is given by the legislature and how much money is allocated. Then it goes to the university level, then the college level, then the department, and then the chair's decision of how much the individual raise will be. In this case there

> is an annual evaluation process involved and you allocate or give an increase based on the individual performance. There is a clear procedure in this scenario and you follow the procedure in the process. In some cases there is no clear procedure or rule. If a faculty says I want to buy this computer. I need to buy specific equipment that I need, and then you balance the need with the resource available. Sometimes this is a very individualized decision and you don't want to call a committee to discuss this one thing. So, as a department chair when somebody approaches me wanting to buy this new item, then I look at need and the available resources. I seek a balance. Most of the time I think about…is this okay, is this allowed, do we have the resource for this thing? Most of the time there is a clear rule to follow and if there is then I follow the rules.

Utilitarianism and inclusion as an ethical approach to decision-making.

Gabe states:

> I view my role as the chair as someone who protects the faculty unnecessarily from the burden of administration and I take on a lot of that decision-making duty on my own. If it is something that is sort of vision related, the stakes are high, or the potential for consequences are high, then I will bring the faculty together and have a discussion, and then we will make the decision by consensus, or in the worst possible scenario by majority vote. We have never had to do that yet; we have been able to come to consensus. The unwritten expectation is that when the stakes are high the entire department gets involved in the discussion. I just have finished my fifth year as a chair and in my first year didn't have a great sense of what should go to the faculty and what shouldn't. But over time, experience has taught me the best way to get there, and what faculty care about and that changes, of course, when new faculty are brought on and you have to figure out what they care about and what they think the department should care about. I am big proponent of trying to predict the outcomes of these things. Now that I know the faculty so well I can predict their preferences and their outcomes too. I know that if I don't talk to this guy before… if I don't make him or her think that it is his decision or his or her idea… then s/he is going to come back as this attack on it… even if it's a good idea… just because s/he didn't have early input on it. I'm a person who looks for the lowest possible harm, even if it may not be the best for the department. I don't like to go into a department vote on a split decision; I just I feel like we need to build consensus on these decisions, which is why the background work needs to happen. I think that if you go into a department split and you build factions…and then once you get factions… they are almost to dissipate, thinking about the consequences is really important. I think asking other people beforehand about the consequences is important. I just can't miss consequences and you have lots of unintended consequences. They can be mitigated by being deliberative and non-reactive. Even little strategies like never sending an email response on the same day that you receive the email. I always wait a day if there's a controversial email. I to let myself cool off and the other people cool off. There is nothing worse than an email string that goes forty-five long and

> takes twenty minutes to read. That is a bad email string, so I never let that stuff happen. I am also keenly aware that some decisions are going to affect stakeholders in ways that they are not going to be happy with. I try to mitigate that as well. I have said before, I don't like conflict. It is easier for me to preempt that problem and announce it rather than have someone come storming in afterwards yelling at me. I don't like that either. I think it is poor decision-making to not think about your stakeholders and the consequences. If I am going to make an organizational change I have to consider all the factors of that. If I am going to bring somebody over on a joint appointment, I have to consider how that's going to affect this program and the other program. When I first was a chair, I didn't understand that. You don't have context. When you are a faculty member, you have no context. Even as a chair I have limited context on what the Dean is doing. I think that I also recognizing that my scope of context is limited which is helpful because then it helps you get to other questions I think people have.

Hanna provides:

> If it involves particular faculty I make sure I talk to them in a lot of detail. If I get new information I go back. If I have this dilemma, I don’t want to go back to them with the busy work, but I want to inform them as much as possible. It may take an extra day to process. If a decision involves them then they need to know, they need to understand. If there is any feedback that they can provide then they should provide it. I take my time in decision-making, but I also have to make the decision. There are certain things…there are things that make faculty happy and satisfied so those are a high priority to me. I try to understand what makes each faculty really tick. For some faculty it is very important when [time and day of the week] they teach and for some faculty it is not. For the faculty who it is important, I try to focus on them first. If a faculty finds it important which room they teach, I try to focus on room selection. While I am making decisions I try to find a way to hurt them the least. If there is going to be a trade off on something, I will try to make a decision with the least impact. I look at it as a satisfaction of their work. If there is something important to them, then let’s work on it. It’s a big deal for some faculty, but it is a hard job. It is important when faculty tell me this is really important, then it is really important. This is in the back of my mind with all decisions.

According to Melanie:

> I usually bring people in and I try to bring in the people who I know are going to object. For example, when I wanted to create this position for the partner of the faculty member, the first thing that I did was identify several people (about 10) who I knew would give me very honest answers and who I knew may not agree at all. I explicitly said *I’ve asked you because I am counting on you to do those things and help us make the right decision*. I try to do this when I put groups together during retreats because I know everyone so well. I try to get a good mix of personalities and in a few cases I’ve even identified and given them roles. I’ll say *here’s what you are good at and the role that I need you to play in this group* and then people won’t

receive it as personal because I have said this is the role of this person even though the person probably does this all of the time. The downside is that at times people view my decisions as too consultive.

Going back to the authentic leadership, it's the way that I tend to operate in the world so that I am not going against my grain. How do I respectfully act like a leader to say we are still going to have this conversation…or we are at least going to decide actively are we going to vote or are we not going to vote? During the recession when we had to talk about the budget cuts I was so nervous about what was going to happen. We had to come up with three different scenarios – the worst of which involved cutting positions and that always gets territorial. And we had done pretty well about not getting territorial up to that point. I worked with the Provost's office and I said how do I do this? So, together we came up with this process where I started by saying…*here are the ground rules that we need to have this conversation on* and a few people said …*this is treating us like children*. I said*… I understand that this might be how you feel, but our ultimate goal here is to walk out of here still being able to talk to one another*. We know this is high stakes and there is a lot of emotion involved and I am going to ask that you follow these parameters for this conversation. They did and we were able to get through that process. It was hard and there were certainly some hurt feelings here and there. It was not nearly what it could have been. I learned a great deal during this process setting up those boundaries and using… I was *these are my colleagues and what right do I have to stand up and say no, you are going to do it this way…you are the students and I am the teacher?*
That part of my authority took a long time for me to own. Once I did it became easier to set those up. I tend to make those kind of decisions by thinking about what are our goals and what do we have in common? What are those values? I try to emphasize with the department as we build community…what brings us together? Because we are otherwise, we are in these areas that are silos and people will complain about those silos but do not know how to bridge those. One of my purposes as a leader is to help us figure this out.

According to Robert:

When Department Chairs make unilateral decisions, we always hear about it on our evaluations and people get ticked off. *So and so is making a decision without talking to the rest of us, and so forth*. Although at this point in my career, I have a pretty good sense of what decisions I can make, and what decisions I shouldn't make by myself. The hard decisions are what you are going to do when the budget's not where you thought it was going to be. Where are you going to take the money from? The tough decisions are sometimes how to handle conduct matters with students. Usually with us it has to do with plagiarism or other forms of cheating in class, and the faculty are great about sharing that with me as a dilemma or the ethical question. It's our major and this person can graduate this year and because those graduation numbers are important we consider, but they've just committed this plagiarism which means that have to at least get an F on the assignment. But the F on the

> assignment might mean that they're not going to graduate. When making those decisions, the faculty is always a part of it, and they're willing to be a part of it, as long as we can sit down and talk it out because that's what the creative process is our department. It's a collaborative creative process and that's how we're wired to make it work. They're all ready to be a part of the things that come up. In fact, we talk a lot about the fact that most of our offices are down the hallway, so we have hallway meetings all the time and my door is pretty much always open. People and students feel like they can almost always walk in here and we can talk almost any time. I want to say that I think it's in our nature [of this department] that our decision process is very collaborative. It's not to say that it's always successful and that we've made the right decision, but we've all had a hand in it.

