

Creating a web of support: an important leadership strategy for advancing campus diversity

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Abstract Research demonstrates that leadership, particularly among presidents, is important for moving a diversity agenda forward and make appreciable progress on it. The research questions pursued here are: What is the role of the college president in advancing a diversity agenda? What strategies do presidents identify as important to facilitating a diversity agenda? There were three main findings: (1) strategies are deployed in a non-linear way best represented through a web metaphor, (2) six sets of actors that serve as key nodes on the web and specific strategies were crucial to enhancing and deepening the web—developing an internal network, hiring, mentoring, partnering with faculty on the curriculum, supporting student affairs staff, working directly with and learning from students, and establishing external networks; and, (3) strategies within the human resource frame are noted by presidents as particularly important to moving a diversity agenda forward.

Keywords College presidents · Diversity agendas · Change · Leadership

For more than three decades, America's colleges and universities have made determined efforts to create diverse campuses in which individuals from different backgrounds (e.g., race, gender, socioeconomic status) are successful—often referring to these efforts as a

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diversity agenda or initiative.¹ Overall, some progress has been made; take for example the issue of racial diversity. From 1991 to 2001, African American enrollment rose by 36.9% and Hispanic enrollment increased by 75.1%. During that same period, Asian American students increased by 53.7% and American Indians 35.3% (Harvey and Anderson 2005). Although most institutions have been effective in attracting and admitting students of color, many have fallen short in fashioning a successful undergraduate experience for these same students, whose numbers are predicted to grow substantially. Graduation rates for African American and Hispanic students trail those of their White and Asian peers. Among students entering 4-year degree programs in 1995–1996, 62.3% of Asian American students, 58% of White students, 36.4% of African American students, and 42% of Hispanic students attained bachelor's degrees (Harvey and Anderson 2005). Therefore, there is much work that still needs to be done. While, diversity is widely and repeatedly acknowledged as an institutional priority, why is something important so slow to advance?

Research demonstrates that leadership, particularly among presidents, is important for moving a diversity agenda forward and make appreciable progress on it (Harvey and Anderson 2005; Hurtado 2005). However, advancing campus diversity is complex and compounded by the demands competing for presidents' attention such as fundraising, developing external partnerships, and being responsive to changing community needs. At the same time, campus diversity is an issue that has high stakes and garners much campus attention, and has the potential to trouble an otherwise successful presidency (See author for a discussion of the politics of diversity and how leaders can address them). Attacks on campus affirmative action efforts bring off-campus politics onto the campus, compounding the difficulty of leading diversity initiatives. What leadership approaches and strategies do presidents use to advance a campus diversity agenda? This is a particularly important question; however, there are no empirical studies that have been conducted on the role of presidents in moving diversity agendas forward.² This is an important gap in our understanding of both campus diversity efforts and presidential leadership.

This study draws on the experiences and insights of current college and university presidents to understand the leadership strategies associated with advancing an institution-wide diversity agenda. The overall study of which this article is a part explored issues such as initiating a diversity agenda as well as reinvigorating an ongoing one, determining what issues to attend to and when, changing institutional culture, and negotiating conflict. Several different articles have been developed from the study, some focus on the effect of institutional type or context on advancing a diversity agenda and another examines the effect of presidential style. A discussion of the general strategies can be found in Authors (2005). The research questions pursued here are: What is the role of the college president

¹ A diversity agenda or initiative as I am defining it and as defined by the presidents is multi-faceted and attempts to integrate diversity into the structure, culture and fabric of the institution—so that it is truly institutionalized (Curry 1992). Diversity initiatives have several broad goals including developing an understanding of diversity; infusing attention to differences by race, sexual orientations, and gender; and creating greater equity and parity in the experience and outcomes of individuals from diverse backgrounds (Hale 2004; Hurtado et al. 1999; Musil et al. 1999; Smith 1989). While I did not impose a definition of diversity, almost all presidents defined it broadly to include race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, class and the government designated protected classes and beyond.

² The American Association of College and Universities has a series of publications about diversity agendas/initiatives (for example see: Bauman et al. 2005; Milem et al. 2005; Musil et al. 1999; Smith and associates 1997). This article complements these publications by providing a detailed examination of presidential leadership. Within these publications the authors describe the importance of committed leadership, but do not provide the type of detail that this study provides on leadership strategies and the role of presidents.

in advancing a diversity agenda? What strategies do presidents identify as important to facilitating a diversity agenda?

In this article, we focus on novel leadership strategies for advancing campus-wide diversity efforts. What those interviewed described was not an action plan of linear strategies nor was it a handful of key clearly articulated strategies. Instead they each offered a complex, multifaceted approach that included some of the conventional strategies in the current literature on leadership and diversity, such as strategic planning or vision setting, but they also described developing a web of support which has not been identified or detailed in earlier research as a key role of leaders. This article will focus on the web of support and how presidents can facilitate the advancement of a diversity initiatives through the development and expansion of such a web.

Conceptual framework

This investigation adopted a multi-lens conceptual framework (Bolman and Deal 1991) to understand the presidential leadership required to advance campus diversity efforts. To support our use of this approach, we review the two key literatures related to this study—advancing campus diversity agendas and presidential leadership.

Advancing campus diversity

The literature on advancing campus diversity is primarily anecdotal (exceptions include Hurtado et al. 1999; Milem et al. 2005), focusing on the experiences of campuses in implementing a diversity agenda. Some key leadership themes emerge, but they tend to be one-dimensional, mostly reflecting Bolman and Deal's (1991) structural framework.³ These strategies include: vision and mission statements, strategic plans, diversity councils, committees and task forces, allocation of resources, and evaluation (Ford 1999; Hale 2004; Smith 1996; Smith and associates 1997; University of Maryland 1998). For instance, Garcia et al. (2001) note that campus leaders tend to take advantage of opportunities to develop institutional mission statements, set institutional agendas, and formulate strategic plans. By attaching diversity efforts to institutional plans and agendas, or changing mission statements to include diversity as a goal, leaders have the ability to publicly share their values and intentions. Processes such as the development of mission statements and strategic plans are useful in promoting diversity since they establish organizational norms and assumptions (Brown 1998; Garcia et al. 2001; Hale 2004; Hurtado et al. 1999; McGovern et al. 2002; Slaughter 1998). Leaders and selected campus constituents participate in drafting what they perceive to be the intentions and direction of their institution and set the tone for the organizational environment (Smith 1989). Aside from serving as an organizational roadmap for leaders, mission statements, strategic plans and institutional

³ This critique relates specifically to how leaders are described in the literature—not the nature of the diversity literature in general. Therefore, diversity literature now emphasizes the importance of changing the climate and culture, but does not relate that specifically to the role of leaders. Some exceptions exist, e.g., Hurtado et al. 1999, but the critique relates to the majority of literature in this area. And even in the exceptions, structural aspects of leadership are still mostly emphasized. Certainly the importance of changing the culture has been emphasized in the diversity literature, but this is often not linked to leadership strategies, which still maintain the structural focus. What we are identifying is a disconnect in the literature.

visions are also critical to sustaining organizational climates (Ford 1999). Nelsen et al. (1994) note that when senior leaders articulate their institutional vision publicly, it assists efforts to institutionalize diversity throughout the organization. Beyond setting the tone, these practices serve to sustain and propel any diversity-related progress that has been made (Kirkpatrick and VanNatta 1999). While these same practices may serve symbolic functions and help to shape human relationships on campus, the literature tends to emphasize how they relate to organizational goals and create priorities for the organization.

