

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF A UNIVERSITY CONSOLIDATION: AN INITIAL EVALUATION OF THE AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP PIPELINE PROGRAM

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University mergers and consolidations are on the rise, and the trend is likely to continue in the near term future. Such a trend is significant, as a university consolidations are inherently challenging and require strong and well-developed leadership to be successful. In the current paper, a low-cost leadership development program (the Authentic Leadership Pipeline program) that was initiated and developed to meet the leadership needs of Augusta University, the institutional result of the consolidation of Georgia Health Sciences University and Augusta State University is described. In addition, an initial pilot evaluation of the program that examined reactions and subjective perceptions of learning and behavior change is described. The findings were promising and suggest a high level of satisfaction, significant learning, and new behavior. Implications, applications, and future directions are discussed.

Introduction

A recent report by Moody's Investors Services (2015) indicated that closure and merger rates for small, 4-year public and private universities and colleges (i.e., operating budgets of \$100-\$200 million) are likely to

rise in the near term. For example, by the year 2017, closure rates are predicted to triple, while merger rates are predicted to double. While the decision to close or merge an institution of higher education is often difficult, the reasons to do so are complex, varied,

and usually associated with a host of factors such as increased competition, enrollment decline, lost market share, availability of academic resources, politics, loss of public or private funding, and challenges around revenue growth (Mortensen, 2012; Wieder, 2013).

The deleterious economic, employment, community, and educational impact of a university or college closure is well documented (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson, & Leachman, 2013). However, when institutions of higher education merge or consolidate, leaders and administrators are often presented with a different situation; the already multifaceted challenge of leading a single university or college (Azziz, 2016a) is significantly intensified by the additional burden of a transformational blending of resources, processes, personnel, and charters (Ribando & Evans, 2015). As Azziz (2016b) suggested, successfully completing such a task is predicated on six critical and essential elements: a compelling unifying vision, the right sense of urgency, a committed and understanding governing body, a robust project management system, sufficient dedicated resources, and the right leadership on the ground.

While all six of the foregoing elements are indeed critical and essential to a successful consolidation or merger, the focus of the current paper is on the last of these elements, *the right leadership on the ground*. Specifically, the purpose is to describe a leadership development program—along with pilot data on its effectiveness—that was initiated and developed to meet the leadership needs of Augusta University, the institutional result of the consolidation of Georgia Health Sciences University and Augusta State University.

BACKGROUND

The public institutions of higher education in the state of Georgia are governed and managed under the authority of the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR). In 2012, based on an effort to reduce expenditures, eliminate duplicated services, and improve access and educational quality for students, the USG BOR identified eight institutions to be consolidated into four (USG, 2012a). Three of these consolidations involved the merger of state universities with state colleges that had similar charters; however,

the fourth consolidation involved two institutions that were close in proximity, but very different in terms of focus, population, and culture. The first institution, Georgia Health Sciences University, was an academic health center (Association of Academic Health Centers, 2014) with an affiliated health system that had a predominantly professional, graduate student population, while the second institution, Augusta State University, was a liberal arts university with a predominantly non-residential, undergraduate population.

The USG BOR acknowledged that the merger would be inherently challenging due to institutional differences in mission, organization, structure, identity, and governance (USG, 2012b); however, the consolidation moved forward. The USG BOR approved the new name of the institution—Georgia Regents University—in August 2012 (USG, 2012c), consolidation efforts continued, and the newly consolidated institution was made official on January 8, 2013 (USG, 2013) with a total workforce of approximately 14,000 and a student population of nearly 9,000 (Augusta University, 2016a, “Augusta University Fast Facts,” para. 1). Finally, in September 2015, the USG BOR changed the institutional name (USG, 2015) to Augusta University (AU), and the board of directors of the affiliated health system followed suit in 2016 by changing its institutional name to AU Health System.

Efforts to complete the consolidation were multifaceted and robust, and personnel at both institutions worked to implement the aforementioned six critical and essential elements. To help meet the element of ensuring the right leadership on the ground, the AU Office of Leadership Development (AU-OLD) was created with a staff of two doctoral-level leadership education professionals and a business manager. The AU-OLD began its efforts in earnest in December 2014, with a mission “to develop every individual at Augusta University and AU Health System as an authentic leader” and a vision “to create a pipeline of authentic leaders for the enterprise within three years” (Augusta University, 2016b, “Leadership Academy,” para. 2) As part of its initial efforts, the AU-OLD created the Authentic Leadership Pipeline program (“Pipeline program”), the leadership development program that is the subject of the current paper.