Todd adds:

> I first identify what IS the issue, what is problem, not just the symptom, or what is putting you in the position of making a decision. Is there anything you can do about it? Sometimes you can't, but if you can, then what do we need to know? What pieces of information or what factors should affect the decision we might need to know? Gathering that information, making sure you haven't forgotten anything, and involve others in the decision as appropriate, because that helps to make sure you haven't forgotten anything or factors that may need to be considered. Then I figure out how to bring that all together… weighing one piece of the decision against another piece, and deciding which one is more important. Sometimes that may be the tricky part because there is no formula for knowing which thing you are supposed to weigh more than the other thing. Sometimes that's obvious; but it isn't always. Then it is a decision. Hopefully you get some consensus among all those it is going to affect, and hopefully they agree with that decision and support it. If they do not agree, at least they understand why it is the decision. They can at least still support it and not feel like their voice wasn't heard, or their position wasn't considered, or that they are not being valued, or whatever.

The participants provide descriptions of their decision-making processes related to standards expected from the dean or higher administration. These anecdotes indicate that participants tend to lean toward making decisions based on evidence or inclusion of stakeholder perspectives.

Conflict and Decision-Making

Making low-stakes decisions seem rudimentary for the participants and seldom create tension regardless of the approach. When decisions need to be made in high-stakes situations, and are surrounded by conflict, the FDCs adapted in varied ways. Each participant was asked to share how conflict may alter their decision-making. There were two primary themes within the decision-making approach to conflict: avoidance and engagement. Eventually, even the avoiders must make decisions; however, each engages in techniques or strategies to minimize conflict. Some of the participants avoid in some situations and engage in others.

Decision-making, conflict avoidance.

Gabe states:

> I don't like conflict! I don't like dealing with conflict and I do my best to mitigate conflict early. There are two approaches to dealing with conflict. There are some conflicts that take care of themselves. If someone comes in all worked up about something, and they are mad about this person or that, I let them vent and they ask me, *what I am going to do about it.* I say *well, give me some time to think about it* and by the next day it is typically not a thing any more. A lot of problems are like that. Every now and then it's not. In those cases, go straight in and focus and say *let's get this taken care of and let's just be done with it because nobody wants to have to deal with this anymore.* These are the two approaches that I take and I actually try to decide in a very short order which kind of problem it is. If it is a problem that going to take care of itself and you give it a little air, or if it a problem that needs to be attacked immediately. I have made some misdiagnosis before which caused some problems, but in general it's worked for me.

Haana adds:

> I spend a lot of time thinking about this…taking the dog for a walk and in my mind I go through all of the scenarios…it is really tiring. I try to think of all of the ways that it can go. I don't always anticipate everything…conflict may make me a little bit less reluctant to take on certain things, depending on the topic. If it is something where I feel very strongly then conflict will not stop me, but all and all I may not like it. Sometimes people bring conflict to you where I don't see the conflict. I think *this is not a big deal*. Sometimes conflicts are a big deal such as student conduct issues. It really affects faculty and I try to help, and when I am helping I am just not satisfied with the level of help that I got from elsewhere to deal with the situation. A student/faculty conflict has an impact on me and the faculty in how we deal with it in future conflicts. Sometimes I don't know what to do…we are learning constantly. I go to the Dean…and the Dean goes to someone else…and they go to someone else to try to figure things out.

Melanie shares:

> When I ran for chair this last time there was someone who ran against me and it was a conflict situation because s/he was very belligerent to me before I had even decided to run for Chair again. I offered mentorship and s/he said I haven't been watching you, and I am sure that there is plenty I don't know about what you do, but we will see what happens. S/he was mean and snarky through email. I didn't share it widely. After the election [and participant was reelected] it came up again because s/he said I am not going to do tasks you are working on and I took it to Faculty Affairs Committee and sought advice. I said this isn't just me; here is the evidence and s/he still doesn't like me. It is what it is. Early on when I was just really struggling with workload, I wasn't able to get things out as quickly through email and respond quickly and I had a couple of faculty who wrote complaints to the Dean and copied me on their complaints about not getting things done in time. I have also had a lot of belligerent students. I had a guy who I thought was physically going to go after me. How I resolve the conflict depends on the type of conflict. If the conflict is with me then I always bring someone else in to be a third party. If I have to make a decision, like with the faculty member who was pretty awful, I have third party documentation and input. Sometimes I will ask for my Dean's perspective if there is conflict.

Patrick states that:

> This may not reflect well on me, but sometimes, depending on what's at stake, I make the easier decision if the cost isn't too high. I am somewhat conflicted. If I can avoid a little bit of conflict by making a decision that I probably wouldn't normally make, I might do that. But if the stakes are high, I'll welcome the conflict.

Stephanie shares that:

> Conflict alters decision-making because some decisions I'll make to avoid conflict. I could put somebody on a committee that I'm going to be on and then it's going to be a big hassle all year, so I won't do it. But that I don't place them on the committee would be seen as a weakness. I wouldn't say weakness, but that's an area that I need to work on. Making decisions based upon trying to avoid conflict is not necessarily always going to be the best approach. It's certainly been what I did this year though, I can tell you that.

Decision-making, conflict engagement.

According to Bruce:

> Conflict in the context of tenure system is really difficult. I think you are right to focus on this because the tenure system provides an ability [for faculty] to act behaviorally really poorly and really unprofessionally. When conflict occurs, the times that it occurs, it's with the same people over, and over, and over, and eventually what has to happen is our Associate Deans and Deans have to step in

> because faculty are situated as bullies. We had a case this last year, in a different but related department, and chairs unfortunately don't have the authority or the power to really address contentious misanthropic faculty members.

Haana shares:

> Student/faculty conflicts comes up quite a bit lately and they happen in the classroom; faculty/faculty conflicts in the past happened frequently with one particular faculty who is no longer here, and since then it has been better; with chair/dean occur when we see something and they don't. For example, one of our lecturers was retiring and we were hiring (replacement) and they approved it (salary and position) and then later they decided that the salary was too high and it was already approved. We had the expectation that we were going to have that salary to hire a new lecturer. That was a conflict regarding how much we can spend on our lecturer and the expectation that a decision had been made. That was a conflict between the Dean's office and with our department, and of course the chair is the person who deals with all of that.

Josh shares:

> We don't have too many administration/faculty conflicts. I think that the administration respects faculty governance and then the consultative approach in these situations is really beneficial. Sometimes the administration has to make hard decisions like the budget crisis. In that case there may not be as much consultation, but I think almost everyone understands those kinds of situations. I try to be as empathetic as possible and that's something we are not trained to do. I definitely think about the consequences to everybody in the decisions we make, especially with regard to how much work everybody is doing because we are all kind of at the edge of work life balance and sanity.