The establishment of diversity councils, committees, and task forces is another prevalent method for pursuing diversity that further embodies structural approaches (Davis 2002; Ford 1999; Hale 2004; Hurtado et al. 1999; Yang 1998). By assigning the pursuit of diversity to specific campus groups who are qualified and committed to these efforts, leaders secure the stability of their diversity efforts and goals (Kee and Mahoney 1995). Such committees and task forces are charged with identifying areas where diversity is lacking and monitoring the progress of already instituted initiatives. These groups are particularly important in setting the tone and climate of institutions. Campuses with such committees tend to be more diverse and welcoming of difference because there is a built-in organizational component constantly present to ensure the progress of diversity and address challenges and problems related to diversity when they arise (Davis 2002; Hale 2004).

Lastly, two other commonly identified structural approaches focus on the allocation of resources and evaluation (Ford 1999; Garcia et al. 2001; Hale 2004; Hurtado et al. 1999; Musil et al. 1999; Smith 1989; University of Maryland 1998; Yang 1998). Resource allocation should be tied to the strategic plans and institutional visions. Evaluation also helps advance diversity as it creates a sense of accountability for progress and a structure for ensuring follow through (Burke and Associates 2003; Garcia et al. 2001). Like resource allocation, effective evaluation efforts also are tied to strategic plans and organizational agendas and visions.

The most commonly noted strategy outside the structural frame is a political focus on gaining campus support for such efforts (Davis 2002; Smith 1989). Interventions with little commitment or those that are fraught with irresolvable conflict often fail. Building such commitment happens in many ways including through town hall style meetings and private conversations with trustees and faculty, and the use data to substantiate their claims about diversity (Garcia et al. 2001; Hurtado et al. 1999; Nelsen et al. 1994; Richardson and Skinner 1990; Smith 1996). In many cases, commitment is the result of consensus-building which occurs when leaders engage different campus constituents in an effort to agree upon proposed strategies and the overall need for diversity. For example, Musil et al. (1999) explain consensus-building as an effective way for leaders to cultivate support and agreement for interventions in order to move their agendas forward.

The above strategies culled from the diversity literature tend to be largely grounded in Bolman and Deal's (1991) structural framework and take advantage of or work to alter organizational structures and processes. Practices such as the development of institutional missions and visions and strategic planning, while effective and useful, are part of the administrative portfolio of senior leaders. In some cases students and community members are involved; however, traditionally in these practices their roles are limited, but they are invited to participate based upon their position in the organizational structure. Thus, institutional agendas and strategies for pursuing diversity efforts are often determined by a small group in the upper echelons of the hierarchy, not a wider, more inclusive process involving those who need to implement the strategies. Even if such inclusive processes are used to develop the campus agenda, the strategies for their implementation tend to be

structural, focused on resource allocation, evaluation, and presidential commissions, and ignore other organizational dimensions, such as the experiences of individuals affected, the interactions in the implementation process, and the importance of organizational culture, symbols and meaning making.

Presidential leadership

The literature on presidential leadership, which also informs this study, is deeper and more conceptually diverse than the diversity literature in describing the role of leaders. Similar to the diversity literature there exists numerous studies drawing upon a structural perspective. For example, leaders are described as setting institutional direction, creating the vision (or, in some instances, working with members of the campus to create the vision), and developing and monitoring the change processes through resource allocation and evaluation (see for example, Fischer and Koch 1996; Kerr and Gade 1986). Such studies take as their starting point the administrative prerogative of leaders based upon their position in the organization, mirroring the assumptions and strategies summarized in the above diversity literature.

However, other conceptual approaches promote different understandings. For instance, symbolic (often called cultural and interpretive) theories of leadership suggest the key role of leaders is creating shared meaning and embodying key institutional values through invoking symbols (Birnbaum 1992; Chaffee 1984; Tierney and Rhoads 1992). These are essential academic leadership strategies because the administrative/structural prerogatives of academic leaders are constrained (Birnbaum and Eckel 2005; Cohen and March 1986) as compared to other types of organizations. Presidents should spend time and energy managing meaning, listening and being influenced by others, and balancing conflicting ideas, and interpreting ambiguous situations (Birnbaum 1992).

From a political perspective (Baldrige 1971) academic leaders depend upon negotiated agreements with a variety of organizational actors to get things done because independently each is unable to exert adequate influence. Such negotiation is particularly important in academic organizations because they consist of a dual authority structures that reflex administrative and professional (academic) authority wielded by different sets of individuals (Birnbaum 1988; Mintzberg 1985). This diffused power suggests that presidents thus do not have adequate power simply based upon position to “flex administrative muscle” to get work done (Walker 1979). Instead, they must continually negotiate with constantly-changing coalitions both inside and out of the institution.

Broadening the perspectives brought to leadership

The brief review of these two literatures identifies an important conceptual incongruity between them. The research on presidential leadership acknowledges different conceptual understandings. In contrast, the literature on advancing campus diversity, draws largely upon a single conceptual tradition—the structural frame. The trajectory of presidential leadership research suggests the need for a more expansive understanding of the leadership strategies associated with leading campus-wide diversity efforts, including strategies that focus on relationship-building, meaning making and interpretation, as well as power and influence (Kezar 2001). This study seeks to address this inconsistency and provide a more clear and nuanced picture of the leadership required by presidents to move a diversity

agenda forward. Thus, we adopted the four frames outlined by Bolman and Deal (1991) as a conceptual roadmap to understand presidential leadership essential to advancing campus diversity efforts.

