

Experiential Learning: Internships in the Advancement of Leadership Skills

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Abstract

Student field experiences represent a unique, nontraditional, innovative educational approach based on experiential learning. Field experiences provide students the opportunity to experience real world practices. Research has shown that quality field experiences are equally as important as the graduate programs themselves in establishing leadership skills (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2013). The goal of the University X's Ed. D. program's directed field experience (DFE) has been to develop the candidate's leadership and management abilities by engaging the candidates in problem analysis, data collection, and problem-solving activities. The activities that are planned and guided by the university supervisor, mentor, and candidate should be designed to address the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards (ISLLC). Together, the candidate, mentor, and supervisor select a series of meaningful leadership activities and projects allowing the fullest possible development of the candidate's knowledge and skill. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the doctoral candidates' perceptions of the helpfulness of University X's DFE to the preparation of educational leadership by determining if candidates found the program's field experience to adequately prepare them for their professional responsibilities based on the leadership principles set by the ISLLC and Educational Leadership Constituent Council standards. The methodology for this research followed a quantitative design using a Likert-type scale survey. Data was also collected from three open-ended responses asking participants to share how well they believed University X's DFEs prepared them for employment and/or professional advancement, how University X could improve its DFE, and any additional comments.

The findings from this study showed that participants in the study agreed that participation in the university's DFE was helpful in adequately preparing them for leadership responsibilities based on the ISLLC and ELCC Standards. The researcher recommended that these findings be used to guide the university's efforts in continuously improving the Ed. D. program's DFE.

Dedication

No journey this challenging is possible without a loving and supportive family. It is with great honor that I dedicate this dissertation to my husband and best friend, David, and our children, David II and Dante. David and Dante, you have brought the most joy and meaning to my life and I love you both more than you will ever know. Because of you, I could not give up on this journey. Thank you for always taking care of me through the good times and the bad. You truly are God's gift to me. As you continue on your own journeys, know that I am always with you.

David, my loving husband, your patience, support, and unconditional love have carried me all the days of my life. Thank you for not allowing me to give up on this goal. I appreciate your help as you proofread this dissertation and sat by my side as I wrote. I love you so much. The day I received my master's degree you wrote me a letter. Your gift for writing is my blessing. The words you wrote have inspired me.

A journey is often marked by times of difficulty. There are moments of pleasure, but they are not always enjoyed to the fullest. Why? Because the journey continues and the warrior anticipates more difficulty ahead. Soon she learns that the struggle to achieve more each day is a common battle and within each task she derives satisfaction. The struggle and the journey itself are important because they shape and define who she is. The warrior knows that when she reaches the mountaintop and pauses to look around, the long journey is just one of many. From the summit of this climb all the mountains become visible and each one is a tempting new experience. Today...enjoy the view.

I made it to the top of the mountain baby, and I couldn't have done it without you. Let's enjoy the view together.

This work is also dedicated to my parents, Ray and Lupe Mendez, for always believing in me and for your faithful prayers and unconditional love. I am thankful that you instilled the values of faith, hope, and love. Thank you for believing in this dream.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Educational administrators play a crucial role in developing successful school systems and high expectations are placed on school leaders to deal with the demands of our nation's schools. Researchers, policymakers, and practitioners recognize more and more the role of school leaders in developing high-performing schools (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007). Administrators are challenged by federal laws and reforms implemented to improve student achievement. Improving student learning continues to be a constant challenge in most schools. With a national focus on improving student achievement for all students, there has been greater attention to the vital role that school leaders play in improving the quality of education (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Leaders who have a strong understanding of instruction and can develop teacher skills and their schools are essential to improving student success (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Knowing that educational leaders take on a variety of roles, the development of educational leadership is vital to the success of the nation's educational system (Snyder & Hoffman, 2002).

Leading an educational system is not an easy job. Educational leaders are accountable for the academic achievement of every child in a school district. Further, superintendents, assistant superintendents, directors of services, and building level leaders must comply with federal and state education laws, carry out policies set by boards of education, and also manage budgets. The decisions made by these system leaders have a direct impact on student learning, working conditions for teachers, school climate, culture, reputation, and community relationships (Leithwood et al., 2004). With

these responsibilities in the forefront, it is important to link what is done in educational preparatory programs, including course work and internships, to successful administrative practice (Chenoweth, Carr, & Ruhl, 2002).

The current literature on public school administration preparation programs has provided different views of the relevance of these programs for the work aspiring leaders will face. Fry, Bottoms, & O'Neill (2005) stated that several leadership preparation programs fail to provide authentic leadership opportunities. A disparity exists in the literature concerning the effectiveness of leadership preparation programs. There is insufficient evidence signifying whether and how the types of learning opportunities provided by programs allow administrators to become more effective in their practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). In fact, the preparation of school administrators through university leadership programs has been criticized for an extended period of time (Murphy & Forsyth, 1999). Among the primary areas to be targeted in these criticisms have been administrative internships (Murphy & Forsyth, 1999). Recognizing the significant impact that effective leadership has on student achievement and the challenges facing our educational system, the preparation of highly qualified educational leaders must be a priority (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Educational administration doctoral programs must prepare their students to take on the challenges of our educational systems and it is paramount that graduates have a solid foundational experience. Doctoral programs in educational administration are designed to prepare and develop system leaders.

To earn and maintain accreditation, doctoral programs require a regimen of coursework that candidates must successfully complete. Though course work

requirements can vary by states, Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership (Ed. D.) candidates at University X, Northern Iowa, and Missouri State University, for example, complete courses on leadership theory, program administration and evaluation, curriculum and instruction development, school law and policy, resource allocation, community content, data analysis, and organizational change. Through course work and research, doctoral candidates learn about the philosophy and theory of educational administration. However, theory and research taught in the classroom can provide inadequate connections to the responsibilities that Ed. D. candidates will face as educational leaders (Elmore, 2006; Levine & Dean, 2007). As a result, doctoral programs must involve candidates in meaningful field-based learning experiences that prepare them for the real world challenges of school leadership. The central problem appears to be that most university programs present knowledge about school administration, but do not help candidate develop skills to translate that knowledge into practice (Anderson, 1991). Thus, universities have to provide aspiring system leaders with experiences that allow them to translate theory into practice. To more effectively prepare educational leaders for the relevant issues they will face, programs must be redesigned (Daresh, 2004).

Again, candidates combine theory with practice via field experiences, internships, or graduate assistantships that let the candidates experience and put into practice what has been learned in the classroom (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2011b). Wilmore (2002) suggested that internships should provide aspiring administrators the opportunities to do the things that practicing administrators do each day. The result of the field experience can strengthen the connection between course work and practice,

while providing doctoral candidates with opportunities to increase their capability in working with day-to-day responsibilities and decisions the educational system presents (O'Neill, 2010). Considering the academic and professional issues currently confronting the educational field, graduate school programs have taken steps to redesign and balance the theoretical context program with practical, hands-on preparation opportunities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). The balance of theory, research, and authentic field experiences can assist future educational leaders in acquiring the decision-making and problem-solving skills that they will face (Barnett & Coate, 2005).

Internships - when valuable and done well - are one of the ten recommended high-impact educational practices (Kuh, 2008). Promoting candidate learning, high-impact practices, along with internships require that candidates invest a considerable amount of time and devote their efforts to tasks that deepen their knowledge (Kuh, 2008). The idea, according to Kuh (2008), is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting, usually related to their career interests, and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field.

The need for consistency and improvement in educational leadership preparation programs has led to the development of national standards. During the course of this study, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) merged with the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) to form the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), a primary professional organization responsible for the accreditation of educational leadership preparation programs (NCATE, 2011). CAEP replaces NCATE as the new accrediting body for educator preparation. NCATE, now CAEP developed Educational Leadership Program Standards

that support the notion of doctoral preparation programs that help system leaders develop the skills needed to implement instructional programs that increase student achievement. These standards stress the idea that doctoral programs need to prepare candidates by engaging them in meaningful field-based learning experiences that are connected to the type of work that Ed. D. candidates will ultimately assume as educational leaders (National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), 2011). According to CAEP, these standards stress that along with coursework,

Improving K-12 student achievement depends on the successful and simultaneous orchestration of multiple, yet individual, variables within the context of an overall district. Given the interdependency between the execution of specific district leadership skills and the overall educational environment, universities are expected to provide candidates with district experiences that connect, embed and transcend explicit leadership skills within the context of a meaningful whole. Preparation programs must include three dimensions.

1. Awareness – acquiring concepts, information, definitions and procedures
2. Understanding – interpreting, integrating and using knowledge and skills
3. Application – apply knowledge and skills to new or specific opportunities or problems

The overall program should represent a synthesis of key content and high impact field- based experiences extended over time that result in the district level candidates’ demonstration of the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions articulated in the ELCC district standards, and, most importantly, candidates’

success in improving student achievement within a district environment following graduation. (p. 6)

The NCATE standards, now CAEP, closely resemble the Interstate School Leadership Consortium Standards (ISLLC), which help define strong school leadership under six standards (NPBEA, 2011). These six standards call for:

1. Setting a widely shared vision for learning;
2. Developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;
3. Ensuring effective management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;
4. Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;
5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts.
6. Promoting the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

(NPBEA, 2011, p. 18)

These standards represent the broad, high-priority themes that education leaders must address in order to promote the success of every student (Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2008). NCATE used the ISLLC standards to develop their standards. The joint set of standards provides a consistent framework to improve school leadership preparation programs and professional development (NPBEA, 2011). In order to ensure

that aspiring leaders are prepared for their professional responsibilities as an educational leader, educational leadership programs have a responsibility to promote field experiences that allow the candidates to develop and demonstrate mastery in the six Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards.

Background

University X, located in a small, Midwestern town, began a new doctoral program in February, 2006. According to an Associate Professor and former Chair of the Graduate Department at University X (personal communication, January, 5, 2014), and as stated in the 2005 University X Doctor of Education program proposal (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Program Proposal Handbook, 2005*), University X began the development of its Doctor of Education program based on input from focus groups. The program was proposed due to the volume of anticipated administrator retirements in Kansas and Missouri and the need for superintendents, central office administrators, and directors for special programs in the Midwest (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Program Proposal Handbook, 2005*). Multiple focus group meetings were conducted in the spring of 2003 with faculty, professionals from the field, and community organization representatives to determine the need for a program and the important components of a program that would develop highly qualified leaders (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Program Proposal, 2005*). The development of the Ed. D. program began with the utilization of the existing School Leadership masters' program structure. University X's professors conducted intensive research, evaluating over 50 doctoral programs. Their evaluation showed that the current structure used for the Masters in

School Leadership program, along with the cohort group development, would attract candidates that are employed full-time (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Program Proposal*, 2005).

The Higher Learning Commission of North Central Association of Colleges and Schools approved the Ed. D. program in 2005 (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Program Proposal*, 2005). The proposal was also submitted to Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) for district licensure approval and was aligned to KSDE program standards that are aligned with ISLLC Standards. University X approves candidate admission into their program. Admission into the program at University X is challenging. A decision was made that acceptance into the program would be based on a critical thinking test, a written essay, and a written disposition. Unlike many other programs that use standardized entrance exams that have little success prediction ability, University X's program faculty chose assessments related to practical application (personal communication, January, 5, 2014). Once accepted into the program, candidates are required to complete 59+ hours of program study, including successful completion of two separate directed field experiences (DFEs), each consisting of 60 clock hours, and successful completion and defense of a dissertation. Most program classes are seven weeks long and take place one night per week (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2013). Four-week courses were oriented toward dissertation planning and writing in August, 2012.

During the DFE, the candidate is asked to participate in meaningful and wide-ranging leadership responsibilities under the supervision of a University supervisor and

an educational field mentor (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2013). The University supervisor and field mentor work together with the candidate to choose valuable experiences, activities, and projects that respond to University X's Ed. D. program objectives. Through the course work and field experiences the candidate should begin to develop leadership skills grounded in the program objectives and standards.

As specified in University X's 2013 Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, the mission of University X's Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership program is to develop confident and competent educational leaders who promote learning. The University and its program staff believe that confident and competent leaders have a sense of values and beliefs support by educational research and best practices; and have the passion, commitment, and critical thinking skills to transfer knowledge, beliefs, and values into policy and practice (p. 6). As part of the program mission, the school of education developed the model of the Graduate School of Education (GSOE) Conceptual Framework. The GSOE model represents the program's philosophy and vision. As stated in the 2013 Doctor of Education Leadership Policy and Program Handbook, the conceptual framework illustrates the dynamic and systematic process used to develop programs committed to learning and to develop confident and competent educational leaders. There are seven components to the Conceptual Framework as seen in Figure 1: beliefs, program objectives, essential characteristics, commitments, mission, vision, and the evaluation process. The model signifies the constant relationships among all seven components.

MODEL OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Conceptual Framework



Figure 1. Two-Wheeled Model for the Conceptual Framework representing University X's Ed. D. philosophy and vision. Adapted from the *University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, by University X Graduate School of Education, 2013, p. 6.

In order to continuously monitor progress and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Ed. D. program, University X purposely includes the evaluation process within the conceptual framework. The evaluation process allows the program to assess, both internally and externally, candidate progress on program objectives, the scope and quality of the program, the effectiveness of operation, faculty competence, and graduate performance (*University X Doctor of Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2013).

University X's Ed. D. program and DFEs are driven by the program's vision and mission, which is reflected in the GSOE conceptual framework that signifies the constant relationships among all of the framework's components. With this in mind, the design of the program was built with a focus on rigorous research-based course content and

experiences (*University X Doctor of Education in Organization Leadership Program Proposal*, 2005). Additionally, by basing the program's DFEs on the leadership principles as established by the ISLLC and ELCC standards for school leaders, the program engages candidates in authentic learning activities.

Educational Leadership Field Experience at University X

The Ed. D. in Educational Leadership and the District Leadership Licensure (DLL) program is designed to prepare candidates for district level leadership positions along with leadership positions within the educational community. The Ed. D. program prepares candidates to provide effective leadership and promote learning for all participants. The program involves an in-depth study of leadership issues within the educational community (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2011).

Candidates in University X's Ed. D. in Educational Leadership program must show "a strong educational knowledge base that aligns with research and/or best practices" (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2011). Per the 2011, University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, candidates achieve this by demonstrating the following:

1. Facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the entire community.
2. Advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and employee professional growth.