Lee states:

> Sometimes there is a conflict on the course assignments, faculty interest, and the need of the department. Conflict occurs when a particular person wants to create a new course and the department as a whole does not want to offer that course. Conflict occurs during hiring decisions when people want to hire a specific person and you do not agree. There are big conflicts with personnel. Somebody wants a higher salary and you believe that they should get less. Somebody wants to buy that thing and there isn't money there to buy it, then there is a conflict. But in most cases there is a rule that is clear. If somebody wants something, you finally just point to the rule and say…see this is not allowed. When there is a clear rule then it is easier to resolve those conflicts. When there is no clear or clearly specified rule whether the scenario is allowed then it is based on the situation.

Patrick states:

> The conflicts occur when trying to say yes as much as possible, but to do so in an equitable and sustainable way. If I say yes to everybody, we will be out of money. There are some times when I will say, *I'm sorry, that's an unreasonable expense, and no we aren't going to do that.* Or, *yeah, I know you really want to go to this conference, but no, I'm not going to pay for it*. I mediate faculty conflicts between faculty A and faculty B that occur. There are times I am fighting against other departments for resources that we might see as scarce, especially more so the first time I was chair. The second time, I've got to say that overall, we are fairly harmonious. Sometimes a department's needs are greater than my own, or they see our needs as greater than theirs, so we have been for the most part mutually supportive.

According to Robert:

> My weakness as a Chair is my tendency at times to over-react, or impulsively react to certain things that I don't like, and I have a temper, and I can yell. My temper can explode for a couple of moments. It seems like a couple of moments to me. To the people I am exploding at, it may seem longer, but it seems like a couple of moments to me, but it can be ugly at times, and it has been. The last couple of years it got worse because I was getting angry at a policy, or getting ugly about some new directive or something like that.

Todd shares:

> If we have a faculty member who is retiring or leaving to accept a position at another university that open position doesn't automatically go to the department where that person is leaving from. It oftentimes does, but it's not automatic. As a leadership group we review the situation and decide where that position should go. We just did that two months ago and there was some conflict related to that. That is one example of decisions that we make at that level.

Many of the participants indicate that they try to mitigate conflict in most situations to make decisions. Two of the FDCs willingness to engage in decision-making that is surrounded by conflict changed based on the situation. The remaining participants either avoided conflict altogether or found strategies to mitigate it, or engaged fully in decision-making and were not uncomfortable with resulting conflict.

Making Ethical Decisions in Tough Situations

The participants were asked to consider how they incorporate ethics or ethical framework into decision-making in tough or conflictual situations. FDCs make ethical decisions in difficult situations by linking evidenced-based reasoning, or by consideration of Utilitarianism and consultative strategies. Evidence-based strategies, include information collection where Utilitarianism and consultative strategies were directed at maintenance of interpersonal relationship with stakeholders, or serving the group over the individual. In a few cases, the FDC selected one of these two approaches based on the context and situation.

Evidence-based approach to decision-making surrounded by conflict.

Haana states:

> I need to have the most information and I have high standards of decision-making. First I try to do no harm and then I have to look at what is this going to take to make the decision. I am pretty good at making a decision and go for it, because even though I evaluate things carefully, one thing that I don't like is indecision because that drags out the process, takes a long time, and doesn't necessarily produce good results. As much as possible, I go into the details to understand the situation and then make a decision. Secondly, I talk to people before making a decision. I get the parties involved, I get it twice from the Dean's office, get it twice elsewhere, sometimes go talk to the Provost's office. I don't make the decision lightly, but I do make decision and then it is about explaining to people how I make the decisions so that they have an understanding of what was the decision-making process and they were involved in it previously anyway.

Lee shares:

> You need to have all of the facts available and you need to have the data. For example, when the administration makes the budget for adjunct faculty they will say, this year I will give you so much for your adjunct faculty. In that case you need to make a predications for the next year's need. In that case you need to have all of the data: past year's enrollment for certain courses, then you make decisions/predictions on how many courses you expect to offer and how many adjunct faculty you need to hire, and then you argue for how much money you need for this adjunct budget. You need the facts and you need the data.

Utilitarianism and consultative approach to decision-making surrounded by conflict.

According to Bruce:

> I think the key principle is to think about sitting in the chair's position, to think about the potential insecurity and uncertainty of those tenured-faculty members, or those

> without tenure who are oftentimes unwilling to say what they think or do what they want to do because they're fearful. I think that is sort of a principle…. always coming back to and thinking about that relationship. Another principle is to come back and think about the purposes of the University. One benefit of working at an institution like this, is that we actually contribute to the public good. Because of our mission and with our really poor state with a massive working class, with very few and very limited access to education for many, that's a principle, a coming back to the role and how it benefit students. It is about faculty doing their research in the context of their own careers, but linking back into the broader agenda. The third area is the service in the community setting. Those pillars are the key to it.

Lee states:

> Usually, if there is a conflict or I foresee a conflict then I try to resolve the conflict before I make the final decision. Resolve the conflict first. If the conflict cannot be resolved I would consider all of the benefit to the entire department not related to one individual. The benefit of the entire department as a whole should always be consideration of the group over the individual. This is probably a big, big factor that I take into account. Of course, you need courage and building trust. Those are the foundations for making ethical decisions in tough situations. Another tough decision-making process is the salary increase for individual faculty. Those are related ethically. You need to know each individual faculty's performance in the evaluation period. If a faculty was not performing you need to make decisions and point out why they are not meeting performance expectations and why they should get less of an increase or no increase because they are not performing and these are the facts. In that situation you need the courage and also the facts.

Melanie shares:

> Money is always a dilemma where there is no good answer. One of the things that I struggle with is responsiveness when I get so many emails every day. I've tried to figure out how to manage that better; I came up with some solutions and told faculty to just come into my office if they want something immediately. We usually end up dealing with it in the mail room anyway because I will say, I read your email so let's just figure this out. It is hard for me because I understand why they want me to be responsive and yet, the reality of the job is that I almost never can be unless I do it at night. One of my principles, in fact the first time that I ran, I said I am willing to be chair but my daughter is young and as long as everybody understands that she comes first and that I can't attend every event…I can't be that chair, then we are good. Not everyone likes that. I can't win so I chose what is the most important. The former chair was male and he had kids that age and it was never brought it up. He didn't feel the need to bring it up. Faculty saw him very differently; he was always responsive; he always went to events. Some of my colleagues who don't have children will often say you never come to anything…I never see you…why aren't you ever here. I thought…you may it sound like I'm not doing my job when you don't see 90% of what I do. Second of all I am taking my child to this and that and working at night.

> It is one of the things that makes me want to go…blah.