The *structural frame* views organizations as lines of authority and communication with actors holding distinct organizational roles and positions. It focuses on how the institution is organized through goals, mission statement, organizational charts, plans, the relationship among units, and the rules and policies that organizations follow. In addition, it identifies structure as the critical element for organizational operations and functioning, including change processes. Leaders within the structural frame tend to use structural solutions to address leadership challenges. The *human resource frame* focuses on people as central to organizational operations and functioning. Core concepts include interpersonal dynamics, employees' needs and desires, participation, teamwork, training and development, and other organizational processes aimed at inclusion and helping individuals within the organization to self-actualize. Leaders using the human relations plans are likely to see working with people and shaping relationships as critical to successfully enacting leadership. The *political frame* suggests that organizations are largely political arenas in which various interest groups attempt to have their needs met. It focuses on interest group conflict, agenda building, negotiation and bargaining, power dynamics, and competition for scarce resources. Leaders within the political framework see their role as mediating between interest groups, managing conflict, and helping to develop an agenda for key issues they think are important. The *symbolic frame* understands organizations as systems of shared meaning that require interpretation by leaders. Organizations are comprised of core values, beliefs, and assumptions that make up a distinctive culture in which people work. Within the symbolic frame leaders use rituals, ceremonies, and storytelling in order to inspire and create better organizational functioning (for a more detailed description of the four frames see Bolman and Deal 1991).

The use of broader conceptual frames is necessary for two reasons: first, the above review of the two corresponding literatures suggests that the current understanding of advancing campus diversity is limited by its reliance on a predominately structural frame, when the leadership literature suggests otherwise. Second, exploring a complex organizational phenomena through differing perspectives adds important depth and richness that a single perspective cannot (Eckel 2003; Kezar 2001; Van de Ven and Poole 1995). This study tries to inform the literature on diversity by introducing a broader way to conceptualize leadership to advance diversity. Thus, we can anticipate some of the elements of presidential leadership will adhere to a *structural frame*. Examples can be seen in leadership approaches already noted in the diversity literature that concern themselves with strategic plans, the development and use of diversity councils and taskforces, the creation of new offices and positions, the allocation of resources, and the use of evaluation processes and structures. Beyond these acknowledged structural strategies, we anticipate some elements of the *political frame* because multiple stakeholders are affected by efforts to advance diversity and traditions of shared governance create expectations for widespread involvement, particularly among the faculty on academic issues (AAUP 2003; Eckel 2000). We expect to see *symbolic elements* because often the reach of presidents is limited to (or most readily linked to) making meaning (Birnbaum 1992) and diversity efforts may very well call for new traditions and for new meanings associated with familiar rituals and symbols. Finally, campus diversity is at its heart about with human issues, thus, we anticipate some strategies concerned with Bolman and Deal's *human resource frame*. The overall study examined how presidents used various frames in order to move a diversity agenda forward (Author 2005). In this paper, we focus on the human relations strategies

and approaches used by presidents that are not well described in either the diversity or presidential leadership literature. While this article focuses on human resources framework and strategies, other publications from the study address political and symbolic frameworks adding additional depth and complexity to the literature (Authors 2006 and forthcoming).

Methodology

The research team pursued a qualitative approach through “elite interviews” with 27 college presidents (Dexter 1970; Holstein and Gubrium 1995) because it enabled the researchers to obtain information about a phenomenon that had not been pursued in earlier research. Elite interviewing is a specific research methodology that evolved in disciplines such as sociology and political science (Dexter 1970; Holstein and Gubrium 1995). It is based on the assumption that access to elites is often difficult and therefore key people that participate in a process are often not interviewed. It is characterized by the following qualities: researchers conduct extensive analysis of documents and background work before conducting interviews; developing rapport is critical to obtaining information; the interview protocol is based on a combination of background research and literature; the interviewee is allowed more freedom to shape the direction of the interview because they are chosen for their expertise on in the issues; and the interview sample selection is particularly important for ensuring the phenomenon of interest is elucidated. As a result, the methodology section focuses on sampling strategy, background research for the interviews and strategy around access and rapport (Merton et al. 1990).

Sample

Selection of interviewees is a particularly important part of the elite interviewing method as the trustworthiness of the results is based on identifying individuals with significant experience and expertise (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). The choice of interviewees was driven by three primary criteria related to expertise: (1) presidents who had significant presidential experience as defined above and made significant progress advancing a diversity agenda (as identified by national experts on diversity in higher education); (2) presidents who represented different institutional types or sectors in a variety of settings (rural, urban and suburban); and, (3) presidents who had a reputation for being reflective about their leadership strategies. To develop an initial list of participants, we asked organizations that are familiar with issues of diversity (such as the American Council on Education’s Center for Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Equity and Office of Women in Higher Education) to nominate individuals based on these criteria as well as presidents to provide names of peers they respected on diversity-related issues.

The final list of potential participants included individuals from every region of the country and all higher education sectors. Many had held presidencies in different geographic regions and some at different types of institutions. The final group of interviewees included those who led public and independent; 2- and 4-year; rural, urban and suburban; and majority-serving as well as historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions and Tribal Colleges. Age, gender, race/ethnicity and other criteria were not purposefully sampled, but an effort was made to ensure that a diverse set of individuals was included. It should be noted that the sample had close to 50% presidents of color. In

addition, over one-third of the presidents were women, both the number of women and presidents of color are in greater proportion to presidential demographics (Corrigan 2003).

Data collection

The primary method of data collection was phone interviews because the individuals were geographically dispersed and extremely busy making visits difficult. Ensuring rapport was extremely important because we wanted to create an environment in which individuals would share information about ways they have been successful in advancing a diversity agenda and strategies that failed, both of which might challenge traditional opinions (Holstein and Gubrium 1995; Merriam 1998; Seidman 1991). Elites have limited time for interviews; therefore it was critical to provide information and data to their staff up front so they could be briefed on the study and questions. Background information was gathered on the individuals interviewed from websites, documents requested from campuses, press releases, and through personal contacts. The interviewers attempted to establish an immediate connection with each interviewee, using the information gathered from websites and staff in order to garner their trust and interest in the study as quickly as possible before beginning the formal interview process. Interviews averaged an hour in length and were tape-recorded and extensive notes taken as well. The interviews were transcribed verbatim.

An interview protocol was developed from the literature on diversity and presidential leadership. Two researchers conducted the interviews using a common protocol, but the interviews would vary as elites were allowed to move the conversation in directions they felt important. The interview protocol focused on examining the main strategies and activities that presidents believed helped to advance the diversity agenda, the specific role of the presidents in advancing diversity on campus, the leadership style or approach they used, lessons they have learned about leadership in advancing institutional diversity, how they handled situations of conflict and controversy, how the campus context (region, student body, institutional phase, institutional demographic, institutional type, funding, mission) shaped the advancement of the diversity agenda and politics they faced. In order to contextualize the interviews, we conducted analyses of institutional web sites to identify information related to campus diversity agendas (campus reports or resources discussed) and obtained documents from the institutions.