3. Develop the district or organization's structure, management practices, and resources to establish a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Collaborate with families and community members responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilize community resources.
5. Act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. Understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, and cultural context. (p. 6)

A key component to University X's Ed. D. in Educational Leadership program is the requirement of candidates to complete two comprehensive field experiences. University X's GSOE has designed two DFEs that candidates of the Ed. D. program must complete. The student must enroll in two separate field experiences, consisting of a minimum of 60 hours at an educational site. In investigating other programs and their Master of Arts in School Leadership (MASL) program, University X's program developers decided that two separate experiences would allow better preparation for each of the candidates and would offer more variety while addressing the ISLLC standards (personal communication, August 5, 2014). Program developers also decided that a minimum of 12 hours must be spent working in a diverse setting. The criteria set for diversity is 15% race/ethnicity and 25% free and reduced lunch levels as reported on the district report card (*University X Doctor of Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2013). The purpose of the field experiences is to help candidates transfer and make connections between knowledge, theory, and real world experiences. During both field experiences, the candidate is expected to assist in a variety of significant leadership responsibilities under the supervision of a University supervisor and an educational field

mentor. The activities of the field experiences for PK-12 candidates must correlate to program objectives and/or performance indicators and time is distributed across the six Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) program standards. The standards created by the ISLLC in 1996 and revised in 2008, and the Educational Leadership Constituent Council in 2002 are based on the same fundamental principles of educational leadership that includes vision, culture, management, collaboration, ethics, and context (CCSSO, 2008). The standards read as follows:

1. An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.
2. An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

6. An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. (CCSSO, 2008)

The candidate is required to address all six standards during the two field experiences; however, the candidate must address a minimum of four standards in each of the two field experiences and electronic reflections relating each activity with each program standard addressed in the DFE must be submitted. At the completion of each DFE, candidates complete an electronic portfolio detailing each activity, responsibilities assumed, what was done, what was learned and what may be done differently (*University X Doctor of Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, 2013*). During both field experiences, candidates are “expected to assist in significant and varied leadership responsibilities under the supervision of a university supervisor and an educational field mentor, who is cooperatively chosen by the candidate and approved by the University Field Experience Coordinator. The university supervising administrator and field mentor work cooperatively with the candidate to select a series of meaningful field experience activities and projects from the suggested activities associated with the program objectives” (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, 2011, p. 7*).

Field experiences at University X are graded for satisfactory completion of all aspects of work; including electronic portfolio entries and evaluations completed by the Supervisor and the field experience Mentor (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, 2011*). At the end of the field experience the Mentor completes a written evaluation (Appendix B) of the candidate’s

performance. The University Supervisor works cooperatively with the intern and Mentor to design field experience activities that address the six ISLLC standards. A minimum of three field visits for consultation with the Intern and Mentor are made during each of the 60-hour semesters. Formative and summative evaluation data are provided to an Intern regarding his or her progress. After each field visit made by the Supervisor, an assessment form (Appendix C) is completed by the Supervisor and the Intern. At the end of the course a supervisor summative evaluation of the Intern is completed and represents 1/3 of the final grade. Candidates in the Doctoral Field Experience must have an average score of proficient (8.4-9.1) or above on each of the four summative reflections. If the candidate's average score on any of the reflections is below proficient, the university supervisor and the mentor devise a plan to raise the criteria score to the proficient level (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook*, 2011). Based on the evaluation criteria set by University X, the candidate's performance during the field experience is evaluated by the mentor and university supervisor. If the mean score (averaging the mentor and supervisor together) is below 3.3 on a 4.0 scale on the summative evaluation, the candidate may not be recommended for licensure. As stated in the 2011 Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, a final grade is figured on the following:

1. The Mentor evaluates the Intern at the end of the field experience, and this assessment represents 1/3 of the final grade.
2. The Supervisor evaluates the Intern at the end of the field experience, and this assessment represents 1/3 of the final grade.

3. The Intern finalizes his or her electronic portfolio reflection forms during DFE I and DFE II, and these reflections will constitute 1/3 of the final grade (Appendix D). The reflection rubric provided on TaskStream is used for assessing the reflections. (p. 10)

By designing the two field experiences for the Ed. D. program, candidates are able to transfer and make connections between theory and knowledge and real world practices (*University X Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Policy and Handbook, 2011*).

Statement of the Problem

Leading a school system is a challenging job. Researchers have pointed out that theory and research are taught in distinct courses; however coursework can lack the connection to the work that Ed. D. candidates will eventually take on (Elmore, 2006; Levine & Dean, 2007). These research reports have indicated that doctoral preparation programs need to engage students more in challenging and realistic field-based learning experiences that prepare them for the types of problems they will face as educational leaders (Fry et al., 2005). Properly organized internships or field experiences are among the most recommended high-impact educational practices (Kuh, 2008).

According to Gore and Carter (2011), interventions such as internships or field experiences are increasingly seen as the responsibility of everyone in a university involved in the effort to facilitate learning, growth, and development of college students. The purpose of a field experience is to provide candidates with an opportunity to combine their theoretical studies with the practical application of this knowledge in a work environment (NCATE, 2011). The field experience is not only an important part of the

candidate's academic program, but experiences also enable candidates to continue to learn under the supervision of a professional in the field (Daresh, 2004).

An emphasis on improvement of educational preparation programs at the doctoral level has become more and more essential as administrative candidate pools become limited. Based on the 2003 Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) data, there was an escalating need for superintendents, district office administrators, and directors for special school programs in the Midwest. Agencies that provide central office employment screening services in the Kansas and Missouri area reported that applicant pools, particularly for district level positions, were lacking, primarily due to the retirement age of superintendents and other central office administrators (*University X Program Proposal*, 2005).

A review of research shows that the field experience has been a significant part in graduate preparation programs for preparing effective educational leaders. Participation in a quality field experience expands the knowledge and skills of candidates while also gauging their ability to apply new learning (Fry et al., 2005). As an important component of an educational leadership program, the field experience should also be evaluated for improvement. Candidate feedback and perceptions can help in determining the value of a doctoral program's field experience by targeting strengths and weaknesses. The candidate evaluation allows for improvement and progression as quality doctoral programs prepare current and future school leaders.

Purpose Statement

University X designed a doctoral program in educational leadership aimed at addressing the challenges associated with 21st century school leadership (*University X*

Program Proposal Handbook, 2005). The purpose of this study focused on evaluating how helpful participation in the DFE was to the preparation of educational leadership of candidates and graduates enrolled in the first ten cohorts of the University X Ed. D. program. The intended focus of this study was determine if candidates and graduates found the program's DFE to adequately prepare them for their professional responsibilities based on the leadership principles set by the ISLLC and ELCC standards.

Significance of the Study

A critical component of any preparation program is the internship (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Improving leadership training has been a reform topic in recent years. U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, stated at a conference for the American Association of Colleges for Teachers in 2010 (Duncan, 2010), that the majority of schools of education in America have done a poor job of training educational leaders. Administrators come into the field without the necessary skills needed to improve student achievement and given the attention on school reform, educational leadership should be a major contributor to improving our nation's education system.

Knowing candidates' perceptions regarding their graduate program experience is valuable and essential to any evaluation process (Delaney, Johnson, Johnson & Treslan, 2010). Undoubtedly, feedback on the internship is vital to a preparation program. Candidate feedback and evaluations help assess the impact of the internship from the candidate's personal experience. Evaluations from candidates allow for this in a way that other forms of evaluations do not address (Cashin & Downey, 1992). In 2002, Daresh argued that though some leadership preparation programs "strived to etch the relationship between theory and practice in candidates' minds, many still shortchanged candidates due

to insufficient program planning and field experience supervision” (as cited in Tubbs, 2008). The best approach to assessing program effectiveness is by tracking the satisfaction and success of program graduates.

The Educational Leadership Program at University X uses a traditional internship model, also called the “directed field experience.” This model is similar to other Ed. D. programs; however the required number of hours for the field experience can vary. This study examined and attempted to aid University X’s Graduate School of Education (GSOE) faculty in evaluating, from the candidates’ perspective, the Ed. D. program’s DFE to meet the expectations and achieve the program goals in a way that was helpful and meaningful to program candidates. The data from this study may be used to guide University X’s GSOE faculty resolve in its continuous program improvement. The data may also provide a framework for how doctoral programs in educational leadership can design field experiences that provide doctoral candidates with the opportunities to increase their capability in working with the day-to-day responsibilities and decisions the educational system presents, but not forsaking the experiences that allow students to work through challenges that system leaders face. The data can also assist University X’s Doctor of Education in Education Leadership department learn about candidates’ concerns and determine changes and additions in regard to the program’s field experience. The findings of this study may also provide an initial indication of the DFEs quality. Additionally, this study would contribute to a body of knowledge about the graduate education of PK-12 leaders.

Delimitations

“Delimitations are self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose

and scope of the study” (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 134). The following delimiters were imposed on this study:

1. This study focused only on the DFE that is part of University X’s Ed. D. program.
2. Participants were University X doctoral candidates and graduates. Therefore, this study cannot be generalized to other universities’ field experiences and it did not include candidates in higher education administration.
3. This study was selected for University X doctoral candidates. Only survey responses from PK-12 candidates of University X’s Ed. D. program were included in this study. Candidates and graduates employed in higher education were not included in the sample.
4. The study focused on participants at the PK-12 grade level, in cohorts 1 through 10 of the Ed. D. program.
5. Except for the open-ended questions, the quantitative survey questions did not allow participants to elaborate on their answers. The limiting of explanation may have prevented additional variables from emerging for consideration.
6. Since the researcher was enrolled in this program there is a potential bias in the results of the research because of the familiarity with the university’s programs. An effort was made to reduce any possible or potential bias by taking measures such as blinding respondents’ identities.

Assumptions

“Assumptions are postulates, premises, and propositions that are accepted as operational for purposes of the research” (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 135). The researcher, while conducting this study, made the following three assumptions:

1. An assumption was made that participants would respond honestly to the survey questions presented.
2. An assumption was made that the recollections/information from the participants were accurate.
3. The survey data was accurately downloaded from the survey software and entered into IBM® SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 22 for Windows.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study intentionally focused on evaluating how helpful the DFE of University X’s Ed. D. program was to the preparation of educational leadership based on the leadership principles established by the ISLLC and ELCC standards. Each question focused on the candidates’ and graduates’ perceived ability of preparedness for leadership work as a result of the directed field experience. The following research questions were used to guide this study.

1. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X’s Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing skills for setting a widely shared vision for learning?
2. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X’s Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for professional growth to develop a school culture conducive to student learning?

3. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing management skills?
4. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities?
5. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to contribute to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader?
6. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context.

Definition of Terms

According to Lunenberg and Irby (2008), key terms that are central to the study and used throughout the dissertation should be defined. The following definitions will be used in this study:

Candidates. Individuals admitted to, or enrolled in, programs for the initial or advanced preparation of teachers, teachers continuing their professional development, or other school professionals. Candidates are distinguished from *students* in P–12 schools (NCATE, 2011).

Cohort Group. As defined by Hill (1995), a cohort is a group of students entering a program at the same time and completing at least two-thirds of the program together.

Directed Field Experience (DFE). This is the internship component of the Ed. D. program at University X. The field experience includes a variety of required, practical field-based opportunities in which candidates enrolled in a doctoral program participate in to observe, assist, and learn. May also be referred to as internship (*University X Doctor of Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, 2013*).

Educational Field Experience Mentor. The person selected by the student and approved by the University Coordinator. Mentors must be certified and have three years of district administration experience, and two years of experience in their present district (*University X Doctor of Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, 2013*).

Electronic reflections. A description of activities related to each program objective addressed in their field experience. The reflection describes each activity stating what responsibilities were assumed, where and when the experience occurred, under what conditions, reflections on what was done, what was learned, and what may be done differently (*University X Doctor of Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, 2013*).

Field Experience University Supervisor. Person appointed by the university to assist, monitor, supervise, and evaluate the candidates' DFE (*University X Doctor of Educational Leadership Policy and Programs Handbook, 2013*).

Internship. A form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting (NACE, 2011b). This refers to any internship program or course such as the Field Experience in which candidates participate in on-site activities related to leadership work.

ISLLC standards. A set of six professional standards for school leadership, created by the Interstate Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). These standards represent the broad, high-priority themes that education leaders must address in order to promote the success of every student (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008).

Satisfaction. Astin (1993) defined candidate satisfaction in term of students' perceptions towards their university experience, and perceived significance of the education they received from an institution.

Overview of the Methodology

The research for this study involved a quantitative study of aspiring educational leaders who were participants in the first ten cohort groups of the Doctorate of Education in School Leadership Program at University X. In order to collect data needed for a comprehensive evaluation of the program's DFE, the researcher surveyed all candidates and graduates whose background was at the PK-12 grade levels and who had completed the program's DFE requirements. Prior to providing candidates access to the survey, the researcher communicated with each eligible participant to provide information regarding the purpose of the study and directions and timelines for completing the survey while assuring anonymity. Participants were provided a web link to an anonymous on-line survey (Appendix A). The selected survey instrument was intended to measure how helpful participation in the DFE was to the preparation of educational leadership of candidates enrolled in the first ten cohorts of the University X Ed. D. program based on the leadership principles set by the ISLLC and ELCC standards. The survey was also aimed at accumulating demographic information from the participants, as well as their professional position at the time they participated in the field experiences. Data analysis

was completed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis involved a one-sample *t* test to address each research question based on the responses to the Likert-scale items.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized and presented in five chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction of the problem, background information, and a brief description of the design and implementation of the field experience of the Ed. D. program established by University X. Chapter one also contains a statement of the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the research questions to be answered, definition of terms, along with the delimitations and assumptions related to the study.

Chapter two includes a review of the literature including a historical review of internships or field experiences and an examination of the importance of successful internships. The chapter also includes an explanation of the standards developed for educational leaders. The chapter concludes with a review of the significance of candidate evaluation and ongoing program evaluation. Chapter three describes the methods used to conduct the study, explains the methodology used in conducting the study and details the process of collecting data, along with the procedures used to analyze the collected data. Chapter three also includes a description of respondents and the survey instrument used in the study. Chapter four presents the results of the study and chapter five presents a summary of the results. Finally, chapter five reviews the implications of the research findings and makes suggestions and recommendations for future study.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

This chapter provides a literature review of internships as an educational practice within the college and university setting. The literature review in this chapter includes: (a) an overview of the history of internships, (b) a review of internships as well as research findings (c) an examination of important elements of effective internships, (d) a review of the standards for educational leaders, (e) a brief description of University X's DFE, including a summary of the candidates' evaluation criteria and (f) a review of the importance of on-going program evaluation.