Stephanie states:

> This college and department has a low percentage of female faculty. I think it's common. We have talked about it in the college a lot. I think we have slightly more than half female students, but if you look at the faculty, other than one department, it's really low, and I'm one of two tenure-track faculty out of eleven. When we were hiring last year I made it a point of discussion. I wasn't the chair of the hiring committee, but I was on the committee and the chair of the committee and I discussed the need for a diversity statement really making an effort to hire more women. Everybody generally agreed with that and then we went through the whole interview process and looked at how many women were top candidates. Out of our top two candidates, one was a man, one was a women. We were in the hiring committee meeting and there were three women. When we first took the vote every man voted for the male candidate and all of females voted for the female candidate. We talked about it for quite a bit. I felt like I had to be really vocal in support of considering the female candidate. We left the meeting and then three of the men came to me and said they were changing their vote, so we ended up hiring the female candidate. But I had to really push hard for that and then in my evaluations,one person, and I don't know who it is, said that I am a strong feminist and if you don't agree with me I'll push it down your throat. If I was a male chair and the decision was made as a male it wouldn't even cross their minds. They would say…*he favors men*…would they even say that? I can totally see how that's perceived as *she's favoring*…I'm fine with that, if that gets another women hired and that's a perception that I have to go through, fine. But they don't even see that, no, they think that that means I'm being a feminist. If it were switched around nobody would have even blinked an eye if we had hired the male, or how he got hired over the woman. There's a study that just came out that states that if there are four candidates and one of them is a woman and three of them are a men, her odds of getting hired are zero. Zero.

Todd adds:

> If it's a tough situation or one where there's some conflict or disagreement, then yeah, it's the building trust that makes the most sense to me. In the sense that you want to do the best you can to make sure that all sides feel like they were heard. Whether the decision goes in their favor or not, they don't feel like it was because you were ignoring them or based on what they think, but again, I try to keep that from happening. Talking to people one-on-one or in a small group is helpful so that they can hopefully appreciate the fact that you have thought about that, you have considered that, here is why you don't agree, or here's why you're still going to act in a different way.

The stress of making ethical decisions in tough situations surrounded by dialectical tensions from varying stakeholder interests surrounded by conflict can take a toll on the FDC. As previously described few FDCs were enthusiastic to take-on the role of chair. Each participant was asked how they care for self and cope with the stress of the position and decision-making.

FDCs Coping with Stress of Position and Decision-Making

Authentic Transformational Leadership provides for servantship and care for all stakeholders. All of the participants shared the strategies they use to protect faculty and students. The high level of care allocated to others often leads to a situation where the FDC neglects self and personal efficacy for the sake of position. When asked how participants renew themselves these were their responses.

According to Bruce:

> I have found being chair is very stressful especially in conflictual environments, which is really one or two students over three years, and one faculty member. I have lost sleep worrying about this. It is not the planning of the normal stuff as all of that is easier. The conflicts are difficult. I don't really think I have a really good mechanisms for self-care. The University did a whole bunch of Department Chair meeting stuff and 80% was a waste of time… not useful. Occasionally there'd be a nugget. What would have been more useful would have been better channels to deal with these problematic faculty members. We are somewhat of an oddity institutionally in the modern, capitalist world. We don't have unions, so we are not like teachers. There is not that sort of representation. The tenure is there more on research and teaching, but primarily on research. There is no really good mechanism in terms of renewal. I decided in December that this was going to be my first and only term as chair because of one faculty member and that felt great… that was a renewal. It was just getting away…getting away from it. I think that was sort of positive.

Gabe states:

> This is a hard one for me because I know that I don't like it when people don't agree with the decisions that I make; because I generally think that they are the right ones. You know of course, they're not always the right one, but it's hard. I try not to get personally invested in the decisions, so that if I go far down a path in a decision and I realize that it is not right, or someone disagrees with it then it is not personally offensive.

Haana shares:

> I have to make sure that I feel good about everything when I make decisions. I am not going to go against my own framework and standards as much as it is possible. I'm not going to do anything until I have argued all sides and possible affects. I have to go bed at night. Sometimes I am going to make mistakes, but I have to live with my decisions. I try to work hard and play hard. Our Dean had mentioned when s/he first came along about having chairs be a 12-month appointment or 11-month at least. But I do not think it is a good idea; I just want to say that I am off contract. I am not working for two months. So nobody can tell me, you have to be here to work. I do try to get away. I do also work hard. Maybe I am not able to get away as much as I want to; it is also the mental get away. Because when I see an email I just have to respond. I just have to respond to that email. But I still have to do the work, so it just is a hard balance.

Josh states:

> I have a tendency to say yes to everything. I need to learn to say no more, and that is what I do to renew myself. I got a research grant in the fall and I am going to be chairing from a remote location in the fall. That is going to be an opportunity for renewal. Sabbatical is important...take sabbatical.

Lee shares:

> Sometimes you have events outside of your regular working hours and I often make time arrangements for that. We have to work weekends; sometimes we come to campus and make a prior arrangement; nowadays, many times I can work on the phone or through the computer, and that is somewhat convenient. At certain times you have to spend more time on your work and sometimes I can do this at home. Some of the issues are work/life balance. Sometimes your blood pressure gets higher. Yes, sometimes when you have a tough decision to make it might affect my sleep at night. If there is an intense moment, deadlines, too much work, then I do not get good sleep during those times and it affects my health.

Patrick states:

> Honestly I haven't had a break yet. I am at my breaking point right now. So yeah, I need to renew myself. Actually, this teacher leadership course, taking time to talk about big ideas, that was actually honestly renewing, and it was very needed for me. I am in a year-long cribbage battle with my youngest daughter, and the winner gets a crown. So sometimes, I'll come home and say, *we have got to play some Cribbage*. I have a dog and will go out and play with the dog. Decision-making can really drag you down.

Stephanie adds:

> This is not a job that you leave in the office, that's for sure. That is one of the things that is in our professional development plan and the Dean has talked about this quite a bit…this work-life balance. I work at home all the time. I'm conscious of it and over the summer I never come in, well, I come in whenever I want to… in the summer for sure. I'm not going to be here at 9 o'clock ever. I'm not even on contract right now. I've just got too much to do. I don't mind it and I've got a paper to write. What I do to renew myself is sit out on my patio all summer long and try not to work. I would rather work here until 6 to get what I want done than take it home and do work at home.

Todd shares:

> I get away. I probably don't do that as much as I should because during the school year it's hard to get away, but we are traveling this summer. Travel is probably one of the main things that we do as a couple that gets us out of our normal routine and lets us recharge and feel like it is okay, and I can hit this again. I cannot completely unplug because I don't want to come back to the huge backlog. I try to address as many emails as I can. That's the one thing about academia that's hard. Although in the summer you have quite a bit of flexibility, during the school year you have most no flexibility, so it's like this very dichotomous kind of a thing. In most jobs you can go on vacation almost whenever you want. There may be certain times when you can't, but there are going to be relatively smaller periods of time when you can't; but here, there are nine months you can't. It's an interesting issue, but I know it's important, and that's why I do it when I can.

Gabe states:

> I don't take work home often. I answer emails and stuff like that and it's sort of stuck in me…it's sort of hard to push this away. There are lots of times in this world when I am not the chair and to me that has to be the case, otherwise, I think the burn out rate would be just terrible... to do this all the time.