Analysis

The interview data and documents were analyzed using Boyatzis' (1998) thematic analysis, which involves both deductive and inductive coding. The deductive codes were developed from the literature on campus-wide diversity initiatives and presidential leadership. Examples of deductive codes include mission, vision, strategic planning and these were reviewed in the literature section of the paper. Inductive codes include the strategies that emerged that had not been identified in previous literature such as working closely with students, partnering with student affairs professionals, and obtaining board support. Four different individuals coded the data and compared the strategies identified. When discrepancies emerged (this happened on only two codes) such as the relative importance of board support we discussed the data, compared evidence that we identified, and negotiated a consensus. Criteria used to identify themes/subcategories for improving performance were: (1) number of different individuals who brought up the code/theme; and, (2) the

amount of time they discussed the concept and level of significance they placed on a code/theme.

Trustworthiness and limitations

Within elite interviewing, some of the primary methods for trustworthiness include amount of background research, careful sampling procedures, obtaining access to elites and building rapport all of which were critical components of the study design. In addition to these techniques, member checks were conducted by sending summaries of key points, preliminary analysis, and possible quotations from the transcripts to each president. We provided them the opportunity to ensure that our interpretations matched what they had intended and said in interviews. We additionally ensured trustworthiness through three different researchers reviewing the interview transcripts and comparing the strategies that they identified emerging and the level of importance for each strategy. Furthermore, we compared interviews to documents collected from the organization.

In terms of limitations, the data focused on the perceptions of college presidents about what strategies appear to be important to advancing a diversity agenda and helping diverse students succeed on their campuses. However, we do not know the extent to which these perceptions were shared with other key campus stakeholders and perceptions of complex organizational phenomena may vary within the same organization (Pettigrew 1995; Starbuck and Milliken 1988). The focus of the study was on gaining insight into a particular set of influential individuals who, although widely acknowledged as essential to advancing meaningful change on campus, have not been examined empirically. Because the actions of leaders are difficult to link with organizational outcomes in higher education (Birnbaum 1988), we speculate that the data obtained from diverse individuals leading different types of institutions would yield adequate confirming and disconfirming data to surface important and common perceptions. We chose to place significant faith in the self-obtained wisdom of college presidents. What we do offer are words of wisdom through experienced individuals who have worked hard for many years to create a successful environment for students of color. Finally because the focus was on presidential leadership not organizations and their change, we elected not to conduct case studies of each campus to explore the themes presidents described in more detail. Doing so would have added important depth and richness to this study, but traveling to approximately 30 institutions was prohibitive.

Results

There were three main findings that are introduced briefly in this section and then detailed further below in a composite example:⁴ (1) strategies are deployed in a non-linear way best represented through a web metaphor, (2) six sets of actors that serve as key nodes on the web and specific strategies were crucial to enhancing and deepening the web-developing

⁴ Although this paper focuses on identifying promising strategies for advancing a diversity agenda, the larger study examined resistance to diversity efforts and ways to negotiate the politics of diversity. Therefore, the researchers acknowledge that advancing diversity needs to be examined in complex ways focused on more than promising practices. However, the importance of the human resources strategies, which are missing from the literature, deserves special focus within a paper.

an internal network, hiring, mentoring, partnering with faculty on the curriculum, supporting student affairs staff, working directly with and learning from students, and establishing external networks; and, (3) strategies within the human resource frame are noted by presidents as particularly important to moving a diversity agenda forward.

First, rather than pursue a linear list of leadership strategies, our data suggest that presidents pursue strategies which are highly interrelated and invoke the image of a spider web (See Helgesen 1990 or Tierney 1988 for similar web images that have been found among leaders). This web is comprised of threads and nodes that connect various individuals and activities that reinforce each other to construct a powerful necessary network of activities and people. The ability of the web to work depends upon the interconnectedness of its various elements. Moreover, presidential strategies focused on horizontal leadership and collaboration, refuting conceptualizations of the hierarchical role of the leader (Fisher 1984). While the findings suggest that presidents believe collaboration is critical and that hierarchy can be problematic, the data also suggest the importance of presidents as central facilitators helping to spin the supportive web. Each strand of the president's web is strengthened through relationships and empowerment of others. This finding about the web and the critical role of people throughout campus is particularly important given that the study focused on presidents' role in advancing a diversity agenda. There were not questions that asked them to speak about other individuals on campus, yet they described the role of other leaders throughout the campus and the way they worked with these individuals, as well as the way they shared power with these other key groups and delegated authority to the best of their ability. Therefore, even though college presidents have primary authority and accountability for issues on campus, they are very cognizant of the importance of working with and empowering others. While research from a feminist perspective predominantly on women leaders has previously identified the notion of the web with leadership, this has not been common within higher education or presidential leadership (Kezar et al. 2006).

Second, our findings suggest six important sets of actors, which serve as nodes in the web: faculty, administrators, staff—particularly student affairs educators, students, boards, and various external organizations. Each of these groups plays numerous important roles and has varying levels of involvement in the key strategies that interact to create our proposed web. The second element of the web—the strands—consists of those human resources strategies presidents pursue, in concert with strategies typically described in the leadership/diversity literature such as strategic planning or evaluation. They are quite different from those identified in the literature and fall outside the structural framework and focus mostly on human resource strategies. These distinctive strategies that emerged include:

- Presidential involvement in hiring and supporting the “right people,” which includes being personally involved in hiring faculty of color;
- Mentoring faculty of color and setting up an intergenerational mentoring network;
- Creating partnerships with faculty to transform the teaching and learning environment;
- Supporting student affairs staff and creating safe havens;
- Interacting and learning from students;
- Creating external networks and obtaining board support.

A common element among these strategies is their human resource frame focus.

Our research confirmed much of what we found in the diversity and leadership literatures, that leaders invoke structural strategies to advance campus diversity. For example, they provided a vision, allocated resources, created a strategic plan or agenda for diversity,

developed structures to provoke dialogues and conversations, created new administrative positions, and established presidential level task forces (Kesar and Eckel 2005). However, other themes emerged from the interviews that extend current knowledge beyond the structural frame, particularly the human resource frame. In addition, the human resource frame may diffuse the political frame. For example, presidents believed that by working closely with people in an inclusive way and actively listening to various stakeholders, the presidents ended up mitigating potentially destructive political infighting, eliminating the need to invoke strong political strategies. While all four frames are likely important, presidents believe that the human resource frame was the most successful in helping them move forward on an institution-wide diversity agenda.

Institutional context was specifically examined in another paper from the project which describes how campuses that are early in their diversity agenda vs. those that are late have different work to accomplish. In addition, presidents face different sets of politics on different campuses. However, these human resources strategies transcended specific context and it is for that reason that we believe it is important to present these findings. Rather than ignore context, the paper specifically examined context and found that was not particularly important when it came to the human relations strategies; these strategies are important at various institutional types and at campuses at different phases in advancing their diversity agenda. Therefore, we found the composite to be an appropriate way to present the data, not a decontextualized way of presenting it.