THE AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP PIPELINE PROGRAM

The development of the Pipeline program was undertaken after careful consideration of the new mission of Augusta University: "...to provide leadership and excellence in teaching, discovery, clinical care, and service as a student-centered comprehensive research university and academic health center, with a wide range of programs from learning assistance through postdoctoral studies" (Augusta University, 2016c, "Mission, Vision, and Values," para. 1). In addition, careful consideration was given to the historical culture of each of the consolidated entities, the consolidation process and its impact on personnel, and the goal of creating one culture that reflected the new mission. The consideration of culture was particularly important to the development of the Pipeline program, as research results indicated that effective leadership development is inherently linked to institutional culture (Bingham, 2013; Schein, 2010).

For the purposes of the current paper, institutional culture was defined as "the interwoven patterns of beliefs, values, practices, and artifacts that define for members who they are and how they are to do things" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 217). Based on the above definition, the historical cultures of the consolidated entities were explored by Ribando and Evans (2015). Briefly, Ribando and Evans found that each entity had a distinct culture; Georgia Health Sciences University was characterized as having a high-status, research-focused, health-oriented culture, while Augusta State University was characterized as having a low-status, teaching-oriented, liberal arts culture. Interestingly, Ribando and Evans further found that the initial impact of the merger of cultures was increased levels of stress and decreased person-organization fit, particularly among the liberal arts personnel; however, results from a follow-up study (Slade, Ribando, & Fortner, 2016) suggested that the increased levels of stress may have begun to abate since completion of the consolidation.

Given the predicted challenges around merging these two institutions (USG, 2012b), the above findings are not surprising. Nevertheless, results from previous research (e.g., Cora-Bramble et al., 2006; Luber, Sharfstein, Lehman, & Talbott, 2011; McGinnis, McMillen, & Gold, 2007) have indicated that academic mergers

can be successful if the institutions have a clear vision, careful planning, patience, and thoughtful and open discussions around cultural differences. Using these findings as a guideline, combined with the cultural findings of Ribando and Evans (2015), the Pipeline program was grounded in the Authentic Leadership (AL) model (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005).

The AL model of leadership has several distinguishing features, including self-awareness, relational transparency, openness to differing perspectives, and self-regulated behavior based on personal values and standards (Gardner et al., 2005). The rationale for grounding the Pipeline program in the AL model was based on two considerations. First, the AL model is a positive leadership model that was well suited for the just-completed consolidation process and its impact on personnel. As Avolio and Gardner (2005) note, the:

unique stressors facing organizations throughout the world today call for a renewed focus on what constitutes genuine leadership [and] on restoring confidence, hope, and optimism; being able to rapidly bounce back from catastrophic events and display resiliency; helping people in their search for meaning and connection by fostering a new self-awareness; and genuinely relating to all stakeholders. (p. 316)

Second, the AL model is associated with promoting dialogue and organizational learning (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008), factors that would be important to the new institutional mission and integral to the goal of creating a new culture.

Having grounded the Pipeline program in the AL model, several other important decisions were made about its focus and direction. First, the program was targeted toward middle management types (e.g., directors, chairs, associate deans). Not only are these the "on the ground" type of leaders referred to by Azziz (2016b), they are also a sizeable population of AU and AU Health and one that research results suggest is significantly in need of leadership development (McKinney, McMahan, & Walsh, 2013). Second, because leading others well is predicated on effective leading of self (George, 2015), the program was further divided into Pipeline I and Pipeline II to allow

for an organizational scheme that focused on leading self (Pipeline I) and leading others (Pipeline II). And finally, four broad and complementary objectives were established for both Pipeline I and II: to promote and facilitate ongoing growth and development as an authentic leader in order to lead self (Pipeline I) or lead others (Pipeline II), to obtain a guided way of thinking about self and development as an authentic leader to lead self (Pipeline I) or lead others (Pipeline II), to obtain relevant content and experiences that enhance the ability to lead self (Pipeline I) or lead others (Pipeline II), and to build a community of AU and AU Health System leaders with whom participants can network and learn (Pipeline I and II).

Tables 1 and 2 depict the content areas of Pipeline I and Pipeline II. Content was selected based on its relevance to the AL model, consistency with the above-mentioned objectives, and results from a previously conducted, enterprise-wide internal survey of leadership development needs. All content was grounded in leadership development areas that are well established,

well researched, or both. A standardized methodology was established, including time frame, teaching techniques, recruitment and selection, class size, teaching faculty, and project requirements (see Table 3). Cost to conduct each Pipeline course was calculated at \$238 per participant.