Melanie shares:

> Initially it was really hard just because it has been hard for me to focus on renewal. Which is part of what enabled me when I ran for chair to say that my daughter is the most important…work isn't the most important anymore. That was empowering. When I finally took sabbatical it was instrumental. When I had the time I thought I am not going back to chair again. The impact of all of the emotional labor that we have to do. You fulfill a role and I told the faculty too when I ran the first time, you guys are going to respond to me as a chair and I ask that you remember it is me, but there is always that tension. That part is painful for me. The friendships have really been stressed by the fact that I have made decisions based on what I believe are ethical principles, but not what my friends would want. It has been painful to not be included in the social things. The other thing that I realized on sabbatical was that I

> haven't been able to produce traditional scholarship since I have been chair. During the sabbatical I realized that I still love to write, that I can still do it, that I still have something to say. It takes a lot of emotional energy to keep that thick skin up. I had reached a point a couple springs ago that the cynicism came in. I actually set a goal to finish an article, to do something proactive for me, to deal with my sense of sacrifice, and I wasn't able to because of what is demanded of me with program prioritization and huge changes and all of us were pretty spend. I thought…*I am done…I am not sacrificing any more*. I have really come to terms since the sabbatical. It helped me realize how much the emotional labor impacted me and how much I was allowing it to reinforce the self-doubt. It also reassured me that when I am not chair that I will have a role. It is very lonely.

Summary

Chapter four provides a summary of the significant data derived from this single-case study, which includes interviews, observation, and document analysis. The data analysis and interpretation presented seven theme families and 14 sub-themes that reflect the lived experiences of FDCs as they share their experiences, document analysis from the Northwest University, and observation of the FDCs and other stakeholders. The themes were organized in relation to the two research questions.

Chapter five provides a full summary and discussion of the findings to answer the questions related to this study. The final chapter also provides recommendations for future research.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Higher education and the role of the FDC have changed over time, now requiring a nearly insurmountable workload. Gmelch (2004) provides an overview of the FDC position that aligns with findings in this study.

> Many faculty have joined the academy in search of a professional life characterized by autonomy and independence. They observe the stormy years of chairs and deans and scathing criticisms of presidents and wonder, "Why would I want to subject myself to such scrutiny and public criticism?" We cannot ensure a decent amount of personal privacy for chairs since they are public servant leaders every moment of their day, with every appointment, message, and memo open to public scrutiny, critique, comment, and review. Even at home, academics find that leadership is not a "family-friendly" profession. Thus, most academics are not willing to give up their professional and personal lives for one of servant leadership (p. 9).

The researcher provides a summary of the study in this final chapter. Major findings are interpreted in answering the research questions and presenting conclusions. The final section of the chapter highlights recommendations for further study and advice from participants for those who seek an FDC position in higher education.

Summary of Study

This study examines the many challenges of the FDC position in higher education related to straddling the division of their work as administrative task manager and authentic transformational faculty leader by exploring the approaches utilized to achieve ethical decision-making. Development of ethical awareness to embody professional standards that foster connections between administration and faculty strengthens higher education; benefits faculty, students, staff, and administration; and reduces FDC-role conflict, which leads to enhanced outcomes, reduced turnover in the position, reduced dissonance, and enhanced efficacy for stakeholders. This inquiry explicitly and implicitly manifests the components of authentic transformational leadership and ethics of the profession toward creation of a socially-just system of leadership.

This study informs educational leaders, stakeholders, policy makers, and those with influence whose support of social justice leadership practice is manifested in a congruent statement of ethics as institutional and professional standards. Finally, this examination further considers the need to implement an ethics of the profession as a road map to decision-making that may lessen inequity within higher education organizations, both politically and discursively. This chapter outlines a summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations to FDCs, and implications for further study.

This study investigates the experiences of ten FDCs who have experienced dialectical tension in their position as they sought to make ethical decisions in the role of task manager and ethical leader toward answering these research questions:

1. How do FDCs manage and lead relative to an ethics of the profession surrounded by dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?
2. How do FDCs engage a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

The research illuminates the perceptions of ten faculty department chairs at the Northwest University in the United States. A single-case study was bound to Northwest University documents, the participant FDCs' lived experience collected via semi-structured qualitative interviews, and observation of stakeholders within the case.

A semi-structured interview protocol was established, and questions focused on the experiences of the FDC pertaining to ethical leadership, ethical framework, dilemmas and conflict, and the decision-making processes that surround their work. Permission from supervisory deans was granted and the ten participants agreed to participate in two, one-hour interview sessions. The interviews were video-recorded and transcribed. Transcribed interviews were forwarded to participants for member-checking. Northwest University documents pertaining to the role of the FDC related to ethics, leadership, position expectations, and decision-making, as well as observation field notes and university documents were coded and triangulated with the interview transcripts. Three cycles of thematic coding produced seven thematic families and 14 sub-themes examined through the lens of Critical Social Justice Theory and ethics of the profession with an emphasis on Authentic Transformational Leadership related to *affect*.

Conclusions

How do FDCs manage and lead relative to an ethics of the profession surrounded by dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

All of the participants readily provided definitions of authentic leadership that, although not specified as such, related to the development of an ethical framework and also to their personal ethical code. Two sub-themes emerged from the participants related to their ethical framework: 1) policy drive and 2) “doing the most good” for the students, faculty, and university while mitigating harm. Three of the participants expressed that they lead through adherence to policy. These participants linked adherence to policy as a method to eliminate the gray areas of leadership by considering the policy related to the action or request and following the rule. Several participants expressed that the university, colleges, and departments have outdated rules that stakeholders are redesigning. All participants, including those who expressed a policy-driven ethical framework, also expressed the need to cultivate a leadership approach that provides the greatest good for the most stakeholders while mitigating the harm. The greatest good for the department was based on a consideration of the needs of faculty in the department and the department as a whole rather than give preference to a particular faculty member. Most of the participants expressed that relative to ethical leadership, priority was given to students first as they “are the reason that we are here”.

All of the participants expressed that time and resources are scarce. In particular, each participant discussed two distinct aspects of their position as an FDC: administrative management and faculty leadership. The tasks related to administrative management are expressed to be easier to approach ethically because each felt that they know their faculty team well, understand expectations of their supervisory dean, and understand the mission of the university; therefore, they can ethically navigate low-stakes decisions and manage them without faculty involvement. Some of the tasks are high-stakes and participants expressed that they know which high-stakes tasks should incorporate faculty involvement. Phrases such as being open and fair, acting with integrity, and transparency were woven throughout the responses. Many of the participants expressed that one of the primary inhibitors to following ethical leadership principles is to lead ill-behaving tenured-faculty. Some of the ill-behaved tenured-faculty directly attacked the FDC, and were resistant to contribute to departmental work aside from their research or teaching responsibilities.

There were some instances that participants shared that relate to dialectical tension caused by administration located hierarchically above the FDC position. In these instances, the administration of the Northwest University created directives without consultation of the FDCs. A single participant, in particular, discussed the importance of administration providing clear, evidenced-based rationale for directives. The participant expressed that clear evidence and rationale allow for additional questions and motivates the FDC to get “on-board” with the directive to motivate faculty to implement it. Another participant interviewed, provided research data that suggests that the FDC is 80-percent of the reason that an initiative or directive is successful. If this holds true, then administrative stakeholders benefit by providing justification and rationale to the FDC.