Rather than explore each thread and node independently, we present our findings in a way consistent with the web metaphor and depict how they work in unison to advance campus-wide diversity. The findings are presented through a single composite president, President Araneae,⁵ in which we assign direct quotations from various presidents participating in this study. Presenting the findings as such illuminates the integrated nature of the key strategies for promoting the achievement of students from diverse backgrounds. The composite includes frequently used strategies that presidents felt were particularly effective.

No thread or node was more important than another and each reinforced additional elements; the web depends on each component. For instance, without talking directly to students, President Araneae would have made presuppositions about the challenges they face. Instead, she directly heard their needs in students' own words. She also used data from administrators about the challenges students face. Likewise, speaking with faculty of color was important to knowing how President Araneae could better support them in their roles and transform the curricula to make it more responsive to various students from diverse backgrounds. Garnering support from the board ensured that students from diverse backgrounds had the proper resources to persist, and her involvement in the community offered her additional threads to build the web for students of color. This non-structural, web-like set of elements was highly dependent upon personal relationships and human interaction as they involved various persons from divergent vantage points who each had unique knowledge and skills to build and support the web.

A web in practice: the case of President Araneae

A diversity agenda is unlikely to gain traction and students from diverse backgrounds are unlikely to be successful unless there are certain allies or individuals to support them

⁵ The term Araneae describes a family of spiders, such as those found in North America. Found at Spiders of North America <http://www.kaston.transy.edu/spiderlist/>

across various parts of the campus. We liken this structure to a web of support or network. To have a very supportive student affairs division, but faculty that are not supportive of students from diverse backgrounds will not be effective. As President Araneae noted: “we have to see that we are working together on this, helping students from diverse backgrounds is not the work of the student affairs division or the academic affairs division or the institutional research office or the Board of Trustees for that matter. We each play a different role and we need to be working together to support students from diverse backgrounds.” Presidents create this web by using a variety of strategies that are described next.

Identifying the network

Leaders need to make sure that multiple groups are part of a web of support and they can begin this effort by identifying individuals who are already committed to the success of students from diverse backgrounds. President Araneae identified other key people on campus so they can be working together and supporting each others’ work. This type of widespread understanding illustrates the importance of creating a far reaching web. The result is a campus-wide commitment to ensure the success of students from diverse background. President Araneae describes the process of identifying the network:

Early on a president should do their homework and learn which people are committed to making your college community more diverse. Historically, they have a history of supporting that type of agenda and that’s where you need to start. These will be the people who can serve as advisors to clubs, who serve on your diversity committees, who come to you and try to help you understand the importance of diversity and multiculturalism—those individuals who actually step out front and will lead the campus forward if supported. I’m not just talking about people of color, but having individuals from all backgrounds. And then you need to provide them with rewards, celebrate their successes, and provide PR [public relations] for their efforts. From my vantage point, that’s how we’ve been able to identify some folks here, support them, and create a collective change.

It is important to note the ways in which President Araneae identified key individuals, particularly those who were not people of color. The web involved numerous persons across various racial/ethnic backgrounds. In some instances these people were part of formal offices charged to support students of color. Although multicultural offices are important, President Araneae did not place the onus solely on these offices for meeting the needs of students from diverse backgrounds; rather, she purposefully sought the help of other persons within and outside of campus to build the web. This network has been the necessary process through which students from diverse backgrounds achieved desired outcomes.

Extending the web through hiring

After President Araneae has identified the network, she focuses on hiring people in key positions to add energy to the web and fill important missing threads. President Araneae made it a point to hire multiple individuals who were committed to the agenda of creating a successful environment for students from diverse backgrounds to flourish:

Another part of leadership is making sure the right people are in the room. And so hiring staff who deeply care about this is also perhaps as important or more important than stating a vision because—You can't be everywhere. And we interview for those people. We say this is who we are as an institution. We explicitly talk about diversity. One of the questions I say is, what is your experience with a diverse student body and how might you approach this? And so we really consciously look for that.

Making an understanding of students from diverse background part of the interview process and hiring criteria was extremely important to continuing to develop a web of support and increasing the number of allies and advocates. She describes the importance of hiring people in key administrative positions that understand diversity and also represents the diversity of the campus is driving for as well as encouraging other units to diversify their hiring processes. She also notes how these influential hires can help change the culture of the campus and make the web of support more connected.

I think naming people to important positions, men and women and of all cultures, speaks loudly. But if you hire the right provost, you hire the right dean, you do not have to mess around with hiring of the faculty because the dean is of like mind, and they're going to do that. So I have paid very close attention to key hiring or the right VP for student activities, a Hispanic female, who got it.

Not only must the president hire key individuals, but she needs to prioritize hiring faculty of color as part of her agenda. It is no revelation to note that the numbers of faculty from diverse backgrounds, particularly faculty of color, on most campuses are insufficient and data (Hale 2004; Smith 1996) suggest their importance to the success of students from diverse backgrounds. Recognizing the importance of a diverse faculty, President Araneae made their hiring and support a priority, and she did so by engaging various stakeholders and pursuing multiple strategies. To this end she continually asked deans about their efforts to recruit and hire faculty of color and requested data to mark progress and hold units accountable. For instance, she said:

One way that I created public accountability was that I asked the deans individually how their plans for hiring minority faculty were going. Every dean knew that when they went to that meeting, they were going to have to, in front of their colleagues, explain what it was that they were doing, how many people they were interviewing, how many candidates they had identified, when the interviews were going to be starting, what the quality of the candidates were. That notion that everybody was going to be called to account, everybody was going to be held responsible and in front of their peers, they were going have to explain what it was that they were doing to contribute towards this institutional goal. Peer pressure is a lot more effective than presidential pressure.

This “peer pressure” the president was able to create among her deans helped provide the necessary attention to increasing the presence of faculty of color on campus and was crucial to ultimately aiding in the success of students of color.

In response to the common defense offered by academic departments conducting faculty searches that the qualified applicant pool is not diverse, President Araneae challenged departments to think more broadly about what makes potential applicants qualified. She became personally involved in some searches. She recruited other people the faculty would respect to help broaden their thinking. At other times she had to take a firm, public stance.

She said: “Members of the campus now know that the diversity of the pool has to be presented to me. I will not accept an all White pool. You have to change people’s ideas about what is acceptable.” The web is well on its way to being built with a cadre of allies being identified and new faculty and staff hired, but the web also needs on-going support and development which is why the president is involved in mentoring and supporting mentoring efforts.