The Pipeline I and Pipeline II programs were evaluated according to the widely used Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006) four-level evaluation framework. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's outcome framework allows for evaluation of reaction (level 1), learning (level 2), behavior (level 3), and results (level 4). Level 1, by definition, is a subjective outcome; however, outcomes for levels 2–4 can be evaluated subjectively (e.g., perceptions, skills, or attitudes as judged by the participant), objectively (e.g., facts, tangible results, or changes as measured by objective means), or both (Burke & Day, 1986). As the focus of the current evaluation was on reaction and subjective learning and behavior, data collected included reactions to how participants felt about the program and their satisfaction

Table 1. Content for Pipeline I (Leading Self)

Module	Module title	Explanation
1A	Leadership foundations	Introduction to the importance of authentic leadership development (George, 2015); identification of leadership challenges (Bennis & Goldsmith, 2010); self-assessment of leadership competencies (Gentry, Eckert, Munusamy, Stawiski, & Martin, 2014; Giles, 2016); and identification of critical life events that shape the leadership development process (Shamir & Eilam, 2005).
1B	Leadership development plan I	Introduction to intentional leadership development planning (Bennis & Goldsmith, 2010; George, 2015; McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnston, 2008).
2A	Emotional intelligence	Introduction to emotional intelligence and its importance to leadership development (Goleman, 2006; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013); brief assessment of emotional intelligence.
2B	Developing resiliency	Introduction to resiliency to enhance leadership effectiveness, maintain balance, manage change, and persist in the face of adversity (Bennis & Sample, 2015; Coutu, 2002; Hay Group, 2010).
3A	Understanding yourself	Leveraging self-report assessment data from the Strengths Deployment Inventory (PSP, 2015) to increase self-awareness as it applies to leadership (Scudder, LaCroix, & Gallon, 2014) and interpersonal functioning (Ellis, Wallis, & Washburn, 2011).
3B	Conflict management	Introduction to leadership skills and attitudes that facilitate dialogue, working through difficult conversations, and effective conflict resolution in the workplace (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2011; Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2012; Scott, 2004; Stone, Patton, & Heen, 2010).
4A	Expanding your capabilities	Introduction to personal leadership behaviors that multiply or diminish the capabilities of those around them (Wiseman, 2010).
4B	Leadership development plan II	Completion of personal leadership development plan using a case study. ^a

^a In order to respect individual preferences for privacy, a case study was used to practice the generalizable skills needed to complete a personal leadership development plan.

Table 2. Content for Pipeline II (Leading Others)

Module	Module title	Explanation
1A	Vision and strategy	Introduction to mission, vision, and core values, and their relationship to strategy and strategic thinking (Collins, 2001, 2004; Montgomery, 2008).
1B	Influence, persuasion, and presentation	Introduction to communication skills that enhance the ability to influence, persuade, and present with authority and professionalism (Anderson, 2013; Grenny, Patterson, Maxfield, McMillan, & Switzler, 2013).
2A	Team building and trust	Introduction to strategies, tools, and principles for building and leading effective teams (Gratton & Erickson, 2007; Ibarra & Hansen, 2011; Lees, 2011; Lencioni, 2005; Shapiro, 2015)
2B	Budgeting as a team activity	Introduction to budgeting and forecasting as team-based leadership strategies (Goldstein, 2005).
3A	Leading change with your team	Introduction to leading and managing organizational change (Hiatt, 2006; Hiatt & Creasey, 2012; Kotter, 2014).
3B	Lean thinking	Introduction to lean thinking and process improvement as a leadership strategy (Hines & Lethbridge, 2008; Lean Enterprise Institute, 2006; Shook, 2008; Womack & Jones, 2003).
4A	Negotiation	Introduction to negotiation strategies, tactics, and styles (Brooks, 2015; Lewicki, Barry, & Saunder, 2015).

Table 3. Standardized Methodology for Pipeline I and II

Standardized method	Explanation
Time frame	Classes met twice a month on successive Fridays and Saturdays for each module (e.g., module 1A and 1B; see Tables 1 and 2) over the course of 2 months for a total of eight meetings. Each meeting was 3 hours.
Recruitment and selection	Approximately 6 weeks before the start of a program, recruitment of participants was conducted through email solicitation and networking with senior leaders. Potential participants had to complete an application, which required a nomination and approval from their immediate supervisor. In addition, potential participants had to be an AU or AU Health employee in good standing and hold a director-level or middle management type of position or above. An application deadline was set for both programs and once all applications were received, an AU-OLD committee selected participants according to predetermined criteria that would produce, as much as possible, a diverse mix of class participants based on sex, ethnicity, discipline, profession, department, and unit.
Class size	Class sizes were limited to 22–27 participants due to budgetary considerations and to facilitate effective learning (Monks & Schmidt, 2010).
Teaching techniques	Teaching techniques were designed to foster development at the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral level (Kets de Vries & Korotov, 2007). In addition, the teaching environment was designed to both challenge and support (Eich, 2008) and to allow for experimentation (Kets de Vries & Korotov, 2007). Examples include multimedia presentations, class and roundtable discussions, action plans, readings, and self-awareness worksheets, exercises, and assessments.
Teaching faculty	Internal AU or AU Health System subject matter experts were recruited to facilitate or teach 80% of the modules. For the remaining 20% of the modules, external subject matter experts were recruited and paid an honorarium.
Project requirements	A project is required for both Pipeline I and Pipeline II. For Pipeline I, participants are required to complete a Personal Leadership Development Plan, and for Pipeline II participants are required to complete a Development Plan for Leading Others.