The participants unanimously shared that an ethics of the profession would benefit the academy. All of the participants were unsure of how it might be implemented or what it may entail; however, having an ethical framework that administration, staff, faculty, and students could draw upon, was expressed as a to benefit the organization. One of the colleges created core values that stakeholders utilize in every leadership situation. The FDCs in this college have a clear understanding of these guidelines and the existence seems to create unity in their approach to ethical leadership. Several participants expressed that buy-in and compatibility between the FDCs’ ethical framework and those that the Dean or higher administration, faculty, and students agreed to are an important component to the development. Several participants expressed that specific ethical training for the FDC and other stakeholders would be beneficial.

How do FDCs engage a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

The majority of participants acknowledged that the university structure is bureaucratic. Although decision-making procedures are not always explicit from executive administration or the supervisory dean, each participant note a process for how s/he makes decisions. Two sub-themes arose from the decision-making data: 1) evidence-based or weighted approach to decision-making and 2) utilitarianism and inclusion as an ethical approach to decision-making. Nine of the FDC participants shared that they frequently encounter dilemmas and conflict surrounding their decision-making. Dilemmas and conflict surround issues at the university, college, and departmental level involving administrative directives, student conduct, faculty conduct (particularly tenured-faculty), course scheduling and faculty assignment, student/faculty communication, faculty compensation and performance raises, research funding, and professional development. Similar to the consideration of ethics, the FDCs either relied on policy-based decision making, utilitarianism and inclusion as an ethical approach to decision-making, or a hybrid approach that utilizes both approaches depending on the importance of the decision. The hybrid model was relied on more often when decision-making was high-stakes. Many of the participants also shared that they would seek advice from their supervisory dean the higher the stakes of the outcome.

All of the participants shared some adversity to conflict. Eight of the participants were very averse to conflict and took extraordinary precaution to mediate a situation before conflict arose. Only two of the participants, although not seeking conflict, willing engaged immediately in decision-making surrounded by conflict. These approaches to conflict are coded as sub-themes of conflict aversion or conflict engagement.

Interpretation of Major Findings

The interpretation of findings is considered through the conceptual framework of this study: Critical Social Justice Theory, Authentic Transformational Leadership, Ethics of the Profession, and ethical decision-making.

Through the lens of Critical Social Justice Theory. The following tenets are derived from a consideration of critical theory and social justice; combined they function as conceptual framework of Critical Social Justice (Dahms, 2008; Brown, 2004).

1. Advancement of emancipation of human beings within their day-to-day lives, structures, and cultures from structural and systematic constraints.

The FDCs who participated in the study expressed the difficulty of the position. None of the participants entered academia bound for the role. It is primarily out of servanthood that each accepted the position. It is significant that each FDC communicated the complexity and difficulty of the position, and eight of ten expressed having little support from faculty within the department. The participants shared that the FDC is the vital link between administration and faculty and as such should be cared for in a manner that conveys care and concern for other stakeholders.

2. Application of critical self-reflexivity, regarding self as a contributor to define society, against both implied and publicly-stated intentions and interests of individuals, social scientists, collective actors, and society.

Through the organizational framework of communication constitutive organization (CCO) as discussed in chapter one, the FDC benefits by engaging in self-reflexivity related to the position. The organizational norms and values are created and recreated through the communication and work of the FDC as organizational member. Many of the participants expressed that they accepted the position because no one else would step up or it was their turn in the rotation. The dissonance between the positive aspects of the position to serve stakeholders and the actuality of the position is furthered by institutional members' disregard or irreverence of the position.

3. Examination of how compounded layers of alienation alter our ability to discern and to shape societal conditions.

The FDC is not completely administration nor completely faculty, and works within the middle realm between, which creates a dichotomy of position. Several FDCs expressed that much of the compounded alienation occurs when the faculty consider the FDC as the boss rather than as a colleague who is temporarily in the leadership position to serve faculty, students, the department, and the university.

4. Nourishment of the social aspects of individuality, the interpenetration of self and other, subject and object, and theory and praxis.

All of the FDCs expressed their interest to create an ethical and uplifting environment for faculty and students as a leader. Nine of the ten participants excitedly shared that nourishment and enrichment of others as their primary work.

Through Authentic Transformational Leadership. All of the FDC participants describe their leadership styles as incorporating at least two of the precepts of Authentic

Transformational Leadership, including those described by Weichun, Avolio, Riggio & Sosik (2011) as leaders:

> [Authentic Transformational Leaders]...do not just lead followers to perform well; they also develop followers to lead themselves and others to perform well through four behavioral dimensions (i.e., idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) and are characterized by possessing moral character and having concern for self and followers; embedding moral values in leaders' vision, articulation, and program that followers can embrace; and establishing moral decision making processes and choices in which leaders and followers collectively engage and pursue (p. 805).

The thematic families and sub-themes of this research are considered under the theoretical tenets of Authentic Transformational Leadership. According to Bass and Steidlmeier (1999), Authentic Transformational Leadership is linked to ethical philosophy and ethical discussions of "...character and authenticity as well as the major themes of the modern Western ethical agenda: liberty, utility, and (distributive) justice" (p.182). In this case study participants responses aligned primarily to and ethics of justice via decision-making and ethical leadership aligned to policy and seeking evidence and logic. The participants forwarded concepts of utility related to ethical leadership and decision-making through responses related to transparency, care for stakeholders, and doing the most good for the majority of stakeholders and mitigating harm.

Utility or Utilitarianism as a distinct tradition in ethical thought, founded by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and furthered in considerable detail by John Stuart Mills (1959), centers on the principle of utility in what many of the FDCs describe as “doing the most good” for the students, faculty, and university while mitigating harm.

According to West (2003):

> In the 21st century a distinction has been made between forms of utilitarianism in which the rightness or wrongness of actions is a matter of the consequences of each particular action, case by case, and forms of utilitarianism in which the rightness or wrongness of actions is a matter of whether they are in accord with or in violation of a rule, with the rule justified by the consequences of its acceptance or general practice in society. (p. 74).

Therefore, leading authentically under the precepts of utility enhances decision-making even amid the dialectical tension that the FDC faces continually. Each of the FDCs provide that they have concern for self and followers, and work to articulate the university’s and department’s vision to ask followers to engage and pursue these efforts through teaching, research, and service.

Through the lens of Ethics of the Profession. Development of a personal and professional code of ethics is beneficial to education leaders (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001). This knowledge of self, coupled with a consideration of ethics provides a protective layer of reinforcement toward leadership and self-management. The term *affect* discussed in previous chapters is generated through the interactions between the FDC and stakeholders, as well as through decisions made by the FDC. An individual should be in touch with themselves, and understand their intrinsic motives to act ethically and uphold ethical standards (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). Each participant expresses that establishment of an ethics of the profession to be an interesting concept for consideration, and/or a model that would benefit them and the profession. Adding that specific ethical training for the FDC and other stakeholders would reduce tension. This is evidenced in the satisfaction that the FDCs experienced in the college referenced previously, that had already constructed core values to assist stakeholders in decision-making and leadership action.

Implications

In the current political economy of higher education where filling seats is equated with success, is ethical decision-making even possible? Utilitarianism is based on a concept of happiness for the most while simultaneously reducing unhappiness and mitigating harm. Based on the evidence provided in this study, it is possible to create and maintain an ethics of the profession to elevate the utility of the FDC's professional work, even with the pressures that s/he faces each day.