Solidifying the network through mentoring

A common problem for many faculty and staff of color is that their service activities can overcome other priorities of teaching and research necessary for promotion and tenure. Noticing this high demand placed on faculty of color, President Araneae forged a different expectation among such faculty:

I realized I needed to make it okay for faculty of color to say no to committee service and responsibility because we do not have [a] critical mass; there were too many demands on them and they were leaving. I am working to hire more, but in the interim, I have to change the climate so that they feel comfortable saying no. Part of this is mentoring, and I make sure that I do it or a member of my cabinet works closely with the faculty of color.

President Araneae’s actions strengthened the web by enabling faculty of color to succeed on campus in order to augment their presence.

In addition to supporting faculty and staff of color, the president also made sure to establish intergenerational mentoring among the allies and advocates on campus. Being an advocate for diversity can be draining for many individuals because they are not supported by many of their colleagues on campus. In particular, many of the advocates of diversity tend to be early in their career and having more senior colleagues who mentor them, helping provide guidance about campus politics and sharing strategies for maintaining resiliency in the face of adversity was extremely important to this younger generation. President Araneae describes this mentoring network:

You have to make sure that there are some key administrators, faculty and staff who provide mentoring for others on campus, who can provide inspiration and direction, and who also have the patience and wisdom to help younger colleagues who often get frustrated by how long it takes to change the campus. Without these people you can get a lot of turnover and burnout.

Once the web is in place and supported, the presidents began to look for specific partnerships that could enhance and deepen support for students—particularly partnering with faculty, student affairs staff, and students.

Partnering with faculty on the curriculum to strengthen the web

One of the first areas that presidents focused on in deepening the web of support was partnering with faculty on the curriculum. President Araneae took an unexpected move for a president focusing on the curricula and teaching and learning environment (traditionally the domain of the faculty) to make it more reflective of the interests and needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Presidents took a variety of approaches to partnering with faculty on transforming the teaching and learning environment. For example, some presidents established a commission to examine the curriculum and the way it met the needs of

diverse learners; others started a series of dialogues or retreats to discuss creating a multicultural teaching and learning environment. Some presidents had very specific visions of a multicultural teaching and learning environment that they tried to communicate to various stakeholders on campus. President Aranae describes her approach to partnering with faculty and administrators to transform the curriculum:

I established a curriculum committee at the presidential level to examine courses and I made sure to include key faculty and stakeholders from across campus. Faculty need to demonstrate respect for all cultures in the way course material is presented—I made that expectation known. I know that we have a different structure than most campuses, but I imagine presidents of other institutions could adopt some variation of this approach. But, the president has to be involved in the curriculum and talking to faculty about teaching and learning for diverse students—it is just too important, it is the core of the institution.

Curricular involvement is one mechanism that has significantly transformed the campus climate and has made it more reflective of the needs of students from diverse backgrounds, and hence, more welcoming and supportive of their success. President Aranae recognizes that working with faculty to transform the curriculum must truly be a partnership and that faculty voice and expertise is absolutely essential for creating an inclusive environment for diverse students: “unless a president creates a true partnership with the faculty around curricular issues and commitment to transforming the teaching and learning environment, then campus will not truly succeed in advancing a diversity agenda.”

Reinforcing the web with student affairs staff

In addition, President Aranae worked with student affairs educators to assess the campus climate and evaluate the need for spaces on campus where students from diverse backgrounds can congregate to feel comfortable, candidly air their frustrations, and discuss necessary interventions for making their experiences more meaningful on campus. President Aranae recognized that student affairs staff had valuable insight through their training, experience, and background to help develop a campus that is supportive of diverse students. It is through student affairs staff that President Aranae became aware that: “one of the best ways a campus can support students from diverse backgrounds is to ensure that there is a safe space for students. Unless they have a space to get together, affiliate, and develop relationships and support, they just will not make it.” This knowledge about students was critical to transforming the campus environment to meet students’ personal and academic needs. Through interaction with student affairs staff, the president developed a multicultural center, strengthened the student groups on campus, created new student groups on campus to meet unmet needs, increased support for the counseling center, and provided specific programming for students from diverse backgrounds. From her numerous, sustained conversations with student affairs educators, President Aranae came to understand better the experiences of students from diverse backgrounds which helped in other endeavors such as partnering with faculty on the curriculum, working with admissions on financial aid, and other key aspects in the web of support. President Aranae provided advice for other presidents: “When you came to a campus, look to see how active their student groups are, and this gives you a sense of the amount of support students from diverse backgrounds feel on that campus.” This subtle, but potent observation significantly impacted the experiences of students at the university and contributed to a better understanding of their unique challenges and needs. President Aranae had learned the

importance of trying to understand what support and safe havens exists for students from diverse backgrounds and using this knowledge to strengthen environment.

Enhancing the web by including students

Given the contemporary demands of the job, presidents spend much of their time on external matters. This means that presidents are often unavailable on campus. However, President Araneae made a commitment to spending important but scarce on-campus time with students of color. “I learned to support students of color,” President Araneae asserted, “by spending time with them.” This enabled her to more purposefully devote energy and resources to the issues with which students faced, rather than presupposing she already knew the issues and concerns. Students of color also provided President Araneae with extra motivation to keep pressing on diversity issues, even when she became tired: “Over the years, your energy can really lag, and it is the student voices that pick you up and give you the energy to go on.” Although data is important to creating interventions for diverse students, President Araneae recognized that data is no substitute for personal interactions with students. She said:

I think we’ve learned that trying to develop solutions related to the diversity agenda without input from students just doesn’t work. We thought we had a handle on why we had fewer women students on campus. But until we started meeting regularly with a group of women students, we realize that we didn’t understand the pressures that they felt from members of the community to stay at home and care for family rather than become educated. We also realized that we needed to work with the community to help these women be successful. But this would not have come out on a survey, in fact we didn’t figure it out from the climate studies we have done, and other efforts we have had to understand students. Obtaining student voice means talking to the students not just administering surveys. This lesson is often hard for people to learn because it means more personal time but there really is no substitute.

By role modeling a commitment to interacting and learning from student, President Araneae often encouraged other faculty, staff, and administrators on campus to do work more directly with students to help create a more inclusive environment.

Extending the web through external networks

Administrators, faculty, student affairs educators, and students were not the only key actors essential to the web; President Araneae established relationships with individuals in the community as well. She realized that students are connected in many ways with the community and therefore, it was important to understand the complexities of student experiences and leverage valuable off-campus resources. She said:

We have students from well over 169 different countries and we realized that if we didn’t make connections with the community we would never serve them well. So we made liaisons with community-based organizations. So if you are Armenian and there is an issue of family relations or counseling, we can connect students with community organizations to help.