History of Internships

Internships existed as apprenticeships for centuries. Today, student internships are defined in various ways and called by different names. "Internship" and "cooperative education" are the two most often used names in the United States to describe career field experiences (Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010). Other terms that are used in the university setting include, experiential learning, field experience, experience-based learning, applied learning, practicum, and work-integrated learning (Freudenberg, Brimble, & Cameron, 2010). Although it is referred to by different names, an intern is basically a person working in a provisional position who focuses on education rather than employment (Weible, 2010).

Carr, Chenoweth, and Ruhl (2003) identified four types of internship experiences: independent, interdependent, embedded, and apprenticeship. To determine current internship requirements being conducted in educational leadership preparation programs across the nation, the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA)

contacted 48 educational leadership programs, with 43 of the programs serving as UCEA institutions. Based on the responses from 40 of these institutions, UCEA found a wide range of inconsistencies in the quality and quantity of internship requirements and activities (Barnett, Copland, & Shoho, 2009). Based on the investigation conducted, three dominant internship designs emerged (Barnett et al., 2009):

1. Full-Time Job-Embedded Internships. This type of internship immerses “on the job” learning. Although this design is rare, its appeal is growing, especially if preparation programs want to establish strong linkages with school districts.
2. Detached Internships. During this type of internship, interns document the completion of required activities using portfolios and reflective journals.
3. Course-Embedded Field Experiences. Course-embedded experiences disaggregate the activities contained in detached internships, distributing them across courses throughout an entire preparation program. This model is not widely used due to state certification and licensure mandates requiring an internship. (n.p)

Experienced-based learning, similar to today’s internships, has been valued as an educational practice for years. In an article written for the *International Journal of Asian Social Sciences*, Warinda (2013) stated that on the job training and learning began its origins around 600BC in Greek, Roman, Chinese and Vedic communities. During the Middle Ages, transferring the knowledge of doing and making was controlled by groups of craftsmen who worked together with others who shared the same trade (Sides & Mrvica, 2007). Master craftsmen and tradesmen took in young learners and gave them

basic jobs. Interns would learn a craft as an entry into skilled fields (Sides & Mrvica, 2007). Women established their participation as well in similar guilds. They demonstrated how internships can be a means of empowerment and independence for those less advantaged (Sides & Mrvica, 2007).

In the American colonial era, practices similar to today's internships were a basis for industrial education (Sides & Mrvica, 2007). For years in the skilled trades, apprenticeships matched protégé and teacher. Unfortunately, "early American apprenticeships and internships focused on manual skills and could not meet the rising needs for technological knowledge and skills that were developing during the Industrial Revolution" (Sides & Mrvica, 2007, p. 7). As a result, there was a refocus on internships during the 20th century in which students paired classroom learning with workplace application in order to increase student learning and performance (Walker, 2011).

Experience-based learning or experiential learning gained great recognition within higher education in the United States during the 1900s, expanding as an educational practice with the concept of cooperative education. Cooperative Education (co-op) developed at the University of Cincinnati in 1906 by Herman Schneider. Schneider recognized that most students need and/or want to work while attending college (as cited in Howard, 2004). Through co-op, Schneider was able to find a way for students to meet their financial needs and provide meaningful experiences for them (Howard, 2004). Today, co-op is defined as "an educational methodology in which periods of classroom instruction alternate with periods of paid discipline-related work" (Cates & Cedercreutz, 2008, p. 20).

Cooperative Education expanded during the 1960s when funds for new co-op programs were provided by federal government. The 1965 enactment of Title VIII of the Higher Education Act authorized monies for co-ops. With these funds, colleges created new programs (Howard, 2004). This led to more programs: 1,012 by 1986 as opposed to the 60 programs in 1956 (Howard, 2004). Not long after its peak in 1986, funding declined and by 1996, the funding ceased. As a result of the decrease and later elimination of federal funding, colleges and universities throughout the United States were forced to cut close to 400 co-op programs. Even with the decrease in the number of co-op programs, students placed in cooperative education jobs have not decreased (Pettit, 1998). Despite the absence of federal support, cooperative education is still attracting colleges and universities wanting to establish educational programs that better prepare students for their profession (Howard, 2004).

In the last two decades, internships are being viewed differently. The emphasis placed on preparing students for professional roles has caused a failure by employers to promote learning and employers are taking advantage of interns. The U.S. Department of Labor clarified the government's take on what defines an unpaid internship (Westerberg & Wickersham, 2011). In April 2010, the Department of Labor ("DOL") published a "Fact Sheet" on "Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act." According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2010), the six Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements directing whether an intern should be paid or unpaid are:

1. The training, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to that which would be given in a vocational school;
2. The training is for the benefit of the trainee;

3. The trainees do not displace regular employees, but work under close observation;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainees and on occasion the employer's operations may actually be impeded;
5. The trainees are not necessarily entitled to a job at the completion of the training period; and
6. The employer and the trainee understand that the trainees are not entitled to wages for the time spent in training. (p. 1)

If all six factors are present, then the employment relationship does not exist under the FLSA between the company and the student interns (U.S. Department of Labor, 2010). Conforming to the FLSA, the emphasis of the internship should be on presenting practical experiences and mentoring the intern, instead of a focus on the work that the intern produces (Hurst & Good, 2010). Thus, colleges are clarifying the distinction between academic internships and employment.

There is still much dispute about what is viewed as an internship in higher education. Internships are carried out differently among higher education programs—for credit, not for credit, full-time, part-time, with faculty support or without, paid or unpaid (Eyler, 2009). Regardless of compensation and variability, the capstone of a good preparation program is a carefully designed and supervised internship in which aspiring leaders are placed in a position and asked to function in that role (Sherman, 2000). Experiential learning theorists like Dewey, Piaget, and Lewin have suggested that learning and growth happen mostly when learning is combined with experience.

Internships should provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in the classroom to what they learn and experience in real world situations (as cited in O'Neill, 2010).

Medical preparation programs can serve as a model for educational leadership programs in integrating experiences, embedded clinical learning, and coursework (NCATE, 2010). In some medical programs, medical students follow a cohort of patients from the day they enter medical education to the day they complete their training, even as they take coursework and work with simulated patients in the course of their preparation (NCATE, 2010). In the problem-based method developed at Harvard Medical School, for instance, case studies and simulations of problems in diagnosing patient conditions, or working with families are used to construct an integrated spiral curriculum. These same cases are revisited several times during a semester. This allows medical students, working in small groups guided by clinical and academic faculty, to approach real life issues of individual patients, in increasingly more knowledgeable and sophisticated ways as their course work adds to their knowledge base (NCATE, 2010). A similar approach can be emulated by educational leadership internships because educational leadership candidates need that same intense level of review, guidance, and support.

Internships

Several researchers, including Cordeiro & Sloan (1996) and Daresh (2004), have noted the lack of research on field-based experiences, along with internships. Daresh (2004), stated:

It is somewhat surprising to note that while there are numerous recommendations suggesting the need to improve the quality and frequency of field-based

administrator preparation activities, the literature concerning this aspect of educational administration programs is presently not well developed. (p. 2)

Cordeiro & Sloan (1996) stated:

Despite the steady increase in the number of internship programs in educational administration, there is little empirical evidence with which to determine how internships impact both, the novice or intern's learning as well as the mentor administrator or expert. (p. 7)

Capasso & Daresh (2001) defined an administrative internship as a temporary placement that provides practice in the skills of leading, administering, or managing in an educational setting. According to Capasso & Daresh (2001), the internship has been noted as an important component in the preparation of school leaders as well as an essential component of educational leadership programs.

Studies have confirmed the value of internships as a means for developing educational leaders. According to Cordeiro & Sloan (1996), internships provide an authentic experience for the intern to “transfer theory into practice in a real setting” (p. 12). In another study by Kraus & Cordeiro (1995), administrators expressed that the internship provided “authenticity of the job” and connected theory and practice, provided access to a networking system, and built confidence (p. 17). Cordeiro & Sloan (1996) also described the confidence-building part of the internship as: “Being pushed to work independently, the intern's awareness increased and it allowed the intern to develop a sense of accountability for his or her actions” (p. 12). Researchers also found that internships help candidates gain important skills, including problem solving strategies and working with other adults (Cordeiro & Sloan, 1996). The review of the literature on

internships revealed elements of an effective educational leadership internship program. The following section is a discussing of different elements of an effective internship.

Elements for Successful Educational Leadership Internship Programs

It is universally agreed that the purpose of any internship is to bridge the gap between classroom learning and its application in the real world (Radigan, n.d.). In designing effective internships, a number of areas including the role of the internship in the overall educational program, site placement, and activity selection must be taken into account in order to ensure the best possible experience for the candidate (Berry, 2007). An important element in developing the program is to ensure that the candidate has plenty of opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding and working knowledge of the routines and daily tasks associated with the position (Berry, 2007). A successful program is dependent upon the competency and motivation of all parties: the student, the university and the placement site (Coco, 2000). Although internship programs and experiences vary, a review of the research has shown that the internship is one of the most valuable factors in preparing school leaders and developing leadership skills in candidates. Since internships differ from program to program, it is essential to review the literature for elements of effective internships.

Reflective practice. Reflection as an educational improvement strategy has come to involve an array of uses and meanings, based in a belief that critical examination of one's daily work is important to drive future action (Woerkom, 2003). Reflective practice, or critical reflection, is a process that involves practitioners to be engaged in self-discovery and improvement (Mezirow, 1998). Ostermann and Kottkamp (1993) defined critical reflection as a "means by which practitioners can develop a greater level

of self-awareness about the nature and impact of their performance, an awareness that creates opportunities for professional growth and development” (p. 2).

The process of reflection is challenging and demanding, but transformation requires critical reflection and is the initial step in recognizing what needs to be changed (Wagner et al., 2006). Self-reflection and recognition, as stated by Wagner et al. (2006), is the hardest and most powerful step in accepting one’s responsibilities as a leader. Despite the fact that internships provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge gained in the classroom with what they will be doing in the workplace, often times students are not able to make these connections without thinking on the experiences of the internship. Kolb (1984) asserted that internship reflection “enhances a learner’s experience through a linkage of education, work, and personal development” (p. 10). Giving candidates an opportunity to reflect is essential to any leadership preparation program, however, critical reflection should not just involve the recording of daily actions or events, but it needs to include an analysis of how events are related to theory and how these events can be seen from different perspectives (Ostermann & Kottkamp, 1993). According to Short (1997), critical reflection may include reflective journals, group reflections, simulations, and dialogues. In reflecting, the candidate makes connections in order to form new meaning. Although the internship experience is valuable, it is not enough. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) stated, “While experience is the basis for learning, learning cannot take place without reflection. Conversely, while reflection is essential to the process, reflection must be integrally linked with action” (Osterman & Kottkamp, pg. 3). Through experience and reflection, candidates can reflect on their thinking and learning along with developing their leadership skills.

Mentoring. One of the key practices for facilitating learning for the educational profession students is mentoring. Research resoundingly venerates the significance of mentoring in any preparation program. The concept of mentoring has existed for thousands of years (Murray, 2001). The origins of the word “mentor” can be traced back to ancient Greece and the epic tale of Odysseus (Murray, 2001). In the *Odyssey*, Ulysses’ entrusts his son Telemachus to a wise friend name Mentor. While Ulysses is gone for twenty years, Mentor becomes the prince’s guardian, counselor, and guide. Mentor aids the prince in understanding the problems that lie before him. The word “mentor” also relates to the Latin word “mens,” pertaining to or occurring in the mind (Gopee, 2011). Going beyond definitions of the word mentor, research indicates that the definition of mentor needs to include: nurturing; role modeling; functioning, as a teacher, sponsor, encourager, counselor and friend; focusing on the professional development of the mentee; and sustaining a caring relationship over time (Kerry & Mayes, 1995).

History offers many examples of helpful mentoring relationships: Socrates and Plato, Hayden and Beethoven, Freud and Jung. Derived from myth, the term “mentor” is a topic of discussion in today’s leadership development. Mentorship is a personal development relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person (Daresh, 2004). Mentoring is an ongoing relationship of communication and learning. The purpose of mentoring is to pass down knowledge acquired to help the protégé develop in their professional career. Effective mentors have good listening and communication skills. They are administrators with knowledge and experience in their field and they want to

help others develop and succeed. According to Daresh (2004), a mentor is a teacher, a guide, a counselor, a positive role model, and a wise and experienced supervisor.

Internships can provide meaningful learning experiences for future leaders, if the skill of the supervising mentor is essential. Mentors can engage and inspire aspiring leaders to become great leaders. Mentoring is significant but its effectiveness resides in the commitment of those responsible for the mentoring. Malone (2001) examined the relationship between mentors and protégés and discovered that mentors lacked in effectiveness because they did not have the time to work with their mentee. When time was available, several mentors lacked the necessary skills of a capable mentor (Malone, 2001). Malone found that at times, mentoring was detrimental to the development of the mentees especially when the mentees overly relied on the mentors for solutions.

Researchers have suggested that mentoring is more beneficial if there is more adequate training for mentors. Fry et al., (2005) supported this recommendation by saying,

Training should focus on (1) the competencies the intern is expected to demonstrate; (2) what “ideal performance” looks like; (3) how to observe and evaluate performance; (4) how to provide effective feedback; and (5) opportunities to practice, as needed, to develop proficiency. (p. 9)

The authors went on to summarize, “The quality of the internship depends upon much more than selecting a mentor who is recognized...Mentors must also be skilled in designing and coaching the learning of novices” (Fry et al., p. 9). In addition, mentors need to provide constructive feedback and they must assist interns in evaluating their work (Painter, 2001). Effective mentoring is developed through collaboration where

mentors serve as role models and aides in increasing knowledge and skills within new leaders (Daresh, 2004).