(level 1-subjective); participant perceptions about learning outcomes (level 2-subjective), and participant perceptions about changes in leadership-related behavior (level 3-subjective).

Method

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES

Eligible participants for the evaluation included the 27 Pipeline I participants and 24 Pipeline II

participants who completed the programs respectively in September–October of 2015 and January–February of 2016. Participation was elective and all information was number coded to protect participant anonymity. All study procedures were approved by the AU institutional review board.

For both programs, participants were informed about the purpose of the evaluation and invited to participate at the first class meeting (i.e., informed consent). After the consent process, data collection occurred just prior to starting the first class and again at the conclusion of the last class. Based on strategies suggested by Kirkpatrick (2006), all data were collected in a group setting and by use of pre- and post-course questionnaire and a post-course survey.

MEASURES

The post-course survey was used to collect reaction (level 1) and behavior (level 3) data, while the pre- and post-course questionnaire was used to collect learning data (level 2). Slight modifications were made to the post-course survey to accommodate the unique features of each program, which resulted in two similar versions of the survey: a 25-item survey for Pipeline I and a 23-item survey for Pipeline II. Both surveys contained eight reaction items (e.g., I would recommend the program to a colleague) and five behavior items (e.g., The program helped me identify leadership development gap or blind spot) that were identical; however, the Pipeline I version contained an additional nine reaction items and three behavior items that were unique, and the Pipeline II version contained an additional seven reaction items and three behavior items that were unique. For both versions, all items were presented as positively worded statements and participants were asked to rate their agreement with the statements based on a 5-point Likert scale (i.e., 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *somewhat disagree*, 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 4 = *somewhat agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

A unique version of the pre- and post-course questionnaire was used to collect demographic information (e.g., gender, education level, position, years in leadership) and learning (level 2) data for each of the Pipeline programs. The Pipeline I version had 49 items comprised of Likert-type measures for four learning

constructs: leadership self-efficacy (total and three subscales), authentic leadership (total and four subscales), leadership self-concept (single scale measure), and self-leadership (total and three subscales). The Pipeline II version had 55 items comprised of Likert-type measures for three learning constructs: leadership vision (single scale measure), attitudes toward organizational change (total and three subscales), and influence tactics (total and three subscales). The items for the seven learning constructs came from assessment instruments with well-established validity and reliability. Tables 4 and 5 provide details about each of the seven instruments.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analyses were conducted using SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 22; IBM Corp.; Armonk, NY; 2013). Demographic responses were analyzed by frequency, and descriptive statistics were calculated. Means and standard deviations were calculated for all reaction and behavior items. Paired samples *t*-tests were used to test for differences on each of the four Pipeline I learning constructs (including subscales), and on each of the three Pipeline II learning constructs (including subscales).

Results

Complete and valid data were available for all 27 Pipeline I participants and all 24 Pipeline II participants (100%). Demographically, for Pipeline I, the participants were near evenly split for gender (51.9% females), with a majority being Caucasian (88.9%), educated at the doctoral level (66.7%), and aged 45–54 (40.7%). For Pipeline II, the participants were majority females (62.5%), Caucasian (83.3%), and educated at the doctoral level (66.7%). Complete characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 6. The means and standard deviations for all reaction and behavior items are presented in Tables 7 and 8. The paired samples *t*-tests for Pipeline I and Pipeline II learning indicated significant positive improvement for 17 of the 23 learning outcomes (Table 9). The pretest–posttest differences for the remaining five learning outcomes were higher or the same; however, none of the differences were significant. There were no other significant findings.