President Araneae also forged partnerships with local school districts in order to gauge students’ needs and preparedness for college. She noted:

Right now, we have 800 students from our school system each and every day who are engaged in some type of enrichment program or high school experience or technical preparation [at our campus]. In addition to getting out into the schools, we try to bring families onto campus. A lot of our plays focus on multicultural themes and a lot of our music reflects the rich diversity that is here in the city. We have a jazz, a gospel, and a Chilean ensemble. All of these efforts help to create access, and make sure more families are familiar with higher education.

One of the essential off-campus relationships was with the board. President Aranae worked especially hard to garner their support and expand the web.

I had the Board of Trustees pass a resolution in support of diversity as an institutional imperative. As the board saw recruitment programs, financial aid initiatives, and retention programs being put forward, they knew that it was connected to that resolution we had passed on diversity. I've been fortunate that my board has embraced our emphasis on diversity as a good for the campus community and they're very supportive and track that stuff. They will ask me about the continuation rates if I don't bring it up. They have bought into diversity as a value in a significant way, and I know it has helped us in advancing our agenda as people on campus see what a significant priority it is for the board, they cannot ignore this initiative.

Her involvement of the board helped to leverage other key strategies, particularly resources in support of diversity efforts. But it also instilled important messages that diversity was an essential campus strategic priority and the type of issue that boards should be addressing.

Integrating other strategies into the web and identifying the interaction of frames

While the results have highlighted some of the strategies that are not described as commonly in the diversity or presidential leadership literature, presidents did describe strategic planning, budget allocation, and using data as well (more common strategies listed in the literature). Presidents' comments demonstrate how they integrate structural or symbolic strategies into the web and used the existing nodes of support to enhance these other strategies. As already noted, obtaining board support helped begin the process of obtaining necessary budget allocation and strategic planning. President Aranae also described enlisting support from administrators to build the web by knowing what their peer institutions do to create more responsive environments for students from diverse backgrounds. This resulted in the development of benchmarking metrics (a common structural strategy) for recruiting and retaining both students and faculty of color. She said:

Benchmarking teams are in place this year to create a list of best practices or key indicators of success. So they're charged with going out and finding models that are being implemented by colleges and universities that we can measure our success against. So at the conclusion of the first iteration of the strategic plan, we really have those key indicators that will help us understand how far we've really come.

The benchmarking teams were created as part of the web and then are also use to develop metrics for the strategic plan. In addition, the web was instrumental in helping President Aranae know when to use various structural strategies and in shaping those strategies. In the process of helping to identify the network on campus, President Aranae realized that several individuals held strong and compelling visions for a multicultural campus. By talking to these individuals, she was better able to develop a vision for the campus as well

as recognize the need for a visioning process for the campus to make this perspective more broadly shared.

In addition to integrating strategies from multiple approaches (structural, political, symbolic) into the web, presidents were aware of the way that human resource strategies helped diffuse politics. President Aranae highlights the way that working with different constituents had helped shift the political landscape on campus:

I have realized that I tended to approach things from a political perspective and in the process created more politics on campus. I was really trying to diffuse politics, but instead I proliferated them. I began to recognize that if I build trust and worked with people I was addressing politics and that taking a decidedly political strategy wasn't needed.

She also mention the ways the web was instrumental in overcoming resistance to hiring faculty of color or changing the curriculum:

I was having no luck getting the various schools and colleges to meet their goals— hiring faculty of color and changing the curriculum. In fact, I began to hear stories about resistance emerging. So things were going from bad to worse. That's when I decided I needed to bring in leaders from business and industry and we have been partnering with. When engineering companies tell the school of engineering that their faculty is too white, that there graduates are not diverse enough, and that their curriculum is outdated that really makes a difference. After that, things started to change and the resistance subsided.

Therefore, using human resource strategies not only built a web of support but also served to combat resistance and challenges to supporting students from diverse backgrounds.

Discussion and implications

Most institutions have long struggled with adequately ensuring success for students from diverse backgrounds. These findings provide important perspectives on how presidents can effectively advance a campus-wide effort beyond the traditional and expected structural strategies typically espoused, such as examining the institutional mission, articulating a vision, leveraging the strategic plan, establishing presidential commissions, creating institutional dialogues, and developing resource allocation strategies and evaluation processes that are tied to strategic objectives.

While these are important, we use this research to highlight other aspects of leadership not described in the literature in implementing diversity initiatives through the metaphor of an interconnected web of activity and which draw strongly upon Bolman and Deal's human resource frame. Leaders successful at advancing campus diversity saw themselves at the center of a network of builders rather than in a hierarchical position (hierarchy is reinforced in the structural framework). It is important to summarize some key aspects and advantages of building such a network. First, the network focused on and involved many people. The web is person-dependent and progress is impeded when leaders do not understand and appreciate the human dimensions of such work. Second, the web helped to capture key knowledge from all the various stakeholders that is needed to ensure students' success. Each member of the campus as well as people off-campus had information that if not gleaned and shared would affect the campus efforts. Third, creating networks of people that support the initiative serves as an important strategy to build support and construct

coalitions among various stakeholders who might otherwise oppose such priorities and efforts.

This research suggests expanding the strategies used by presidents and others from structural approaches to incorporating a human resource oriented strategies such as involvement in the hiring of faculty of color, mentoring faculty of color, hiring and supporting the right people, creating external networks, obtaining board support, supporting student affairs educators, interacting and working with students, and partnering with faculty on curricular transformation. This data suggest specific advice for leaders who wish to broaden the strategies used to help advance a diversity agenda and reconceptualize how they approach this task. Creating a web of support from the board to the community to various internal stakeholders helps advance a key institutional objective, and assists people in seeing themselves as having a common agenda. While this paper highlights human resources strategies, political and symbolic strategies need to be better integrated into presidential leadership as well (this is emphasized in other papers on this project).

While the human resources focus may diffuse politics, it certainly did not alleviate all conflicts, and virtually every president described having to negotiate disgruntled alumni, certain community groups, and a set of internal stakeholders that felt diversity was receiving more attention than it should, or inversely, receiving too large a share of attention and resources.⁶ However, according to the presidents the human resource strategies mitigated the necessity of the political frame for many presidents. This is not to say that they did not use political strategies at all, but these strategies were not as common as others because of the impact of the human resource tactics. For example, having built a strong network among the board, external groups, faculty, students, and staff, the president felt they were not required to spend time negotiating an agenda or persuading people, as predicted within a political framework. Certainly, building a network can be seen as a political strategy. Yet, these presidents described engaging people from a human resource perspective; they were listening, including, supporting, and motivating. All of these activities appear to decrease the possibility for people to feel excluded and marginalized which often leads to politics emerging in change processes. In addition, supporting and hiring the right people may create a strong base of advocates that again diffused politics that might be anticipated to emerge. Keeping close to students and listening firsthand to their experience helped the presidents build strong relationships and understand any political issues that might arise before they became significant.