Student Participation. Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito (1998) stated that circumstances that are found, or not found, in a university environment can directly impact students' growth and development. Alexander Astin (1984) proposed in his student involvement theory, that student involvement and active engagement in their environment will increase learning and growth. Astin's (1993) I-E-O model for studying students' collegiate experience and student development has been based on the premise that educational evaluations are not complete unless they include information on student inputs (I), meaning the characteristics of the student, the educational environment (E), referring to programs, policies, faculty, peers, and educational experiences the student is exposed to, and student outcomes (O), referring to the student's characteristics after being exposed to the environment (Astin, 1993). Astin's Involvement theory has suggested five ideas (Astin, 1984):

1. Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. These "objects" may be highly generalized or specific such as an internship experience.
2. Involvement is continuous, and the amount of energy invested varies from student to student.
3. Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of a student's involvement with an internship can be measured quantitatively, such as the amount of hours spent at a site, and qualitatively, as in the student

actively applying their knowledge or just going through the internship duties with minimal effort.

4. The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quantity and quality of student involvement with the program.
5. The effectiveness of any educational practice is directly related to the capacity of that practice to increase student involvement. (p. 519)

The theory of student involvement suggests that a specific curriculum or program must prompt a sufficient level of student effort and investment of energy to bring about the desired learning and intended development (Astin, 1984, 1999). Unfortunately, many leadership preparation programs do not provide candidates with these engaging experiences that are needed for the development of leadership ability. In 2005, the Southern Region Educational Board conducted a survey of 61 schools of education (as cited in Fry et al., 2005). Based on the survey, evidence was found that the experiences presented were not practical enough to build leadership capacity. The research suggests that when preparation programs provide interns with higher levels of involvement, participants learn more. Further, administrative internships are more effective in developing leadership skills when the experiences that the interns take part in require a higher level of engagement and challenge (as cited in Fry et al., 2005).

High-Impact Educational Practices. High-impact learning happens when candidates are actively engaged in the educational process and their learning goes beyond the classroom and is applied in their work lives. In a high-impact learning experience, candidates actively pose and solve problems, work collaboratively in a community of

peers, experience real-world applications of knowledge, and reflect on their learning processes. According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (following the work of Kuh, 2008 in *High-Impact Educational Practices*), a number of educational experiences are conducive to high-impact learning, including internships. Internships as a high-impact educational practice are ideally characterized by Kuh's six common elements that—when employed—make the practices high-impact (Kuh, 2008):

1. They are effortful. High-impact practices demand that students devote considerable time and effort to purposeful tasks and require daily decisions that deepen students' investment in the internship learning experience as well as their commitment to their academic program.
2. They help students build substantive relationships. High-impact practices demand that students interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters over extended periods of time. Internships as a high-impact educational practice will help students to develop a meaningful relationship with another person – a faculty or staff member, student, coworker, or supervisor – and put students in the company of mentors and advisers who are committed to seeing students succeed.
3. They help students engage across differences. High-impact practices such as internships should help students experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves and challenge students to develop new ways of thinking.
4. They provide students with rich feedback. High-impact practices offer students frequent feedback about their performance. Internships as a high-

impact practice should include having one's performance evaluated by the internship supervisor and make opportunities for immediate formal and informal feedback. Feedback is almost continuous.

5. They help students apply and test what they are learning in new situations.

High-impact practices provide opportunities for students to see how what they are learning works in different settings. Internships as a high-impact educational practice should aid students in integrating, synthesizing, and applying knowledge that is essential to deep, meaningful learning experiences.

6. They provide opportunities for students to reflect on the person they are becoming. High-impact educational practices deepen learning and bring about one's values and beliefs into awareness. Internships as a high-impact practice should help students develop the ability to take the measure of events and actions and put them in perspective. As a result, students better understand themselves in relation to others and the larger world. In turn they acquire the intellectual tools and ethical grounding to act with confidence for the betterment of the human condition. (p. 25)

Based on these six elements, an internship is more likely to be "high-impact" for candidates when it is an intentionally structured activity that leads to specific learning outcomes; when candidates apply what they have learned in coursework to work experiences, reflect on these experiences, and receive feedback that helps them improve; when candidates build mentoring relationships with supervisors, faculty, and peers; when candidates are exposed to differences across people in ways of thinking; and when candidates are asked to use their experiences to clarify their values, interests, and

personal goals related to their career (O'Neill, 2010). Further, internships, as a form of experiential learning and a high-impact educational practice, are to provide candidates with direct experience in a work setting related to their career interests and to give them supervision and coaching from professionals in the field (Hurst & Good, 2010).

Although internships serve many purposes, the needs and goals of the candidate must be fulfilled for such programs to endure (Hurst & Good, 2010).

Standards for Educational Leaders

States and universities have used the ISLLC and ELCC standards to guide the professional practice and preparation of school leaders. Together, these leadership standards outline what education leaders should know and be able to do to ensure the success of all students (CCSSO, 2008). The primary goal of these standards is to articulate what effective leadership should look like in an educational system. The following is a discussion of the educational standards for school leaders.

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards (ISLLC)

Standards for School Leaders. Achilles (1994) was aware of the dynamics associated with educational leadership training. He found that innovative ideas were few in this field (Achilles, 1994). Undergoing much criticism, educational administration certainly was in need of improvement among the field and preparation programs (Achilles, 1994). Achilles focused on problems within the 1950-1990 era and sought remedies for the problems in educational administration training. Upon analysis, Achilles determined that the reform ideas from 1980-1990 were too similar to the ideas from the 1950s. He concluded that amendments in educational leadership preparation models were a recurring issue (Achilles, 1994). Achilles found that school administration required a

synthesis of ideas from diverse sources and the implementation of these ideas into skilled practice. Administrator preparation programs thus should provide new administrators with opportunities to enhance their skills and share knowledge among peers under the supervision of mentors and noted experts (Achilles, 1987).

Theory and research indicate that a curriculum that balances traditional doctoral studies with valuable and well-designed field-based experiences will allow Ed. D students to develop decision-making and leadership skills that are essential for system level leadership roles (Barnett & Coate, 2005). The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards (ISLLC), create a sound case for preparation programs that implement instructional programs that lead to improved achievement for students. In 1994, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), under the leadership of its corporate secretary Scott Thompson, created the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Committee. The purpose of this committee was to develop a set of professional standards for public school administrators (Murphy, 2003). The ISLLC, organized by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), was formed for the purpose of developing model standards and assessments for school leaders (CCSSO, 2008). In 1996, a set of standards to guide the practice of administrators was published (Bryant, Hessel, & Isernhagen, 2002). The development of the standards helped lay the foundation necessary for states to develop and have useful information for decision making regarding various educational system issues such as program development and review, licensure, and advanced certification (CCSSO, 2008).

In 2008 a modified set of ISLLC standards were released by CCSSO. These update the 1996 standards. The Wallace Foundation was a prime sponsor of the effort to

update the ISLLC standards. According to CCSSO, the 2008 standards are meant to serve as a starting point for guiding policymakers as they assess current education leadership goals, policies, regulations, and practices of education leaders. The six standards represent broad themes and priorities that education leaders such as superintendents, other district leaders, principals, teacher leaders, and mentors must keep focal in their efforts in order to promote the success of every student (CCSSO, 2008). The new standards represent the basics and what could be learned from an extensive review of research, along with knowledge in the field. The 1996 standards were not supported by this level of research and were dated. ISLLC 2008 now addresses critical topics, such as social justice, diversity, and the importance of student data (CCSSO, 2008). Each of the six standards includes several functions that describe actions that leaders should take to address and reach that standard. These standards are summarized as follows (CCSSO, 2008):

1. An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.
2. An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

4. An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. (CCSSO, 2008)

Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) Standards. Many universities use the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), now CAEP, for accreditation of education programs. NCATE, now CAEP, serves as the leading organization for setting standards for leadership development programs at universities. In the state of Kansas, programs in educational leadership are examined both by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) in conjunction with the NCATE and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). NCATE and The Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) have developed Educational Leadership Program Standards that support the notion of doctoral preparation programs that help system leaders develop the skills needed to implement instructional programs that increase student achievement. These standards include the six ISLLC 2008 standards along with a new seventh standard: “A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by substantial, sustained, standards-based experiences in real settings that are planned and guided cooperatively by university and

school district personnel for graduate credit” (Martin, 2012). The ELCC Standards are stated as follows:

1. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning supported by the school community.
2. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.
3. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by managing the organization, operations, and resources in a way that promotes a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairly, and in an ethical manner.
6. Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the

knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

7. The internship provides significant opportunities for candidates to synthesize and apply the knowledge and practice and develop the skills identified in Standards 1-6 through substantial, sustained, standards-based work in real settings, planned and guided cooperatively by the institution and school district personnel for graduate credit. (NPBEA, 2002)

The ISLLC standards and the ELCC standards are based on the same fundamental principles. These principles characterize effective educational leadership preparatory programs including: vision, culture, management, collaboration, integrity, and context (Murphy, 2005). In an effort to meet the expectations derived from these standards, educational preparation programs and their practical field-based experiences should be structured to enable each student to develop and prepare the students for assuming the role of a school administrator using the ISLLC standards as a knowledge base for the internships or field experiences. The standards address the importance of structured, sustained, standards-based experiences in authentic settings (NPBEA, 2011). The internship, thus, is the process and product that results from applying the knowledge and skills (NPBEA, 2011).

To ensure that preparation programs' field experiences do address the application of knowledge and skills, CAEP's teacher preparation program Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice, recommends the professional education unit and school partners to design and implement field and clinical experiences so that candidates

develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and dispositions so that all students learn. Rubrics for this standard expect that “Clinical practice is sufficiently extensive and intensive for candidates to demonstrate competence in the professional roles for which they are preparing” (n.p). It is also expected that “All candidates participate in field experiences or clinical practice that include students with exceptionalities and students from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic groups” (NCATE, 2011-14, n.p.). CAEP’s district level leadership standard 7.0: Internship addresses the importance of structured, sustained, standards-based experiences in authentic settings. The internship is defined as the process and product that results from applying the knowledge and skills described in the previous standards in a workplace environment (NCATE, 2011).

The internship experience is a prescribed requirement to fulfill accrediting and certification standards for the State of Kansas and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NCATE). Application of standards-based knowledge, skills, and research in real settings over time is a critical aspect of any institutional program. The internship is one of the important ending experiences in the preparation of school leadership that provides students with opportunities to explore, apply, and reflect on their knowledge and skills in a variety of leadership situations. These standards stress the indication that doctoral programs need to prepare students by engaging them in meaningful field-based learning experiences that are connected to the type of work that Ed. D. students will ultimately assume (Martin, 2012).

There is data that internship or field experience programs provide universities with a tool to help candidates acquire “real life” work experience in their chosen field (Bastedo, Batkhuyag, Prates, & Prytula, 2009), but they also can enhance candidate

engagement by “providing a rich, active, and contextualized learning experience” (McLennan, 2008, p. 4). There is also evidence that value-added learning activities such as field experiences or internships improve candidate learning and can also increase the satisfaction of candidates on their courses and instructors (Karns, 2005). Overall, when done well, field experiences or internships can make a significant impact on candidate learning.

Candidate Evaluation

One key aspect of an internship experience is to evaluate what has been learned. Since a defining characteristic of an educational leadership internship program is a focus on learning, feedback to interns is even more important because interns need to know in which areas their performance is meeting or exceeding standards, and in which areas they need to work harder or make adjustments (NCATE, 2011). This involves a variety of formal and informal evaluations of the program candidate and the evaluations should be part of the grading criteria. The field mentor and university supervisor play key roles in helping the candidate learn the educational administrator profession and develop leadership skills, therefore field mentors and university supervisors need to conduct candidate evaluations (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007).

Evaluation is important to an intern's development and is an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses (Martin, 2012). It is helpful if supervisors and mentors evaluate throughout the entire internship, not just at the end. The evaluation should be planned as a learning experience and an opportunity for two-sided feedback (Martin, 2012).

Program Evaluation

Successful program development cannot occur without evaluation. Evaluation is a process that measures the effects of a program against the goals it sets out to accomplish as a means of contributing to subsequent decision making and improving future programming (Weiss, 1972). In its publication “Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education”, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (1994) contends that periodic review of an institution is a measure of its commitment to achieving excellence.

Program evaluation is the process of systematically determining the quality of a program and how it can be improved (Sanders & Sullins, 2006). While program evaluation can include a variety of different types of assessments, the type used should be based on the program’s needs, which yields better, informed decisions and it should be ongoing (McNamara, 2006). An effective evaluation of an educational leadership program requires well-documented evidence of the program’s strengths and weaknesses (Sanders & Sullins, 2006). According to Sanders & Sullins (2006), this evidence must come from program participants’ feedback. In a review of several schools within the United States, Kramer (1991) found that program evaluation was lacking and candidates in these programs perceived that the career educational administrator was heading in the wrong direction. As a result, Kramer determined that methods by which programs were evaluated needed changing and more importance should reside in the perceptions and opinions of the candidates (Kramer, 1991). Using candidate feedback as part of the evaluation provides baseline data for future studies and provides a base for suggesting and evaluating system changes.

Evaluation is not just something performed at the end of a program. It is not just getting feedback and putting information on paper. Evaluation must be an ongoing process that involves the ongoing collection of information that tells whether a program is meeting its goals and objectives. Ongoing evaluation of educational leadership programs, or any program, is essential to success and involving students in the evaluation process is equally important.

Summary

In this chapter, a review of the literature related to internships as an educational practice within the college and university setting was presented. The literature review in this chapter included a discussion on the history of internships, as well as an examination of important elements of effective internships, a review of the standards for educational leaders, and the importance of candidate and program evaluation. Chapter three discusses the methodology that was used to conduct an evaluation of University X's Ed. D. in Educational Leadership's directed field experience program and answer the research questions formulated in chapter one.

Chapter Three

Methods

In this chapter, the methodology used to assess the research questions and hypotheses of the study is presented. This study examined the University X's Ed. D. in Educational Leadership's DFE and the level of helpfulness in preparation for administrative work. The objectives of this study involved assessing how helpful University X's Ed. D. in Educational Leadership's DFE was to candidates and graduates by determining if candidates and graduates believed their DFE adequately prepared them for leadership work in a way that was helpful to the development of leadership skills based on the leadership principles as established by the ISLLC and ELCC standards for school leaders. Chapter three describes the methodology used in this study. It includes the research design, population and sample, sampling procedures, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and limitations.