The majority of FDC participants engage in a utilitarian approach to leadership to maximize the positive affect in their position. Affect is linked to utilitarianism as a means to elevate each member of the faculty team, to uphold the perspective of the department in a positive manner to outside the department, and ensure that the department aligns to the Northwest University's core values and mission. An ethics of profession that considers a standard of utilitarianism as a rule for ethical decision-making provides a moral compass to be applied to leadership and to leader's ethical decision-making to enhance positive outcomes. An ethics of the profession that embeds utilitarianism also provides a support structure for FDCs who voice concern over lack of formalized training to make ethical decisions in their position. This ethical structure allows the FDCs to simply ask themselves, which decision-making outcomes produce the most good and mitigates overall harm at all structural levels. An ethics of profession that includes consideration of utilitarianism, which many FDCs already incorporate, provides a standardized approach to be used by FDCs. Development of an ethical leadership framework that incorporates a formalized statement of ethics of the profession that is accepted by all university stakeholders, furthers this consideration and works to reduce tension experienced by the FDC as middle-manager and leader in the academy.

Given that many faculty leaders in this position already engage in these processes, the potential to co-create an ethical framework for higher-education leadership that focuses on utility rather than the bottom line furthers engagement. The FDC understands their role in the academy and their mission to enhance positive outcomes for stakeholders by aligning with a standard of ethics of the profession despite role tension. So, moving a co-created standard to be defined explicitly in an institutional document that is then subsequently followed by all administrators, faculty, staff, and students, reduces variance in leadership approach and decision-making at all levels. It also reduces inconsistency among faculty, improves operations, and ultimately drives the bottom line in a positive manner to enhance stakeholder buy-in and increase happiness within departments, colleges, and within the university and ultimately students. Within the political structure of the organization, it is also imperative to persuade boards and the public that the professional ethics framework is in everyone's best interest; these positive outcomes are a start.

Recommendations for Action

Higher Education is experiencing great change as institutions are expected to fill seats, substantiate student-learning outcomes, produce critical thinkers who are hirable in the workforce, and do so with constrained resources. The focus on an ethics of the profession provides FDCs and other stakeholders a foundation to assist in navigation of changes, dilemmas, or conflict that arise. Discussions occur systemically, and there are implications for FDCs, administration, and the faculty that require enactment of change in an ethical manner. The researcher recommends that the following leadership actions be taken with consideration to improve the current state of affairs and promote positive change in higher education:

1. Consideration of the FDC position, and how the person in the position can and should be treated in a socially-just manner.
2. Provide ethical-leadership training to FDCs, administrators, and faculty.
3. Advocate for the creation and implementation of a professional code of ethics; introduce standardization of practices as a beneficial criteria of conduct to be developed and followed by students, faculty, staff, and all levels of administration.
4. Work to incorporate a formal training program for new FDCs and encourage mentorship between experienced and new FDCs including conflict resolution and management strategies.

Recommendations for Future Research

From examination of the data provided in this study, several topics arose that are not within the scope of this research, but that may contribute to this body of knowledge, and thus be worth examination. Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from this study, and consideration of the emergence of other topics, the researcher suggests the following intersections for future research:

1. This study only begins to reveal the benefits of the development of an ethical framework to assist FDCs in decision-making. Additional research that considers the

deans' perspectives on ethical framework and decision-making would benefit knowledge cultivation.

2. It would also be beneficial to consider the construction and implementation of this ethical framework documentation to be utilized by institutional stakeholders.
3. Finding of this study suggest that ill-behaving tenured faculty contribute to attrition and diminished job satisfaction for the FDC. Further investigation into the tenure-system and how deans and FDCs can mitigate conflict specific to these interactions may prove beneficial.
4. Information from this study and data collection indicates that many FDCs spend 75-percent of their time managing administrative tasks and only 25-percent in leadership engagement. Additional research that considers alternative division of FDC workload may enhance leadership connection within higher-education departments.
5. Building on the need expressed for improvement of the FDC's work/life balance, there is potential for additional research into this potentially job satisfaction-impacting issue.

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Appendix A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Study: The Dialectical Tension of the Department Chair in Higher Education as Administrative Task Manager or Authentic Transformational Leader

Purpose: To explore the experiences of practicing Faculty Department Chairs (FDCs) in a higher educational institution regarding leadership dilemmas/conflicts and decision-making.

Open-ended survey #1

I. Qualifying and demographic questions

1. Are you willing to participate in this study?
2. Does your faculty department chair job description contain a teaching component and do you teach? (Qualifying question: If no, this FDC is not a candidate for participation)
3. How many credits do you teach in an academic year?
4. What is your gender?
5. How long have you worked for northwest university?
6. How long have you been an FDC at northwest university?
7. Have you worked as an FDC at other higher education institution?
8. Total time worked as an FDC in higher education?
9. Describe your background, courses or professional development related to leadership in higher education or other organizational settings?
10. Describe your background, courses or professional development related to professional ethics?
11. Describe your background, courses or professional development related to decision-making?

Interview #1

RQ1: How do FDCs engage a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

Position Questions

How many faculty do you lead?

Who do you report to in administration? Who is your immediate supervisor?

How often do you attend meetings with your supervisor? How is leadership or an ethical framework for leadership discussed in these meetings? Do you and your supervisor ever discuss the ethical dilemmas of your work?

How is decision-making discussed in these meetings? Is there a process that you are expected to follow?

Describe meeting frequency and emphasis areas in meetings with FDCs across campus?
Leadership Questions

What does authentic leadership mean to you?

What does transformational leadership mean to you?

What does authentic transformational leadership mean to you?

What does ethical leadership mean to you?

How do you see yourself as a leader?

Please describe your own personal code of ethics or ethical framework?

When and by whom should ethical leadership be practiced?

What do you consider and how do you practice ethical leadership?

How is ethics discussed or addressed with organizational leadership or by your supervisory Dean?

How is ethics discussed or addressed in the administrative or FDC meetings you lead?

Describe whether you explicitly share your ethical code with faculty who you lead and how you do this, and if not, why not.

What is an ethics of profession or professional code of ethics and how does it add value to your profession?

Does the northwest university have an ethical framework for leadership? Please describe?

Does your administrative team have an ethical leadership framework? Please describe?

Describe any alignment or contradiction between your own personal code of ethics/ ethical framework and that of the university and/or administration?

How is your ethical framework connected to leadership action?

Interview II

RQ2: How do FDCs engage a process for decision-making surrounded by ethical dilemmas and conflict within dialectical tension between administrative and faculty perspectives within their department?

In the first interview we have discussed your ethical framework. Let's move to your process of decision-making and your experience in confronting dilemmas and/or conflict in your role as FDC.

What are the types of decisions you make as a FDC?

What types of conflict do you experience as an FDC?

Describe your understanding of situations that constitute dilemmas that you face in your work as FDC.

Describe how you engage in decision-making?

Describe how conflict may alter your decision-making?

Describing ethical dilemmas/conflict situations.

Describe a dilemma/conflict that you have faced?

Describe how you approached the dilemma/conflict?