Table 4. Pipeline I Measures Used to Assess Learning Outcomes

Measure

Leadership Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Paglis & Green, 2002): a 12-item, self-report measure of leadership self-efficacy. Items are presented as task statements (e.g., I can gain my employees' commitment to new goals), and respondents are asked to rate their degree of confidence in their ability to perform each task based on a 100-point probability scale with 10-point increments (i.e., 0%, 10%, 20%, and so on.). The measure has three subscales that measure direction setting, gaining commitment, and overcoming obstacles. An overall score, as well as scores on the three subscales, are derived by summing respective Likert responses and dividing by 100. All scores range from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicate greater overall or subscale leadership self-efficacy.

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio, Gardner, & Walumbwa, 2008; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, & Wernsing, 2008): a 16-item, self-report measure of authentic leadership. Items are presented as statements (e.g., As a leader, I say exactly what I mean), and respondents are asked to rate how frequently each statement fits their leadership style on a 5-point Likert scale. The measure has four subscales that measure relational transparency (presenting an authentic self to others), moral and ethical perspective (decision-making and behavior based on internalized values), balanced processing (objectively seeking and evaluating all information before making a decision), and self-awareness (an understanding of how one makes meaning of the world and self). Overall scores, as well as scores on the four subscales, are derived by summing Likert responses and divided by the respective number of items. All scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating a greater measure of overall or subscale-related authentic leadership.

Self-Concept Clarity Scale (Campbell et al., 1996): a 12-item, self-report measure of self-concept clarity (i.e., self-beliefs are clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and stable). Items are presented as statements (e.g., I spend a lot of time wondering about what kind of person I really am), and respondents are asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement based on a 5-point Likert-scale. Ten of the items are reverse scored. Slight modifications were made to the items to reflect the focus on leadership (e.g., I spend a lot of time wondering about what kind of leader I really am). The measure yields a single score, which is derived by summing the Likert responses and dividing by 12. The single score ranges from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating greater self-concept clarity.

Abbreviated Self-Leadership Questionnaire (Houghton, Dawley, & DiLiello, 2012): a nine-item, self-report measure of self-leadership (the ability to influence oneself to perform more effectively). Items are presented as statements (e.g., I establish specific goals for my own performance), and respondents are asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement based on a 5-point Likert scale. The measure has three subscales that measure behavior awareness and volition (awareness and use of behavioral strategies), task motivation (awareness and use of motivational strategies), and constructive cognition (awareness and use of thoughts). An overall score, as well as scores on the three subscales, are derived by summing Likert responses and dividing by the respective number of items. All scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating a greater use of self-leadership abilities.

Table 5. Pipeline II Measures Used to Assess Learning Outcomes

Measure

Leadership Vision Questionnaire (Northouse, 2014): a 10-item, self-report measure of leadership vision (the ability to create a vision for a group or organization). Items are presented as statements (e.g., I have a mental picture of what would make our unit or organization better), and respondents are asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement based on a 5-point Likert scale. The measure is unidimensional and produces an overall score by summing Likert responses and dividing by 10. Scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating a greater ability to create a vision for a group or organization.

Attitudes to Organizational Change Questionnaire (Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2004): a 21-item, self-report measure of attitudes to organizational change. Items are presented as statements (e.g., I believe the changes our organization is trying to implement are appropriate), and respondents are asked to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement based on a 5-point Likert scale. The measure has three subscales that measure cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions to organizational change. An overall score, as well as scores on the three subscales, are derived by summing Likert responses and dividing by the number of respective items. Scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating more positive reactions.

Influence Tactics Assessment (Center for Creative Leadership, 2004): a 24-item, self-report measure of influence tactics (typical actions taken to influence others to take and action or perform a task). Items are presented as statements (e.g., I objectively and logically explain to the person the reason for the requested action), and respondents are asked to rate the frequency to which they use each action based on a 5-point Likert scale. The measure has three subscales that measure logical, emotional, and cooperative influence tactics. Scores for each of the three subscales, as well as an overall score, are derived by summing Likert responses and dividing by the number of respective items. Scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating greater use of influence tactics in general (overall score) or an individual influence tactic.

Table 6. Pipeline I and II Participant Characteristics

Characteristic	Pipeline I ^a		Pipeline II ^b	
	<i>n</i>	(%)	<i>n</i>	(%)
Gender				
Female	14	(51.9)	15	(62.6)
Male	13	(48.1)	9	(37.4)
Race/ethnicity				
Caucasian	24	(88.9)	20	(83.3)
Black or African American	2	(7.4)	3	(12.5)
Asian	1	(3.7)	1	(4.2)
Education				
Bachelor's	2	(7.4)	2	(8.4)
Master's	7	(25.9)	5	(20.8)
Doctorate	18	(66.7)	17	(70.8)
Age ranges				
25–34	1	(3.7)	1	(4.2)
35–44	7	(25.9)	9	(37.4)
45–54	11	(40.7)	7	(29.2)
55–64	8	(29.7)	7	(29.2)

^a Mean years in a leadership position = 13.3 (*SD* = 8.7).