Research Design

Selecting the appropriate research method involves the review of three methods: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed. The intention of a qualitative approach is to understand the meaning of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative research is grounded in the assumption that individuals construct features of the social environment as interpretations (Gall, M., Gall, J. & Borg, 2007).

Quantitative research methods require a specific approach to sampling and statistical analysis (Gall et al., 2007). Quantitative designs such as descriptive, causal-comparative, and correlational designs are used to study the situation as it is. There are various types of quantitative studies that fall under the heading of descriptive quantitative

research. Descriptive studies are mostly concerned with finding out what is, and rely on observation and survey methods to collect descriptive data. This type of research involves either identifying the characteristics of an observed phenomenon or exploring possible correlations among two or more phenomena (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

This study involved a quantitative research design using survey methods to address the research questions. The variables of candidates' perceived level of helpfulness for the six areas of educational leadership as established by the ISLLC and ELCC Standards including, vision, culture of learning, management, collaboration with families and communities, ethics, and context were used to evaluate how helpful the University X DFE was to candidates and graduates. The variable in RQ1 is the perceived level of helpfulness regarding the DFE of University X, specifically in increasing candidates' skills for setting a widely shared vision for learning. The variable in RQ2 was the perceived level of helpfulness of the DFE, specific to career readiness and professional growth in increasing candidates' skills for improving a school culture conducive to student learning. The variable in RQ3 was the perceived level of helpfulness of the DFE in increasing candidates' management skills. The variable in RQ4 was the perceived level of helpfulness of the DFE in increasing skills for collaborating with families and communities. The variable for RQ5 was the perceived level of helpfulness of the DFE in contributing to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of school leaders. The variable in RQ6 was the perceived level of helpfulness that the DFE had in increasing the candidates' understanding of context and influencing the larger community.

Population and Sample

The population for this study included candidates and graduates from the first ten cohorts, who were enrolled in or had graduated from University X's Ed. D. program and whose professional background was at the PK-12 grade level as a teacher, a building level administrator, or a district level administrator. The sample included all PK-12 candidates and graduates who had enrolled in or graduated from the doctoral program that responded to the electronic survey.

Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was used in this study. According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), "purposive sampling involves selecting a sample based on the researcher's experience or knowledge of the group to be sampled" (p. 175). Candidates and graduates who enrolled in or had graduated from University X's Ed. D. program and who were employed at the PK-12 public school setting were selected to be part of this study. Only candidates and/or graduates at the PK-12 grade levels were included in this study. Candidates and graduates employed in higher education administration or in other fields were not included in this study.

Instrumentation

The researcher developed the instrument (see Appendix A) used for this study based on the ISLLC and ELCC standards for educational leadership. The researcher uploaded all survey items into an electronic survey program called SurveyMonkey. The survey instrument was intended to measure how helpful participation in the DFE was to the preparation of educational leadership of candidates enrolled in the first ten cohorts of the University X Ed. D. program by determining if candidates found the program's DFE

to adequately prepare them for their professional responsibilities based on the six leadership principles set by the ISLLC and ELCC standards. These standards are based on the fundamental principles of educational leadership including vision, culture, management, collaboration, integrity, and context (CCSSO, 2008). Descriptions of the six standards appeared in detail Appendix E and in chapter one. The participants rated survey items using a 5-point Likert-type scale.

The first section of the survey gathered demographic and professional information including gender, professional position during the DFE, level of position including elementary, middle school, high school, or district office, and the number of years of administrative experience. Participants selected the appropriate box for each question. The section also consisted of questions addressing how helpful the participants perceived the DFE to be to the preparation for administrative work based on the six areas of educational leadership including, vision, culture, management, collaboration, ethics, and context. The specific survey items were based on the performance expectations and indicators for school leaders. Participants rated each question on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The scale indicated Strongly disagree = 1, Neither agree or disagree = 3, Strongly agree = 5. The following statement was the item stem for this section of the survey. “Reflecting on your participation in the DFE of University X’s Ed. D. program, please rate each item according to your level of agreement or disagreement as an educational leader in the public school setting.”

The second part of the survey consisted of three open-ended questions. The open-ended questions at the end of the survey provided participants the opportunity to

elaborate on their experience in the DFE of University X's Ed. D. program. Participants were asked to respond, in 100 words or less, to the following questions:

1. How well did University X's DFEs prepare you for employment and/or professional advancement?
2. How could University X improve its DFE?
3. Additional comments

Measurement. Determining the candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program's perceived level of helpfulness from the DFE in adequately preparing them for administrative work in a way that was beneficial to the development of leadership skills was the intended measure of the survey. Participating candidates and graduates of the program marked demographic information regarding gender, professional position during the DFE, the level of position, number of years of administrative experience, and whether candidates perceived their professional position was helpful during the DFE. Comparison trends were analyzed based on the demographic diversity of the sample population. The perceived level of helpfulness or lack of helpfulness by participating candidates and graduates was determined from the responses on the Likert-type scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Table 1 contains the items for each research question along with the ISLLC standard that each item addresses. The open-ended questions allowed respondents to share specific information regarding the DFE in regards to preparation for employment and/or professional advancement, suggestions for improving the DFE, and additional comments to share. Analysis of the open-ended responses provided additional information. Comparison of the open-ended responses to those from the Likert-type scale and the demographic items also provided additional

explanation regarding the perceptions of the participants. Table 1 lists the items for each research question along with the ISLLC standard that each item addresses.

Table 1

Matrix for Survey Items by Research Questions

Research Question	ISLLC/ELCC Standard	Item #
RQ1: To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for setting a widely shared vision?	Standard 1: Sharing a widely shared vision for learning.	5-11
RQ2: To what extent do candidates and graduates University X's Ed. D program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for professional growth to develop a school culture conducive to student learning?	Standard 2: Developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.	12-19
RQ3: To what extent do candidates and graduates University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing management skills?	Standard 3: Ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.	20-26
RQ4: To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities?	Standard 4: Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.	27-35
RQ5: To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to contribute to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader?	Standard 5: Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.	36-42
RQ6: To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context?	Standard 6: Understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts.	43-48

Validity and reliability. “Validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure” (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 181). Content validity was established on the survey by sending the survey to an expert panel for review. Minor revisions were made to the instrument based on the recommendations of the panel. A panel of three experts was recruited to verify the validity of the survey instrument. The expert panel included one assistant superintendent and two university educational leadership program professors and directed field experience supervisors for educational leadership programs. The two university faculty members are retired building and district level administrators. The first panelist was an assistant superintendent of general administration. She served as an executive director of special services in the Olathe district since 2008 and was director of that department for eight years. She has worked in the district since 1992, starting as a developmental disabilities classroom teacher. She holds a bachelor’s degree in elementary and special education from the University of Vermont in Burlington. She holds a master’s degree in developmental and child psychology and a doctorate degree in educational leadership and policy studies from the University of Kansas. She has demonstrated strong leadership and supervisory experience with the skills to direct and mentor doctoral candidates. She has served as a field supervisor and mentor to several doctoral candidates from various universities including University X, University of Kansas, and Emporia State University during the directed field experiences.

The second member of the panel was an Assistant Professor of Education/University Licensure Officer at University X Graduate School of Education. He oversaw the directed field experiences for graduate students in school leadership

aspiring to be building principals or assistant principals. He has brought a wealth of school leadership knowledge and first-hand experience to the students in the Master of Arts in School Leadership program. Prior to joining the faculty at University X four years ago, he spent 21 years as a principal at both the middle school and high school level in Abilene, Kansas.

The third panel member retired from a large suburban district in Kansas after many years as a building level administrator. Upon retirement in the early 2000s, he was principal of one of the district's high schools where he served for more than a decade. Prior to that position, he served as an assistant principal at two other high schools in the district. This panelist has served as a field supervisor for the Graduate Department, School of Education at University X. In that role, he had successfully directed candidates at the masters and doctoral levels.

The panel reviewed the survey for clarity of directions, adequacy of items to meet the intended purpose, item clarity, and grammatical correctness. In addition, panel members were asked to identify additional items that might improve the instrument. All expert panel members agreed that the survey directions were clear and the items matched the stated purpose.

Reliability is the degree to which an instrument is a consistent measure (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 181). To evaluate each of the six scales from the survey, the researcher calculated Cronbach's α . According to Carmines & Zeller (1979), a coefficient greater than .80 is sufficient to show the reliability of a scale. As presented in Table 2, the results of those calculations provide strong evidence for the reliability of each of the scales: vision, culture, management, collaboration, ethics, and context.

Table 2

Reliability Coefficients for the Survey Scales Used for Each Standard

	<i>N</i>	Alpha
Standard 1-Vision	7	.938
Standard 2-Culture	8	.899
Standard 3-Management	7	.897
Standard 4-Collaboration	9	.920
Standard 5-Ethics	7	.932
Standard 6-Context	6	.903

Data Collection Procedures

Before collecting data, a Proposal for Research (see Appendix F) was submitted to the University X Institutional Review Board (IRB) requesting approval for the study. Approval from the committee was granted on September 12, 2014. The letter of approval can be found in Appendix G. An email was sent to all University X's Ed. D. in Educational Leadership program candidates in Cohorts 1-10 on September 19, 2014 asking them to participate in the study by responding to a survey using SurveyMonkey. The letter included the SurveyMonkey link that would take the candidates directly to the online survey. A copy of the letter is in Appendix H.

Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants acknowledge consent to participate by clicking on the survey link within the text of the email. The letter explained that responses would remain anonymous and no individual results could be released. There was no risk involved to any participant who elected to respond to the electronic survey. The survey link was open for two weeks and the respondents received a reminder one week before the close of the window to maximize response rates. A copy

of the reminder email is in Appendix I. The data from the survey was retrieved from SurveyMonkey.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

After the results of the SurveyMonkey were compiled, an Excel spreadsheet was produced that included the responses for the candidates and graduates who completed the survey. The data was exported from Excel into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), IBM® SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 22 for Windows. Data was analyzed and reported using descriptive statistics. A one-sample *t* test was conducted to address each research question. Each sample mean was tested against a null value of 3. The level of significance was set at .05. The following hypotheses were stated to address the research questions used in this study.

RQ1. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing skills for setting a widely shared vision for learning?

H1. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for setting a widely shared vision for leadership.

RQ2. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for professional growth to develop a school culture conducive to student learning?

H2. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for professional growth to develop a school culture conducive to student learning.

RQ3. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing management skills?

H3. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing management skills.

RQ4. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities?

H4. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities.

RQ5. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to contribute to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader?

H5. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE contributed to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader.

RQ6. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context?

H6. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context.

Limitations

Limitations of a study “are factors that may have an effect on the interpretation of the findings or on the generalizability of the results” (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 133).

The study had the following limitations:

1. The survey link was e-mailed only to candidates and graduates participating in this one university. Therefore, the results may not be generalized beyond the specific population from which the sample was drawn.
2. The respondents’ perceptions of their level of preparedness were not necessarily factual.
3. As a student enrolled in the University X Ed. D. program, the researcher completing this study is closely tied to the program being studied.

Summary

This chapter restated the purpose of this research and provided a detailed explanation of how each survey item correlated to each research question. Data collection procedures and methods of data analysis were discussed and methods of data analysis were examined. Limitations of the study were also stated in this chapter. Chapter four presents the study findings including descriptive statistics and results of the hypotheses for the six research questions.

Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how helpful participation in the DFE was to the preparation of educational leadership of candidates enrolled in the first ten cohorts of a private Midwestern university doctoral program by determining if candidates and graduates found the program's DFE to adequately prepare them for leadership work in a way that was helpful to the development of leadership skills based on the leadership principles as established by the ISLLC and ELCC standards for school leaders. Chapter four presents the descriptive statistics section, which gives the demographic information about the participants, and the study results including the quantitative analysis for the six research questions.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics are based on the participants' responses to the survey questions. This study included a sample of candidates and graduates who were enrolled in or had graduated from a private Mid-western university's Ed. D. program and whose background was at the PK-12 public school setting. Out of 172 candidates and graduates who received the survey, 64 completed the entire survey for a return rate of 37%. Respondents were able to skip items on the survey; therefore not all items resulted in an equal sample size. Table 3 shows the demographic profile of the study sample. The results of the descriptive analyses illustrate that 73.4% of the participants were female and 26.6% were male and that 55.7% were employed as PK-12 administrators. Additionally, 21.5% of the sample reported that they were classroom teachers or held a

position not otherwise classified by the study. At the time of the study, a majority of the participants, 55.7%, had 0-5 years of administrative leadership experience.

Table 3

Demographic Profile for Participants

Gender	Percentage	Count
Female	73.4%	58
Male	26.6%	21
Professional Position	Percentage	Count
Classroom teacher	21.5%	17
Building administrator	30.4%	24
District administrator	25.3%	20
Other (instructional coach, specialist, etc.)	22.8%	18
Level of position	Percentage	Count
Elementary	24.4%	19
Middle school	25.6%	20
High school	16.7%	13
District office	33.3%	26
Administrative Experience	Percentage	Count
0-5	55.7%	44
6-10	24.1%	19
11-15	11.4%	9
16-20	7.6%	6
21+	1.3%	1

Table 4 presents descriptive statistics across the scale used to measure each standard for the responses to the Likert-type agreement items. The questions were based

on the 2008 ISLLC and ELCC standards for school leaders that promote the success of every student.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistic Averages for the Survey Items Used for Each Standard

	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Standard 1-Vision	63	1.00	5.00	3.86	0.79
Standard 2-Culture	64	2.00	5.00	3.84	0.69
Standard 3-Management	64	1.00	5.00	3.78	0.74
Standard 4-Collaboration	60	1.00	5.00	3.60	0.76
Standard 5-Ethics	62	1.00	5.00	4.06	0.71
Standard 6-Context	64	1.17	5.00	3.78	0.74

Hypothesis Testing

The results of the hypothesis testing, using one-sample *t* tests for each of the research questions are presented here. The level of significance was set at .05 for each research question.

RQ1. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing skills for setting a widely shared vision for learning?

H1. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for setting a widely shared vision for leadership.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to address RQ1. The sample mean was tested against a null value of 3. The results of the one sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 8.65$, $df = 62$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.86$, $SD = .79$) was higher than the null value 3. On average candidates and

graduates agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful to increasing skills for setting a widely shared vision for learning.