Our findings about the leadership strategies for advancing a diversity agenda campus-wide concur with the theory suggested by Bolman and Deal (1991) that leaders need to adopt a complex and varied approach. As they describe, most leadership situations call for the use of multiple strategies including structural, human resource, symbolic, and political. As noted previously, much of the diversity literature and practice has emphasized structural approaches, and this research stresses the need for adding more varied and complex approaches that integrates a human resources frame. Moreover, the data suggest that presidents need to approach their strategies in an integrated and organic way through the use of a web as described here. Although presidents use strategic planning, consensus-building, evaluation, and resource allocation, they do so through an interconnected as compared to step-wise fashion. The anticipated structural strategies appeared in the web and were used opportunistically. For example, resources were important to provide incentives in the

⁶ In a separate paper we describe the way presidents navigate and negotiate political situations and novel approaches to using symbolic strategies. There is simply not space to do justice to these concepts within this paper.

beginning of campus efforts, but then later became important to foster student retention and reward units for meeting key goals. Successful leaders shifted among strategies as they interacted with different people in different ways, and gained more insight and information.

The data in this study counter another widespread belief that presidents are externally focused. These college presidents found ways to spend time on ongoing campus issues. They were present and engaged. For example, most of these presidents spoke about playing a very active role in hiring faculty of color. They additionally spent considerable time hiring and building the right administrative and staff teams. Many presidents mentioned that they personally mentored faculty of color on their campuses. These presidents were actively involved in curriculum transformation efforts at their campus. Each of them was deeply familiar with their student affairs staff. Perhaps most surprising is the direct involvement of presidents with students. Every president mentioned the pivotal role of their relationship with students as a way for them to help support students of color by checking their assumptions, reminding them of their passion, and asking for input in guiding their work. While observers would expect presidents to be involved in garnering board support or in building external networks, other efforts such as their role in faculty hiring or curriculum are important to highlight so that presidents and other campus champions realize other key efforts with which to be involved. This finding begs the question of whether presidents who are more focused heavily on external relations can successfully implement a diversity initiative? How can presidents whose responsibilities take them off-campus reconcile important on-campus responsibilities? Can they effectively delegate this work to a provost or others? In the experiences of those interviewed, the president is instrumental in transformational efforts that change institutional culture. Further research is needed to better understand these types of questions as many presidents experience competing demands and pressures to focus more on the external environment. However, it seems intuitive that the lessons about building a web might also be used by a provost or another key leader (or set of leaders) who is provided authority and responsibility for moving a diversity agenda forward.

Because presidents play such a central role in helping to create and maintain the web, this may make the web particularly fragile for ongoing institutional transformation. Presidents often do not have long tenures on campuses and there is no assurance that a new president will take the same perspective to sustaining the web. This finding suggests questions for future research: Is the web too dependent on the president for creation and support? In what ways can presidents ensure that their critical role in spinning the web is maintained if they transition or have to focus on another priority? Future research is also needed to better understand the perspectives of individuals throughout a campus: for example, what role can grassroots leaders play in creating and sustaining a web of support for students. How do grassroots leaders perceive the role of the president in supporting diverse students? In addition, we need the perspective of grassroots leaders and the lived experience of members of campus as they experience the unfolding of a diversity agenda.

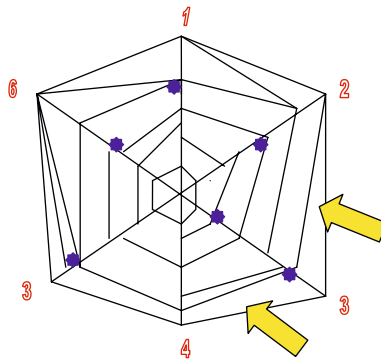
Conclusion

This paper is intended to advance scholarship on campus diversity and presidential leadership. It is also intended to help individuals who care deeply about ensuring the success of students of color in identifying a complex and nuanced way to approach this perennial

issue. The paper suggests a leadership approach that reflects the behavioral complexity necessary to face challenging leadership tasks. By highlighting the importance of the human resource frame and related strategies, indicating the role of human relations strategies for diffusing the necessity of political strategies, and revealing the importance of building a web of support and non-linear strategies, we believe leaders can more effectively engage the challenge creating campuses that supports students from all backgrounds.

Appendix

Web of leadership



1–6 represent the central threads that make up and sustain the web of leadership. Specifically they represent key actions and practices within organizations.

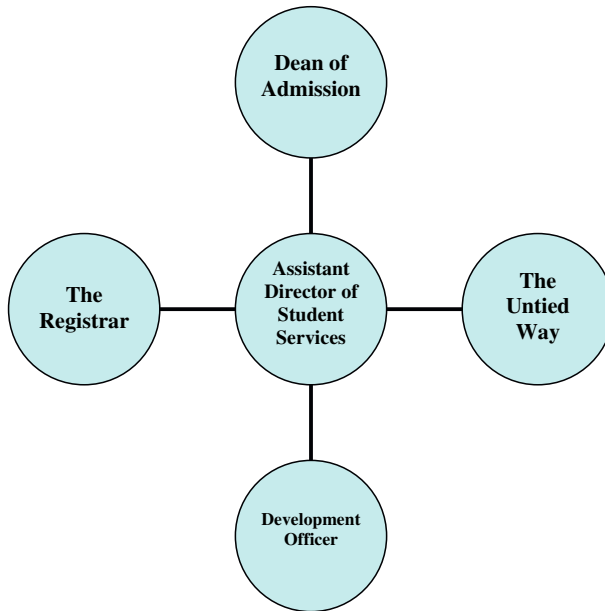
For example:

1. Hiring the right people.
2. Setting up mentoring networks.
3. Creating partnerships with faculty to transform the teaching environment.
4. Supporting student affairs practitioners and creating safe spaces.
5. Interacting with and learning from students.
6. Creating external networks and support.

The blue stars represent “nodes” or institutional actors positioned within the organizational web. These represent faculty, administrators, and staff, including: student affairs educators, students, governing boards, and external organizations.

The yellow arrows indicate strands that link the central threads and nodes and are produced as the result of certain strategies that build the illustrated web. Each of these strands is the result of a human centered relationship building strategy pursued by a leader or leaders. In this study these include: supporting and hiring the “right people,” being involved in the hiring of faculty of color, mentoring faculty of color and setting up multigenerational mentoring, creating partnerships to change the teaching environment, supporting student affairs staff and creating safe havens, interacting with and learning from students, creating external networks and obtaining board support.

A node in the leadership web



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