^b Mean years in a leadership position = 11.9 (*SD* = 9.3).

Discussion

EXPLANATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of the current paper was twofold. First, a leadership development program (the Pipeline program) was described that was initiated and developed in the context of a challenging university consolidation: the merger of Augusta State University and Georgia Health Sciences University into Augusta University. And second, pilot data were presented that provided information on three levels of an evaluation of the program: reaction, subjective learning, and subjective behavior. The results from the evaluation provide preliminary evidence that the Pipeline program holds promise as an effective leadership development program in the context of a university consolidation.

The eight reaction items common to both Pipeline I and II had a range of 4.5–4.9 (on a 5-point scale). These items addressed organization and structure, faculty competency, relevancy, teaching methodologies, meeting needs, meeting expectations, worthiness of time and effort, and likelihood of recommending to a colleague. Although these numbers suggest a high level of satisfaction across a wide range of indices, the

last finding—the high likelihood of recommending the program to a colleague—is particularly of note as previous research results (Reichheld, 2003) suggest it is the best indicator of impact and satisfaction. The reaction items unique to each program's module satisfaction had a broader range (4.2–4.8). While it is not surprising that some modules were better received than others, it is worth noting that none of the module means were below 4.2, a finding that suggests high overall satisfaction with the module content.

The five behavior items common to both Pipeline I and II had a range of 4.2–4.9. These items addressed subjective self-ratings of behavior such as identifying and addressing a leadership development gap or blind spot, improving leadership behavior with respect to job-related responsibilities, and participating in a community of AU and AU Health System leaders with whom participants can network and learn. Given the diversity of the participants, these high scores are promising and suggest that the Pipeline program has the potential to effect meaningful leadership behavior change.

Learning outcomes for Pipeline I and II were assessed using seven assessment measures (four for Pipeline I, three for Pipeline II; see Tables 4 and 5). Of these seven assessment measures, five had subscales. Collectively, the total scores of these seven outcomes plus the subscales equated to 23 learning outcomes. Of these 23 learning outcomes, 17 showed significant positive improvement from pre-course to post-course assessment.

Pipeline I Learning Outcomes

For Pipeline I, all four of the learning outcomes at the total score level showed improvement. However, improvement was only statistically significant for leadership self-efficacy, self-leadership, and authentic leadership; the improvement for leadership self-concept clarity—a single scale learning outcome with no subscales—was not.

Further analyses of the subscales suggest three themes for Pipeline I learning outcomes. First, the participants appear to have grown in two areas of authentic leadership: self-awareness and balanced processing. Collectively, these findings suggest that participants learned the value of knowing themselves, soliciting opposing viewpoints, and considering all options before choosing

Table 7. Means and Standard Deviations for Reaction Items

Reaction items	Pipeline I		Pipeline II	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The program was well organized	4.81	0.48	4.88	0.34
The program faculties were knowledgeable and well informed on subject matter	4.73	0.44	4.83	0.38
The information and content presented in the program were useful and relevant	4.61	0.68	4.62	0.50
The teaching methodologies used in the program were effective	4.50	0.57	4.62	0.50
The program met my leadership development needs	4.46	0.49	4.50	0.51
My personal expectations for the program were met	4.54	0.57	4.62	0.50
The program was a worthwhile investment of my time and energy	4.77	0.42	4.79	0.41
I would recommend the program to a colleague	4.82	0.44	4.92	0.28
Module satisfaction: Leadership foundations	4.46	0.57	—	—
Module satisfaction: Leadership development planning I	4.25	0.50	—	—
Module satisfaction: Emotional intelligence	4.55	0.84	—	—
Module satisfaction: Developing resiliency	4.50	0.69	—	—
Module satisfaction: Understanding yourself	4.73	0.44	—	—
Module satisfaction: Conflict management	4.31	0.77	—	—
Module satisfaction: Expanding your capabilities	4.25	0.80	—	—
Module satisfaction: Leadership development planning II	4.35	0.48	—	—
The assessment instruments provided information that was useful and relevant to my leadership development	4.77	0.42	—	—
Module satisfaction: Vision and strategy	—	—	4.58	0.50
Module satisfaction: Influence, persuasion, and presentation	—	—	4.50	0.51
Module satisfaction: Team building and trust	—	—	4.37	0.58
Module satisfaction: Budgeting as a team activity	—	—	4.17	0.57
Module satisfaction: Leading change with your team	—	—	4.33	0.57
Module satisfaction: Lean thinking	—	—	4.21	0.72
Module satisfaction: Negotiation	—	—	4.67	0.57