RQ2. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for professional growth to develop a school culture conducive to student learning?

H2. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful in increasing skills for professional growth to develop a school culture conducive to student learning.

A one-sample t test was conducted to address RQ2. The sample mean was tested against a null value of 3. The results of the one sample t test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 9.81$, $df = 63$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.84$, $SD = .69$) was higher than the null value 3. On average candidates and graduates agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful in increasing skills for professional growth to develop a school culture conducive to student learning.

RQ3. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report the participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing management skills?

H3. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing management skills.

A one-sample t test was conducted to address RQ3. The sample mean was tested against a null value of 3. The results of the one sample t test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 8.40$, $df = 63$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .74$) was higher than the null value 3. On average candidates and

graduates agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful to their learning in increasing management skills.

RQ4. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities?

H4. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to address RQ4. The sample mean was tested against a null value of 3. The results of the one sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 6.14$, $df = 59$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.66$, $SD = .76$) was higher than the null value 3. On average candidates and graduates agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities.

RQ5. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to contribute to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader?

H5. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE contributed to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to address RQ5. The sample mean was tested against a null value of 3. The results of the one sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 11.73$, $df = 61$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 4.05$, $SD = .71$) was higher than the null value 3. On average candidates and

graduates agreed that participation in the DFE contributed to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader.

RQ6. To what extent do candidates and graduates of University X's Ed. D. program report participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context?

H6. Candidates and graduates report participation in the DFE to be helpful to increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to address RQ6. The sample mean was tested against a null value of 3. The results of the one sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 8.40$, $df = 63$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .74$) was higher than the null value 3. On average candidates and graduates agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful to their learning in increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context.

Additional Analyses

Section two of the survey included open-ended response items. Participants were asked to share their thoughts regarding the DFE in regards to preparation for employment and/or professional advancement, suggestions for improving the DFE, and any additional comments they wanted to share about the DFE. In this section, survey respondents' answers to the open-ended questions are discussed.

Of the 64 participants, 48 (75%) responded to the first open-ended question regarding the DFE's preparation for employment and/or professional advancement. Of the 48 respondents, 39 (81%) responded with favorable comments in regards to the DFE preparing candidates and graduates for employment and/or professional advancement.

The comments ranged from general statements to highlighting specific elements. An example of a favorable, general comment that came from respondent 40 was, “The DFE enhanced my skills and abilities for pursuit of future positions.” A more specific comment from respondent 37 was, “I believe the DFE program was a great way to enhance my skills in each of the six areas of leadership. I had the great opportunity through my DFE to work with a variety of district leaders and experience working with the community. I have not changed my position since completing my DFE but feel very prepared if given the opportunity to work at the district level.”

The less favorable responses to the first question were also examined. A total of nine respondents described the DFE as not meeting its purpose of preparing them for employment and/or professional advancement. The nine unfavorable answers provided by the participants identified specific issues regarding the type of DFE activities that they participated in. The respondents felt the activities were not aligned with the six ISLLC Standards or job preparation duties. One respondent shared, “So many of the hours were spent on activities that did not enhance employment opportunities nor professional development.” Another commented, “I felt like I was given a ton of busy work to do in each of my DFEs. I spent many hours doing mindless tasks.” The other responses given were similar in stating the DFE did not prepare them for employment or professional advancement.

The second open-ended question asked candidates and graduates to share their ideas as to how University X could improve its DFE. Of the 64 survey participants, 37 (58%) responded to the second question. The analysis of responses to the second question indicated that it would be helpful if they were offered suggestions of activities

for each of the six ISLLC Standards. One respondent wrote, “Perhaps offering suggestions of activities for each standard may help. It was hard to think of items that could fall under each, so a ‘starting point’ could be helpful.” Another respondent shared, “I think the DFE should be done in shorter time with some suggested activities that align to standards. I think some students struggle with what will count and what are meaningful activities to seek out to give them deeper understanding of the standard and the steps involved in the task.” Other responses recommended the amount of hours expected for each of the DFEs be shortened considering the majority of candidates in the program are working professionals.

The final open-ended question asked participants to provide additional comments. Of the 64 survey participants, ten provided comments. The majority of the comments were positive in regards to the DFE. Further analysis of the responses indicated a trend to identifying professional connections as a positive element of the DFE program. A total of eight responses included some degree of reference to professional connections they made with district leaders as being a positive result of their DFE experience.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the results from this study. The researcher presented frequency tables to summarize the demographics for the sample, the descriptive statistics for the averaged items for each standard, followed by the results of the hypothesis testing for the six research questions. For research questions one through six, six hypothesis tests were conducted and the results of the one-sample t tests were presented. Chapter four also contained the responses to the open-ended questions.

Chapter five provides a summary of the study, discussion of the findings, implications for action, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter Five

Interpretation and Recommendations

The first four chapters introduced the background, purpose, and significance of the study; provided a review of the literature and methodology used in the study; and presented the data analysis and results of the study.

Chapter five includes the summary of the study, findings related to the literature; and major findings, implications for action, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

Study Summary

The preparation of educational leaders is essential to developing high performing schools. Therefore, the field experiences of leadership preparation programs require careful planning and evaluation. Examination of the perceived benefits by the candidates and graduates can contribute to the overall evaluation of the program, specifically the field experience. The study summary provides a brief description of the problem and purpose of the study. Additionally, the research questions, methodology, and findings are reviewed in this section.

Overview of the problem. The report, *A Nation at Risk* alerted Americans about public schools' lack of success and as a result reforms have taken place (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). More recently, research has emphasized the importance of educational leadership on student achievement (CCSSO, 2008). The increasing complexity placed on educational leaders requires effective preparation for aspiring educational leaders. Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) point out that leadership preparation programs have not effectively prepared school leaders. In their review of

leadership, Fry, Bottoms, & O'Neill, (2005) described the field experience as a crucial instrument in leadership preparation. Fry et al. (2005), also noted that the field experience should provide candidates with opportunities to apply new knowledge and develop skills for their future professional occupations. In response to the changing role of educational leaders and their professional responsibilities, the development of national standards for educational leadership was developed. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium developed a set of standards for educational leadership in 1996 and revised them in 2008 (CCSSO, 2008). In 2002, the Educational Leadership Constituent Council developed standards that are used to evaluate university preparation programs seeking accreditation (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2002). A review of research shows that the field experience has been a significant element of graduate preparation programs that prepare effective educational leaders. Therefore, educational leadership programs should evaluate their field experiences, while candidate feedback and perceptions can help in determining the benefit of a doctoral program's field experience.

Purpose statement and research questions. As stated in chapter one, the intended objective of this study was to examine the perceived level of helpfulness of a private Mid-western university's Ed. D. educational administration program's Directed Field Experience (DFE) by determining if candidates and graduates of the program feel their preparation program's DFE adequately prepared them for their professional responsibilities. The responsibilities of educational leaders were divided into six categories derived from commonalities identified in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the Educational Leadership Constituent Council

(ELCC) Standards: vision, culture, management, collaboration, ethics, and context. The six research questions used to guide this study were based on the six categories of the ISLLC/ELCC Standards.

Review of the methodology. This study involved a quantitative research design using a Likert-type scale survey to address the research questions related to the directed field experience (DFE) of a private Mid-western university. The researcher developed the instrument for the study. The study involved candidates and graduates in the first ten cohorts, who were enrolled in or had graduated from University X's Ed. D. program and whose background was at the PK-12 public school setting. The initial part of the survey contained demographic and professional information. The section also asked candidates and graduates to reflect on their participation in the DFE and rate how helpful the participants perceived the DFE to be to the preparation of administrative work based on the six areas of educational leadership including, vision, culture, management, collaboration, ethics, and context. The specific survey items were based on the performance expectations and indicators for school leaders. Finally, the second part of the survey consisted of three open-ended questions. The open-item questions at the end of the survey provided participants the opportunity to elaborate on their experience in the DFE. The variables of candidates' perceived level of helpfulness for the six areas of educational leadership as established by the ISLLC and ELCC Standards were used to evaluate how helpful the DFE was to candidates and graduates.

The researcher distributed an electronic version of the survey to 172 candidates and graduates who were enrolled in or had graduated from University X's Ed. D.

program and whose background was at the PK-12 public school setting. The data were collected and entered into SPSS for analysis.

Major findings. The results of the hypothesis tests indicated that candidates and graduates of the university agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful to the preparation of administrative work as outlined by the six ISLLC Standards for leaders (vision, culture, management, collaboration, ethics, and context). When looking at the demographic profiles of participants, two ancillary findings were produced; 73% of survey participants were female and 56% of participants had 0-5 years of administrative experience. The results of the demographic profiles also show that 55.7% of the participants held administrative positions and 33.3% held positions at the district office. Looking at the means tabled in chapter four, respondents felt that participation in the DFE prepared them more in the area of ethics. The ethics standard category had the highest mean of the six with a sample mean higher than the null value 3, while collaboration had the lowest mean of the six. The major findings for each of the six research questions are discussed in this section.

Educational leaders should be able to develop and implement a vision of learning (CCSSO, 2008). The ISLLC Standards performance expectations state that administrators "...ensure the achievement of all students by guiding the development and implementation of a shared vision of learning, strong organizational mission, and high expectations for every student" (p. 13). The results of this study were found to be statistically significant. The results show that on average the directed field experience of University X helped candidates and graduates increase their knowledge and skills to develop and implement a widely shared vision. Although there was no hypothesis test

completed, standard one relating to vision was third highest in the level of helpfulness that participation in the DFE had to increasing skills for setting a vision for learning. The results indicate that candidates and graduates may have participated in school improvement leadership activities including developing, affirming, and implementing school vision, mission, and goals. Additionally, participation in the DFE may have provided opportunities for candidates and graduates to utilize and analyze data with staff in order to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Educational leaders should be able to advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program that is conducive to student learning and promotes staff professional growth (CCSSO, 2008). A positive school culture fosters all components of the instructional system including staff professional growth, curriculum, instructional materials, pedagogy, and student assessment (CCSSO, 2008). The performance expectations state that educational leaders “promote the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth” (p. 16). School administrators must be instructional leaders and foster a school culture that facilitates a focus on teaching and learning. The results of this study indicated that on average candidates and graduates of the studied university agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful to professional growth in increasing skills to develop a school culture conducive to student learning and the results were found to be statistically significant. The results indicate that activities of the DFE may have allowed candidates and graduates to collaborate in planning and leading professional development activities related to instructional programs to meet diverse needs, along with participation in observation,

coaching, staff supervision, and data interpretation. Culture was second in the level of helpfulness that participation in the DFE had in preparing candidates and graduates for administrative work with a mean higher than three. Because culture plays such an important part of leadership development, the findings of the study imply that the school district mentors may have placed a strong emphasis on this area in planning activities for the candidates and graduates.

Educational leaders should be able to manage the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment (CCSSO, 2008). School administrators must supervise continuous management structures and practices that enhance teaching and learning, maintain infrastructure for finance and personnel in support of student success, and address potential challenges to the physical and emotional safety and security of staff and students (CCSSO, 2008). The results of this study found that on average candidates and graduates of the studied university agreed that participation in the DFE helped their learning in increasing management skills which imply that candidates and graduates assisted with budget development and became familiar with selected district policies, regulations, and negotiated agreements during their participation in the DFE. Again, the results were found to be statistically significant. The implication here is that field mentors may have also contributed to the leadership development skills in this area by promoting and stressing to the candidates the importance of maintaining a trusting, professional work environment that supports due process and civil rights. Management was fifth in the perceived level of helpfulness to participants; therefore University X needs to work with field mentors and university supervisors to offer more activities.

School administrators should collaborate with faculty and community members, respond to diverse community interests, and mobilize community resources (CCSSO, 2008). Successful collaboration is reached by meeting diverse community interests and needs by utilizing stakeholder resources to positively affect student and adult learning (CCSSO, 2008). Although results showed that on average candidates and graduates of the studied university agreed that participation in the DFE was helpful to their learning in increasing skills in working with families and communities, this area had the lowest mean score of the six variables which suggest that during the DFE, candidates and graduates were given less opportunities to develop their skills in working with families. In order to effectively educate students for participation in a diverse, democratic society, educational leaders must engage all stakeholders in collaboration and partnerships for important decisions of schools and districts. The implication is that University X and participating school districts must make efforts to provide higher levels of involvement in the area of collaboration with all stakeholders in order for candidates to increase their learning and skills.

Educational leaders should conduct themselves with integrity, fairness, and act in an ethical manner (CCSSO, 2008). School administrators should model personal and professional ethics, integrity, justice, and fairness, demonstrate respect and provide equitable treatment for the interests of diverse stakeholders, and develop lifelong learning strategies related to content, standards, assessment, data, teacher support, evaluation, and professional development (CCSSO, 2008). The results of this study found that on average candidates and graduates of the studied university agreed that participation in the DFE contributed to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a

school leader and the results were found to be statistically significant. In fact, candidates and graduates rated the level of helpfulness of the DFE in the development and understanding of integrity significantly higher than the other five variables. The implication here is that educators are held to codes of ethics, with emphasis on personal conduct and fiscal responsibilities, therefore field mentors and university supervisors make great efforts to engage candidates in activities that develop ethical behaviors of school leaders. The Performance Expectations of the ISLLC Standards “build on concepts of professional ethics and integrity and add an emphasis on responsibilities of leaders for educational equity and social justice in a democratic society” (p. 22). Knowing the importance of leaders conducting themselves with integrity implies that candidates and graduates of this university reflect about values and beliefs in education. After further enquiry, University X has added an ethics course to their doctoral program’s course requirements.

School leaders should understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (CCSSO, 2008). Administrators contribute to the context of the educational system by participating and exerting professional influence in local and larger educational policy environments; supporting excellence and equity in education; and collaborating with policy makers to improve education (CCSSO, 2008). The results of this study found that on average candidates and graduates of the studied university agreed that participation in the DFE benefited their understanding of influencing the larger community and context. The results indicate that candidates and graduates were provided opportunities to participate in activities that allowed them to disaggregate and use community demographic data to establish student-learning needs.