Describe your decision-making approach in this situation?

Describe how your ethical framework impacted your decision-making in this instance?

Repeat A, B, C, D to gain additional examples.

Describe principles such as courage or building trust that you employ to make ethical decisions in tough situations?

How does your decision-making affect self and what do you do to renew yourself?

Explain how you consider the consequences to others in decision-making?

How does your decision-making affect stakeholders?

How did your decision-making affect faculty you supervise?

Explain how you consider the consequences to others in decision-making?

Describe how you expand others' decision-making power at the expense of your own?

What best practices or recommendations would you have for a new FDC seeking to experience success in this particular organization? Why are these recommendations important?

Do you have further comments to add to this research? [Exploring leading ethically or engaging in ethical decision-making in higher education as a FDC within the context of contemporary challenges?

What questions should I have asked that I did not to better understand FDC leadership practices and decision-making processes?

Do you have any other comments or questions for me?

Appendix B

Participant Informed Consent Form

Title: STRADDLING THE BRIDGE: THE DIALECTICAL TENSION OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR IN HIGHER EDUCATION AS ADMINISTRATIVE TASK MANAGER OR AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER

Investigator: Michelle Bennett

Directions: Carefully read each statement below and initial by each. Sign on the reverse side only if you understand each statement and are consenting to participate in this study.

1. _____ The **University of Idaho Institutional Review Board** has approved this project.
2. _____The purpose of this study is to identify leadership practices of the Faculty Department Chair related to decision-making and ethics in their role.
3. _____You will be asked to participate in two interviews between April and June 2016. Each interviews should take approximately one hour.
4. _____ Interview questions will be related to your personal experience as a Faculty Department Chair pertaining to decision-making, ethics, conflict, and role tension. Some questions may cause you to feel uncomfortable.
5. _____ I agree to allow researcher to conduct observation of my leadership in the following situations ____.

6. _____This research benefits the community providing opportunity for FDCs to consider how developing an ethics of the profession linked to leadership and decision-making may provide a means to successfully straddle routine profession challenges and may lessen inequity within higher education organizations, both politically and discursively.

7. ______Participation in this study will be confidential. You will be assigned a random alpha/numeric code for all record keeping. Audio recordings will be destroyed once transcripts of the interviews are completed. Once the study is completed transcripts and notes will be shredded. All documents will be stored on a secure, password protected computer and/or filing cabinet with access only available by myself and my faculty sponsor.

8. _____You will be asked to refer to colleagues, faculty, and supervisors by their titles rather than by name to protect identities.

9. _____If you have questions or concerns at any time throughout the process regarding the study, the researcher, or your participation, please contact the researcher or the major professor through the following contacts.

Contact Information

Investigator/Researcher

Michelle Bennett
5500 E. Opportunity
Nampa, ID 83687
Phone: 208-599-6123
Email: benn1252@vandals.uidaho.edu

Major Professor

Dr. Mary Gardiner
University of Idaho - Boise Center
322 E. Front Street, Boise ID 83702
Phone: 208-364-9905
Email: gardiner@uidaho.edu

10. _____You may refuse to participate at any time with no penalty. By stating to the researcher your unwillingness to continue you will be removed from the study and all previously collected documents and interviews will be immediately destroyed.

11.____ I have reviewed this consent form and understand each statement. By returning this document to the researcher I agree to willingly participate in this study. I understand I will not be compensated for my participation.

12. ____ I understand that the results of the study will be available to me.

Please review, complete, and sign consent form on page three to indicate your consent to participate in the study.

Participant Name:

Participant Signature:

Today's Date:

Please designate and provide preferred method of contact:
Phone:

Email:

Mailing address:

Other:

By signing the consent form participant certifies that they are at least 18 years of age.

Researcher Name: Michelle Bennett

Researcher Signature:

Today's Date:

Appendix C

Letter to Participants

Dear Dr. XXX,

My name is Michelle Bennett and I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Administration program at the University of Idaho. I am seeking your assistance in June or early July in completing research surrounding the role of the Faculty Department Chair in higher education related to authentic transformational leadership, decision-making, and an ethics of the profession.

The purpose of this research is to gather data from your Faculty Department Chair perspective in answering research questions pertaining to ethics and decision-making within your work. The FDC is often caught in tension between administration and faculty when making ethical decisions. Elevated standards (ethics) strengthen higher education, benefit faculty, students, staff, and administration and also reduce FDC role conflict leading to enhanced outcomes and reduced turnover in the position. This research provides opportunity for FDCs to consider how developing an ethics of the profession linked to leadership and decision-making may provide a means to successfully straddle routine profession challenges.

It is my hope that you will assist me in completing my dissertation research by participating in two, one-hour personal interviews. During the interviews you will be invited to reflect on decision-making, and ethical considerations in your leadership position. Please be assured that all information provided will remain confidential. Your identity and your institution will be protected through the use of pseudonyms.

Having secured approval through the University of Idaho IRB, I hope you will feel comfortable participating in this study. Having the opportunity to interview and learn from you would be an honor for me and also benefit Faculty Department Chairs allowing them to draw on your rich experiences.

Attached for your review is a copy of the Informed Consent Form and Interview Guide. Please email me at benn1252@vandals.uidaho.edu to schedule an interview time and location that best meets your needs. If you have any questions, please contact me at XXX-XXX or at benn1252@vandals.uidaho.edu. I hope that you will consider assisting me in this important work.

Sincerely,

Michelle Bennett

Doctoral Candidate

Appendix D

University *of* Idaho
Office of Research Assurances
Institutional Review Board
875 Perimeter Drive, MS 3010
Moscow ID 83844-3010
Phone: 208-885-6162
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irb@uidaho.edu

To: Mary Elisabeth Gardiner

Cc: Michelle Bennett

From: Sharon Stoll
Chair, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board

Date: October 10, 2016

Title: STRADDLING THE BRIDGE: THE DIALECTICAL TENSION OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR IN HIGHER EDUCATION AS ADMINISTRATIVE TASK MANAGER OR AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER

Project: 16-1

Approved: 04/27/2016

Renewal: 04/26/2017

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board at the University of Idaho, I am pleased to inform you that the protocol for the research project STRADDLING THE BRIDGE: THE DIALECTICAL TENSION OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR IN HIGHER EDUCATION AS ADMINISTRATIVE TASK MANAGER OR AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER is approved as offering no significant risk to human subjects. This approval is valid until 04/26/2017.

This study may be conducted according to the protocol described in the application. Research that has been approved by the IRB may be subject to further appropriate review and approval or disapproval by officials of the Institution. Every effort should be made to ensure that the project is conducted in a manner consistent with the three fundamental principles identified in the Belmont Report: respect for persons; beneficence; and justice. As Principal Investigator, you are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable FERPA regulations, University of Idaho policies, state and federal regulations.

Federal regulations require researchers to follow specific procedures in a timely manner. For the protection of all concerned, the IRB calls your attention to the following obligations that you have as Principal Investigator of this study.

1. For any changes to the study (except to protect the safety of participants), an Amendment Application must be submitted to the IRB. The Amendment Application must be reviewed and approved before any changes can take place.

2. Any unanticipated/adverse events or problems occurring as a result of