Table 8. Means and Standard Deviations for Behavior Items

Reaction items	Pipeline I		Pipeline II	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The program helped me identify a leadership development gap or blind spot.	4.88	0.32	4.71	0.46
The program helped me address a leadership development gap or blind spot.	4.61	0.49	4.63	0.58
The program had a measurable positive impact on my leadership development.	4.66	0.48	4.62	0.50
The program helped me meet or exceed my job-related leadership responsibilities and benchmarks.	4.19	0.62	4.50	0.51
The program provided me with an opportunity to network with and learn from others leaders in the Augusta University community.	4.81	0.62	4.79	0.42
The program promoted and facilitated my ongoing growth and development as an authentic leader.	4.81	0.39	—	—
The program provided me with a guided way of thinking about myself and my development as an authentic leader.	4.89	0.32	—	—
The program provided me with relevant content and experiences that enhanced my ability to lead myself.	4.84	0.36	—	—
The program promoted and facilitated my ongoing growth and development to lead others.	—	—	4.62	0.50
The program provided me with a guided way of thinking about how to lead others.	—	—	4.63	0.50
The program provided me with relevant content and learning experiences that enhanced my ability to lead others.	—	—	4.63	0.50

Table 9. Paired Samples *t*-Tests for Pipeline I and II Learning Outcomes

	Pre-course		Post-course		<i>t</i> value	<i>P</i> value
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Leadership self-efficacy–total ^a	7.10	1.06	7.68	0.77	–3.17	.004**
Leadership self-efficacy–direction setting ^a	7.41	1.24	7.81	0.91	–2.02	.049*
Leadership self-efficacy–gaining commitment ^a	7.10	1.24	7.93	0.74	–3.76	.001**
Leadership self-efficacy–overcoming obstacles ^a	6.69	1.27	7.09	1.27	–1.61	.120
Self-leadership–total ^a	3.81	0.40	4.06	0.36	–3.71	.001**
Self-leadership–behavioral awareness and volition ^a	4.07	0.59	4.08	0.57	–0.09	.930
Self-leadership–task motivation ^a	3.44	0.62	3.90	0.70	–4.60	.001**
Self-leadership–constructive cognition ^a	3.90	0.52	4.18	0.45	–2.76	.010**
Authentic leadership–total ^a	2.99	0.32	3.16	0.30	–2.77	.010**
Authentic leadership–relational transparency ^a	2.91	0.56	3.03	0.52	–1.06	.297
Authentic leadership–moral and ethical perspective ^a	3.26	0.50	3.34	0.46	–0.90	.374
Authentic leadership–balanced processing ^a	2.94	0.47	3.20	0.49	–2.93	.007**
Authentic leadership–self-awareness ^a	2.81	0.39	2.98	0.47	–1.98	.049*
Self-concept clarity–total ^a	3.24	0.46	3.31	0.51	–0.70	.489
Leadership vision–total ^b	3.99	0.41	4.38	0.37	–5.38	.001**
Attitudes to organizational change–total ^b	3.62	0.37	3.76	0.49	2.02	.049*
Attitudes to organizational change–cognitive reactions ^b	3.62	0.44	3.61	0.50	0.42	.678
Attitudes to organizational change–affective reactions ^b	2.64	0.82	3.69	0.60	4.41	.001**
Attitudes to organizational change–behavioral reactions ^b	3.97	0.49	4.29	0.39	–3.63	.001**
Influence tactics–total ^b	3.77	0.46	4.17	0.45	–4.38	.001**
Influence tactics–logical ^b	3.80	0.49	4.16	0.47	–3.92	.001**
Influence tactics–emotional ^b	3.60	0.54	4.04	0.55	–4.64	.001**
Influence tactics–cooperative ^b	3.80	0.49	4.14	0.47	–3.49	.002**

Note. Although the 23 repeated measures comparisons may raise concerns about type I errors, there is a paucity of general adjustment procedures to address these types of concerns (Bender & Lange, 2001).

^a Pipeline I.

^b Pipeline II.

p* < .05, *p* < .01.

a course of action. Relatedly, the participants also appear to have grown in two areas of self-leadership: task motivation and constructive cognition. Growth in these two areas suggests the participants expanded their learning in self-awareness to include a greater awareness and use of their thoughts and motivation to influence their ability to perform more effectively. Finally, the participants' leadership self-efficacy appears to have grown, particularly around direction setting and gaining the commitment of others.