The candidate attending legislative hearings and meetings concerning educational issues may have also been an area of concentration by participating school districts and the field mentor. Although the results reveal that candidates and graduates felt that participation in the DFE was helpful to increasing their understanding of influencing the larger community and context, this standard's mean score was fourth of the six, which suggests that University X needs to work with candidates, field mentors, and university supervisors in selecting activities that will enhance candidates' understanding and skills required of ISLLC Standard five.

Findings Related to the Literature

Field experiences are an integral part of educational leadership preparation programs. They are designed to prepare students for assuming the role of administrator, as well as developing students' leadership skills. This study examined the perceived level of helpfulness of University X's DFE by candidates and graduates of the Ed. D. program. Data collected for this study revealed that on average candidates and graduates of University X believed the DFE was helpful in preparing them for leadership work based on the components of the ISLLC/ELCC standards. This section connects findings from the results of this study and those found in previous studies. A comparison of the results of this study with those presented in chapter two unveils several similarities.

Based on the results of the Likert-type scale items, this study confirms previous research that notes the importance that the field experience/ISLLC relationship has on preparatory program's field experiences for impacting leadership development. At University X, the content of the DFE is linked to the ISLLC/ELCC standards. In considering field experience activities, the literature offers that activities should provide

authentic administrative experiences, provide a variety of opportunities to develop skills, and apply the knowledge gained in the classroom to what they learn and experience in real world situations (O'Neill, 2010). As an example, University X structures their DFE activities around the ISLLC/ELCC standards. Structuring the field experience in this manner indicates that students take part in activities that cover the responsibilities and skills of practicing administrators stressed by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) as essential to strong leadership. Additionally, Murphy (2005) and the State Consortium of Education Leadership (2008) found that the principles the ISLLC/ELCC standards represent the characteristics of an effective preparatory program. According to the State Consortium of Education Leadership (2008), the “performance expectations and indicators represent a current national consensus about the most important, observable aspects of education leaders’ work” (p. 12).

Coco (2000), noted the competency and motivation of all parties, the student, the university, and the placement site, are significant factors in producing a successful program. The results of this study provide evidence that, overall, the DFE experience of University X appears effective from all of the perspectives noted by Coco (2000). Further, the study’s findings support O’Neill’s (2010) study on the six elements of high impact practices and provide evidence of University X’s DFE. O’Neill noted that a field experience is considered to be a “high impact” practice for candidates when the field experience provides activities that lead to specific learning outcomes; when candidates apply what they have learned in coursework to work experiences, reflect on these experiences, and receive feedback that helps them improve; when candidates build

mentoring relationships with supervisors, faculty, and peers; when candidates are exposed to differences across people in ways of thinking; and when candidates are asked to use their experiences to clarify their values, interests, and personal goals related to their career.

The results of the open-ended questions provided evidence that the mentor/protégé relationship was a significant component in the DFE for impacting the leadership development of candidates and graduates. According to fourteen respondents, the overall quality of the DFE is influenced by the mentor. Such results are consistent with Malone's (2001) findings that indicated that mentoring was significant if the skill of the supervising mentor is essential. In addition the current study's results concur with Daresh's (2004) examination that suggested that positive mentor/protégé relationships occurred, due to the commitment of the responsible mentor, resulting in increased knowledge and skills. Moreover, this study also provides evidence that the effectiveness of mentoring can also be detrimental to the mentee. Malone (2001) noted problems when mentors lack the time to work with their mentee or did not have the necessary skills to serve as a capable mentor.

The study's results to the open-ended questions also provided support to research suggesting that the field experience prompts sufficient level of student effort and involvement to bring about the intended learning. The current study's results agree with the findings of Fry et al. (2005), who believe that administrative field experiences are more effective in leadership development skills when the experiences that candidates participate in require high levels of engagement. Furthermore, the study's results justify

Astin's (1984) student involvement theory that proposed that student involvement and active engagement increase learning and growth.

Conclusions

As stated in chapter one, the field experience is a key component of educational leadership preparation programs. Also, recognizing candidates' perceptions of the effectiveness of their graduate program's field experience is an important factor in assessing the benefit of the field experience to leadership development. The research gained from this study adds to the body of evidence regarding the value and perceived helpfulness that educational leadership preparation programs' field experiences have on educational leaders. Specifically, the results of this study emphasize that candidates and graduates perceived the DFE of a private university in Kansas as beneficial to their professional responsibilities as educational leaders based on the ISLLC Standards for school leaders. The implications for future action as well as suggestions for additional research and concluding remarks are presented in this section.

Implications for action. Educational leadership is more important than ever. The recognition that schools and districts will not meet demanding requirements for improving achievement without effective leaders has made leadership development a major reform strategy (CCSSO, 2008). Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends implications for University X to refine its directed field experience. Overall, the results of the study suggest that University X's candidates and graduates' perception about the DFE was positive. Also, candidates and graduates felt the DFE had prepared them to assume administrative duties based on the ISLLC Standards set for school leaders.

Essentially, the findings of this study have a few practical applications for the role of University X in facilitating a DFE that is done well. One of the most critical aspects of any field experience is the mentor. The review of the literature suggests that mentors play a critical role in the development of school leaders. The findings of this study also suggest the importance of mentors. If mentors are to be successful in providing guidance to their intern, University X should have a comprehensive approach to providing ongoing mentor training for active and prospective mentors. Additionally, University X should screen prospective mentors to assess for time constraints and willingness to engage with candidates to facilitate DFE activities that address the competencies defined through the ISLLC Standards.

The university should also ensure that candidates are involved in higher level of participation. If there is serious consideration about meeting the needs of our educational system, it is imperative to develop leaders with abilities to recognize and overcome the complexities of leading districts and schools. One way that University X can ensure higher level of participation is to work with school districts to provide the type of “hands on” activities that assure the candidates are not just observing, but actually participate in and lead activities that practicing administrators do. By involving candidates in more extensive opportunities to actually serve in the administrative role and to lead activities, the field experience would be more effective in developing the candidates’ skills that translate knowledge into practice.

Another area of concentration for University X to investigate is the development of candidates’ skills in the area of collaboration with families and community members as outlined in standard four of the ISLLC Standards. Based on the data compiled by the

researcher, candidates rated the DFE least helpful to increasing skills in working with families and community members. University X should make collaborative efforts with school districts to form collaborative partnerships and include outside community members, in order to create opportunities for candidates to enrich their skills in working with families and communities. Also, University X needs to communicate with participating school districts, field mentors, and university supervisors that candidates be given projects during the DFE that involve collaborating with an array of community members, politicians, families, and faculty.

Finally, this study is particularly significant to University X because it provides valuable feedback in the evaluation of their school leadership preparation program and specifically the DFE component of the program. Although student feedback alone is not enough to conduct a comprehensive program evaluation, it provides helpful information to the university related to identifying program strengths and areas of improvement. In order to determine program modification needs and candidate perceptions and opinions, University X must continue to survey candidates. Gaining feedback from candidates could provide insight to student perceptions regarding the program's DFE and its helpfulness in preparing them for their responsibilities as educational leaders and whether the DFE is meeting its goals and objectives.

Recommendations for future research. After examining the major findings of this study and understanding the implications for action, recommendations can be made regarding further research in the following areas.

1. Replicate this study with the remaining cohorts and compare results to determine if student perceptions have changed. Repeating this study would

help measure program development in regards to the DFE and whether the university has responded to the information gathered from the collected student feedback.

2. Further research is needed to determine whether field experiences promote more effective leadership. The study could also review the long-term impact of the field experience on the career success of candidates and graduates. It would be significant to examine whether candidates and graduates go on to effectively and successfully apply learned and developed skills as actual practitioners.
3. Replication of this study with an expansion to include all doctoral preparation programs' field experiences in the state of Kansas. The recommended study could focus on the existence and effectiveness of other leadership preparation programs to determine what differences and similarities may exist.
4. Conducting a study to determine the ongoing effects of the field experience at University X on candidates and graduates. Data should be collected from candidates and graduates prior to the directed field experience, during the directed field experience, and at the completion of the directed field experience to determine changes in skills over time.
5. Additional research needs to be conducted to assess the value of the DFE mentor with regard to the ISLLC standards, field experience, and connections from theory to practice.
6. A recommendation for a study of the same university's doctoral preparation program that could investigate the present and past mentors and examine their

perceptions about the field experience process, university level support, and ISLLC Standards.

7. An analysis of the characteristics of effective mentors for educational administration field experiences is needed to examine whether the mentors selected by candidates are qualified to serve as mentors.

Concluding remarks. This study was designed to determine candidates and graduates' perceived level of helpfulness that participation in a university's directed field experience adequately prepared them for their professional responsibilities based on the leadership principles as established by the ISLLC and ELCC standards for school leaders. Based on the literature, the purpose of educational leadership programs' field experiences is to prepare candidates and graduates to become leaders. The field experience is an important component for the preparation of school leaders. The field experience provides students with the opportunity to explore, apply, and reflect on their knowledge and skills in a variety of leadership situations. To make certain that aspiring leaders are prepared for their professional responsibilities as an educational leader, educational leadership programs should promote field experiences that permit the candidates to develop and show mastery in the six Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. The ISLLC Standards issued in July of 2008 support preparation programs that help system leaders develop the ability to envision, design, and implement instructional programs that lead to improved achievement for all students (CCSSO, 2008).

Based on this understanding, leadership preparation programs must design field experience activities to address the ISLLC standards in order to maximize development

of the candidates' knowledge and skills. Recognizing the significant role student perception plays in assessing program effectiveness, universities must consistently survey candidates and graduates regarding the perceptions of participation in the program's field experience and the benefits of the field experience to leadership development. This feedback can help universities make decisions in their efforts for continuous program development. Leadership has significant effects on the quality of the school organization and on teacher and student learning, thus quality field experiences are critical if we are to have better prepared educational leaders.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey

Survey Instrument

1. Introduction

Dear [REDACTED] University Ed. D. candidates and graduates,

My name is Sarah Guerrero and I am a doctoral student at The [REDACTED] University School of Education located in [REDACTED], Kansas. For my doctoral dissertation, I am completing a research study to determine student perceptions of how helpful [REDACTED] University Educational Leadership Doctoral program's Directed Field Experience (DFE) is in preparing candidates for leadership work as a result of the field experienced, based on the leadership principles established by the ISLLC and ELCC standards for leaders.

To gather data for my survey, I am asking each candidate and graduate of [REDACTED] University's Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership program to complete a survey via Survey Monkey titled "Directed Field Experience of [REDACTED] University." This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete and there are no right or wrong responses. To start the survey, please click on the following link: www.

By completing this survey, you are willingly consenting to being part of this study. Data from this survey will be used for the sole purpose of this study and will not be reported or recorded in any other way. No data from this survey will become part of any individual's permanent record that could be made available to a supervisor, teacher, or employer. Individual names will not be recorded or reported in the results of this study. All information is confidential and no individual respondent will be identified when results are published. Only summary information will be given. Participation in full, or in part, is completely voluntary and you have the option of not answering any question or discontinuing participation at any time without penalty or loss. If you would

like the opportunity to obtain a copy of the results of this survey, please send an email to slguerrero36@gmail.com.

Protections for Participants: [REDACTED] University supports the practice of protecting the human subjects participating in a research study. Participation in completing the survey is asked, although it is strictly voluntary. Your name will not be identified in any way with the research findings. Completion of the survey indicates your willingness to participate in this project. By responding to this survey, you acknowledge and consent to the use of your input in this study.

If you have any additional questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Sarah Guerrero at slguerrero36@gmail.com or Dr. Harold Frye at [hfrye@\[REDACTED\].edu](mailto:hfrye@[REDACTED].edu).

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences.

Select the appropriate answer

	Response Categories				
1. Gender	M	F			
2. Professional Position during the directed field experience (DFE)	Classroom Teacher	Building Admin.	District Admin	Other (Coach specialist, etc.)	
3. Level of position	Elementary	Middle School	High School	District office	
4. Number of years of administrative experience	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+

Reflecting on your participation in the DFE of [REDACTED] University's Ed. D. program, please rate how helpful each of these components have been to you as an educational leader in the public school setting. The scale indicates:

**1-Strongly Disagree
agree**

3-Neither agree or disagree

5-Strongly

2-Disagree

4-Agree

	Response Categories				
	1	2	3	4	5
5. The DFE allowed me to use varied sources of information and analyze data about current practices and outcomes to shape a vision, mission, and goals with high, measurable expectations.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The DFE provided an opportunity to engage diverse stakeholders in ways that build a shared commitment to a vision, mission, and goals.	1	2	3	4	5
7. As a result of the DFE, I have a greater understanding of aligning vision, mission, and goals to school, district, state, and federal policies.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The DFE was helpful to increasing my skills to make decisions informed by data, research, and best practices to shape programs, plans, and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The DFE provided sufficient learning opportunities to use data to determine effective change strategies and engage staff and community stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The DFE provided opportunities that were helpful to prepare me to communicate and act from a shared vision, mission, and goals to promote consistency.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The DFE was a helpful experience to increase my skills for setting a widely shared vision.	1	2	3	4	5

	Response Categories				
	1	2	3	4	5
12. The DFE activities were helpful to prepare me for curriculum design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement to meet diverse needs.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The DFE was helpful to increasing my ability to develop a shared commitment to high expectations for students.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The DFE allowed me to participate in activities that were helpful to model openness to change and collaboration that improve student achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The DFE presented opportunities to participate in activities that were helpful to increase my skills with diversity and its meaning for educational programs.	1	2	3	4	5
16. The DFE permitted me to participate in activities that were helpful to increasing my ability to provide and develop professional development that promotes a focus on student learning consistent with the district's vision and goals.	1	2	3	4	5
17. The DFE helped to increase my ability to use effective databased technology that promotes student learning and professional growth.	1	2	3	4	5
18. The DFE allowed me to take part in activities that were helpful to increasing my ability to interpret and use data to evaluate student learning and effective instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
19. The DFE allowed me to engage in activities that were helpful to increasing my ability to assess school culture and climate.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The DFE provided meaningful projects that developed my leadership management skills.	1	2	3	4	5