Pipeline II Learning Outcomes

For Pipeline II, all three of the learning outcomes at the total score level showed statistically significant

improvement. Similar to Pipeline I, further analyses of the subscales suggest three themes for Pipeline II learning outcomes.

First, the participants appear to have learned the importance and value of creating a meaningful vision for their department or unit. In addition, the results suggest that the participants gained a better understanding of organizational change, as their affective and behavioral reactions to it improved from pre- to post-course. Finally, the participants' appear to have expanded their understanding of influence as a leadership tactic to include a variety of styles and strategies (e.g., logical, emotional, and cooperative).

IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

Pipeline I and II were initiated and developed in the context of a challenging university consolidation. The programs were grounded in the AL model to bridge the cultural divide between the two consolidating entities, targeted toward middle management types, designed to develop authentic leadership skills to lead both self and others, and implemented to create a community of AU and AU Health System leaders who could successfully facilitate the consolidation. As the pilot data reported in the current paper indicate a high level of satisfaction, significant learning, and new behavior, the findings provide preliminary evidence that the programs were not only well received, but also met their objectives and were effective in a uniquely challenging environment. In light of these findings, several implications and applications deserve consideration.

Each year the World Economic Forum (WEF) produces a list of the top 10 trends that its Global Agenda Council (GAC) believe will have the most impact over the next two years (WEF, 2015). In its latest 2015 list, the WEF ranks *lack of leadership* as the third most important trend (Shahid, 2015). The ranking is based on the belief by 86% of the GAC members that a leadership crisis exists in the world today. Such a finding—though relevant to a broad range of industries—is certainly a cause for concern for large academic institutions. However, it is especially true for academic institutions undergoing a transformational consolidation where the challenges are significant and require thoughtful, strong leadership for success. Commonly, leaders and administrators in these types of situations focus on infrastructure-related changes (e.g., student and academic affairs, budget processes, facilities and asset management, security) at the expense of developing the leaders and leadership skills necessary to facilitate the consolidation. While understandable given the tangible nature of infrastructure and its obvious import to a successful consolidation, the neglect of leadership development is likely a shortsighted omission that can have an unintended but nevertheless negative effect. As Azziz (2016b) noted, the importance of investing in leadership development is paramount, as the odds of successfully completing an academic consolidation are likely to be low without qualified, well-developed leaders.

As the Pipeline I and II experiences demonstrate, the cost of investing in leadership development need not be high nor is it necessary to have a large staff to service the programmatic needs of large academic institutions. For example, the expenses were calculated at a reasonable \$238 per participant for Pipeline I and II, while the national average of leadership development programs for large organizations range from \$2,665 to \$12,210 per participant (Bersin by Deloitte, 2014). In addition, by using internal subject matter experts as faculty to deliver 80% of the program content, the AU-OLD staff to employee ratio was kept at 3:14,000. Collectively, these two features suggest that the Pipeline I and II programs are highly scalable and may serve as a useful model for leadership development programs conducted in a university consolidation environment.

LIMITATIONS

The results of the current evaluation are subject to several limitations. First, the study relies on a small sample size and subjective self-report data to measure reaction, subjective learning, and subjective behavior. While appropriate for an initial evaluation, the self-report format is susceptible to participant distortion and the small sample size may limit generalizability. In addition, generalizability may also be limited by regional differences, the lack of underrepresented minorities, and the use of a convenience sample.

Another limitation is the lack of a comparison group, which weakens the ability to attribute the changes in learners' subjective learning to participation in Pipeline I or II. Finally, the timing of the post-course questionnaire—immediately after the last module—leaves unanswered the question of whether or not the course experience improved learning for the long-term or was simply a short-lived result of having just participated in a positive leadership development experience.

Conclusion and Future Directions

Reports on leadership development programs in academic settings are myriad; however, very little has been reported on leadership development programs designed and initiated to meet the challenging needs of a university consolidation. The current paper fills that gap by describing the Pipeline I and II programs that were developed to meet the leadership needs of

Augusta University, the institutional result of the consolidation of Georgia Health Sciences University and Augusta State University. In addition, results from an initial pilot evaluation of the programs indicated a high level of satisfaction, significant learning, and new behavior. Collectively, these findings provide preliminary evidence that the programs were well received, met their objectives, and were effective in the context of a challenging university consolidation. More evaluation data are needed to confirm the findings, as well as to investigate any relationships between and among the evaluation or other variables. In addition, the results of the study should be investigated concurrently with objective measures of leadership success to determine the long-term impact of the learning and behavior changes associated with the Pipeline I and II programs. In the interim, the Pipeline programs will continue, as well as a new Women's Pipeline program initiative, and may serve as a useful and scalable model for leadership development programs conducted in a university consolidation environment.

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