	Response Categories				
	1	2	3	4	5
21. The DFE activities allowed me to use problem-solving skills and knowledge of strategic, long-range, and operational planning to improve the operational system.	1	2	3	4	5
22. The DFE helped develop my conflict resolution skills.	1	2	3	4	5
23. The DFE helped me increase my learning in regards to principles and issues relating to fiscal operations based on federal and state rules.	1	2	3	4	5
24. The DFE provided opportunities that helped me identify potential problems and opportunities and resolve them in a timely manner.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I found the DFE to be helpful to increasing my management skills.	1	2	3	4	5
26. The DFE was helpful to increasing my skills in regards to management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe and effective learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
27. The DFE provided opportunities that were helpful to increasing my ability to involve families in decision-making about their child's education.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Participation in the DFE was helpful to learning to work with community programs that serve a special needs population.	1	2	3	4	5
29. The DFE offered opportunities that were helpful to learning that high visibility, active involvement, and communication with the larger community is a priority.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Participation in the DFE provided opportunities that were helpful to learning how to benefit from diversity to help improve educational programs.	1	2	3	4	5

	Response Categories				
	1	2	3	4	5
31. The DFE presented opportunities that were helpful to learning strategies for effective media relations and positive community relations.	1	2	3	4	5
32. The DFE was helpful to increasing my knowledge of integrating community services with school programs.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Participation in the DFE was helpful to learning that public resources and funds are used appropriately.	1	2	3	4	5
34. The DFE provided opportunities that were helpful to increasing my ability to analyze data that provides information about family and community concerns, expectations, and needs.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I found the DFE to be helpful to learning to work with families and community members.	1	2	3	4	5
36. The DFE allowed me to examine my personal and professional values and see how they can be improved.	1	2	3	4	5
37. The DFE allowed me to reflect on my own work, analyze strengths and weaknesses, and establish goals for professional growth.	1	2	3	4	5
38. The DFE provided opportunities to consider and evaluate the potential moral and legal consequences of decision-making.	1	2	3	4	5
39. The DFE helped me think deeply and gain a better understanding of various ethical frameworks and perspectives on ethics.	1	2	3	4	5

	Response Categories				
	1	2	3	4	5
40. The DFE contributed to the development and understanding of behaving in a trustworthy manner and demonstrating respect.	1	2	3	4	5
41. The DFE helped me gain a better understanding and appreciation for protecting the rights and confidentiality of students and staff.	1	2	3	4	5
42. The DFE was helpful in contributing to the development and understanding of ethical behaviors required of a school leader.	1	2	3	4	5
43. The DFE provided opportunities to learn and understand the law as it relates to education and schooling.	1	2	3	4	5
44. The DFE helped me understand how the school community works within the context of policies, laws, and regulations.	1	2	3	4	5
45. As a result of the DFE, I have a greater understanding of aligning vision, mission, and goals to school, district, state, and federal policies.	1	2	3	4	5
46. The DFE was helpful to increase my communication skills by providing opportunities to develop lines of communication with decision makers in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
47. The DFE helped me gain a better understanding of the importance of actively participating in the political process to improve equity and excellence in education.	1	2	3	4	5
48. The DFE was a helpful experience to increase my understanding of influencing the larger community.	1	2	3	4	5

The open-ended items are designed to provide you with an opportunity to express your thoughts on significant learning experiences, program strengths and areas for improvement. Please take a few moments to reflect upon each question. In 100 words or less, write your response in the space provided.

How well did University X's DFEs prepare you for employment and/or professional advancement?

How could University X improve its DFE?

Additional Comments:

**Appendix B: Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership Education
Administrator Mentor's Evaluation of Field Experiences**

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
Administrator Mentor's Evaluation of Field Experiences

Candidate's Name	Mentor's Name	Date		
<p>The School of Education has identified six objectives and numerous indicators that candidates in the Educational Leadership program are expected to demonstrate in the process of becoming confident and competent educational leaders. Field experience Mentors are asked to evaluate candidate performance on each of the six identified standards but not on all indicators, using the following rubric.</p>				
0-2.8	2.9-3.2	3.3-3.6	3.7-4.0	
-----	-----	-----	-----	
Unsatisfactory Observed	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not

The candidate will

1. ***Facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Collaboratively develop and implement a shared vision and mission;
 - b) Use data in the decision making process to identify goals and assess organizational effectiveness;
 - c) Apply leadership theories, beliefs, and values to policy and practice;
 - d) Promote continuous and sustainable improvement.
2. ***Advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Nurture a culture of collaboration, trust, learning and high expectations;
 - b) Ensure the development of a comprehensive, research-based curriculum supported by technology;
 - c) Ensure the development of an effective co-curriculum program;
 - d) Create learning environments that meet the needs of special and exceptional populations;
 - e) Ensure the supervision of instruction;
 - f) Develop assessment and accountability systems to monitor student progress; and
 - g) Develop instructional and leadership capacities through professional development.
3. ***Ensure the management of the organization, operation, and resources to establish a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Monitor and evaluate the management and operational systems;
 - b) Align and use human, fiscal and technological resources using proactive management strategies;
 - c) Manage facilities, equipment, and support systems to ensure effective learning environments;
 - d) Ensure laws and policies are effectively applied, protecting the rights and confidentiality of all.
4. ***Collaborate with families and stakeholders, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilize community resources demonstrating the ability to:***
 - a) Collect, analyze and apply community data pertinent to educational improvement;
 - b) Develop effective consensus building, group processing, and conflict resolution skills;
 - c) Build and sustain positive relationships with families, community partners and stakeholders;
 - d) Promote understanding, appreciation and use of the community's diverse resources; and
 - e) Effectively apply laws to provide services for handicapped and special needs populations.
5. ***Act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Model professional integrity, fairness, and ethics treating all persons fairly and with dignity;
 - b) Safeguard the values of democracy, equity and diversity;
 - and c) Consider moral and legal issues in decision-making.
6. ***Understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, and cultural context demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Address the political, social, economic, and cultural context of the educational organization;
 - b) Work with a board of education/directors understanding the political realities of such entities;
 - c) Work with governing boards in the development of policies and practices;
 - and d) Address trends, issues, and changes occurring in the school community.

Administrative Mentor's Signature

Candidate's Signature

**Appendix C: Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership University
Supervisor Formative Assessment, Administrator Supervisor's Evaluation Form,
and Candidate Self-Evaluation Form**

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
University Supervisor Formative Assessment Form for Field Experience
Observation

Student Intern Observed

Administrator Mentor

Building

- 1. Administrative activities discussed:**

- 2. Comments from Administrative Mentor:**

- 3. Comments on Student Intern's Performance:**

- 4. Suggestions for needed focus or growth:**

- 5. Student intern's comments:**

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
Administrator Supervisor's Evaluation of Field Experiences

Candidate's Name _____

Supervisor's Name _____

Date _____

The School of Education has identified six objectives and numerous indicators that candidates in the Educational Leadership program are expected to demonstrate in the process of becoming confident and competent educational leaders. Field experience Mentors are asked to evaluate candidate performance on each of the six identified standards but not on all indicators, using the following rubric.

0-2.8

2.9-3.2

3.3-3.6

3.7-4.0

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	Not Observed
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The candidate will

1. Facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders demonstrating the ability to

- _____ a) Collaboratively develop and implement a shared vision and mission;
 _____ b) Use data in the decision making process to identify goals and assess organizational effectiveness;
 _____ c) Apply leadership theories, beliefs, and values to policy and practice;
 _____ and d) Promote continuous and sustainable improvement.

2. Advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth demonstrating the ability to

- _____ a) Nurture a culture of collaboration, trust, learning and high expectations;
 _____ b) Ensure the development of a comprehensive, research-based curriculum supported by technology;
 _____ c) Ensure the development of an effective co-curriculum program;
 _____ d) Create learning environments that meet the needs of special and exceptional populations;
 _____ e) Ensure the supervision of instruction;
 _____ f) Develop assessment and accountability systems to monitor student progress; and
 _____ g) Develop instructional and leadership capacities through professional development.

3. Ensure the management of the organization, operation, and resources to establish a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment demonstrating the ability to

- _____ a) Monitor and evaluate the management and operational systems;
 _____ b) Align and use human, fiscal and technological resources using proactive management strategies;
 _____ c) Manage facilities, equipment, and support systems to ensure effective learning environments;
 _____ d) Ensure laws and policies are effectively applied, protecting the rights and confidentiality of all.

4. Collaborate with families and stakeholders, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilize community resources demonstrating the ability to:

- _____ a) Collect, analyze and apply community data pertinent to educational improvement;
 _____ b) Develop effective consensus building, group processing, and conflict resolution skills;
 _____ c) Build and sustain positive relationships with families, community partners and stakeholders;
 _____ d) Promote understanding, appreciation and use of the community's diverse resources; and
 _____ e) Effectively apply laws to provide services for handicapped and special needs populations.

5. Act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner demonstrating the ability to

- _____ a) Model professional integrity, fairness, and ethics treating all persons fairly and with dignity;
 _____ b) Safeguard the values of democracy, equity and diversity;
 _____ and c) Consider moral and legal issues in decision-making.

6. Understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, and cultural context demonstrating the ability to

- _____ a) Address the political, social, economic, and cultural context of the educational organization;
 _____ b) Work with a board of education/directors understanding the political realities of such entities;
 _____ c) Work with governing boards in the development of policies and practices;
 _____ and d) Address trends, issues, and changes occurring in the school community.

Administrative Mentor's Signature _____

Candidate's Signature _____

**DOCTOR OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP Candidate's
Self- Evaluation of Field Experiences**

Candidate's Name	Supervisor's Name	Date
<p>The School of Education has identified six objectives and numerous indicators that candidates in the Educational Leadership program are expected to demonstrate in the process of becoming confident and competent educational leaders. Field experience Mentors are asked to evaluate candidate performance on each of the six identified standards but not on all indicators, using the following rubric.</p>		
0-2.8	2.9-3.2	3.3-3.6
-----	NO	-----
Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient
		Distinguished
		Not observed

The candidate will

1. ***Facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Collaboratively develop and implement a shared vision and mission;
 - b) Use data in the decision making process to identify goals and assess organizational effectiveness;
 - c) Apply leadership theories, beliefs, and values to policy and practice;
 - d) Promote continuous and sustainable improvement.
2. ***Advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Nurture a culture of collaboration, trust, learning and high expectations;
 - b) Ensure the development of a comprehensive, research-based curriculum supported by technology;
 - c) Ensure the development of an effective co-curriculum program;
 - d) Create learning environments that meet the needs of special and exceptional populations;
 - e) Ensure the supervision of instruction;
 - f) Develop assessment and accountability systems to monitor student progress; and
 - g) Develop instructional and leadership capacities through professional development.
3. ***Ensure the management of the organization, operation, and resources to establish a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Monitor and evaluate the management and operational systems;
 - b) Align and use human, fiscal and technological resources using proactive management strategies;
 - c) Manage facilities, equipment, and support systems to ensure effective learning environments;
 - d) Ensure laws and policies are effectively applied, protecting the rights and confidentiality of all.
4. ***Collaborate with families and stakeholders, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilize community resources demonstrating the ability to:***
 - a) Collect, analyze and apply community data pertinent to educational improvement;
 - b) Develop effective consensus building, group processing, and conflict resolution skills;
 - c) Build and sustain positive relationships with families, community partners and stakeholders;
 - d) Promote understanding, appreciation and use of the community's diverse resources; and
 - e) Effectively apply laws to provide services for handicapped and special needs populations.
5. ***Act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Model professional integrity, fairness, and ethics treating all persons fairly and with dignity;
 - b) Safeguard the values of democracy, equity and diversity;
 - and c) Consider moral and legal issues in decision-making.
6. ***Understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, and cultural context demonstrating the ability to***
 - a) Address the political, social, economic, and cultural context of the educational organization;
 - b) Work with a board of education/directors understanding the political realities of such entities;
 - c) Work with governing boards in the development of policies and practices;
 - and d) Address trends, issues, and changes occurring in the school community.

Supervisor's Signature

Candidate's Signature

**Appendix D: [REDACTED] University Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership
DFE Reflection Form**

**University Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership
DFE Reflection Form**

- 1. Your University Supervisor of DFE:**
- 2. Your Educational Administrative Mentor:**
- 3. ISLLC Standard:**
- 4. Date of Activity:**

- 5. Administrative Area (i.e. student personnel, special ed., facilities, etc.)**

- 6. Learning Objectives: (What do you want to learn?)**

- 7. Activity: (How will you accomplish your objective?)**

- 8. Evaluation Criteria: (How will you know if the learning objective is accomplished?)**

- 9. Time Involved: (How much time was devoted to the activity?)**
- 10. What did you learn from this activity?**
- 11. What would you do differently?**

Appendix E: ISLLC Standards

ISLLC Standards

Standard 1: An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.

- A. Collaboratively develops and implements a shared vision and mission;
- B. Collects and uses data to identify goals, assess organizational effectiveness, and promote organizational learning;
- C. Creates and implements plans to achieve goals;
- D. Promotes continuous and sustainable improvement;
- E. Monitors and evaluates progress and revise plans

Standard 2: An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

- A. Nurtures and sustains a culture of collaboration, trust, learning, and high expectations;
- B. Creates comprehensive, rigorous, coherent and research-based curricular and co- curricular programs;
- C. Creates personalized and motivating learning environments that meet the needs of all students;
- D. Supervises instruction;
- E. Develops assessment and accountability systems to monitor student progress;
- F. Develops the instructional and leadership capacities of staff through results-based professional development
- G. Maximizes time spent on quality instruction;
- H. Promotes the use of the most effective and appropriate technologies to support teaching and learning; and
- I. Monitors and evaluates the impact of the instructional program on learning.

Standard 3: An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

- A. Monitors and evaluates the management and operational systems;
- B. Obtains, allocates, aligns, and efficiently utilizes human, fiscal, and technological resources through the use of proactive management strategies;
- C. Promotes and protects the welfare and safety of students and staff;
- D. Develops the capacity for distributed leadership;
- E. Ensures teacher and organizational time is focused to support quality instruction and student learning; and
- F. Ensures that legal issues relating to policies, operations, human resource supervision and support systems are effectively applied, protecting the rights and confidentiality of all persons.

Standard 4: An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with families and stakeholders, responding to diverse and special community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

- A. Collects, analyzes, and appropriately applies community data and pertinent information for improvement;
- B. Promotes understanding, appreciation, and use of community's diverse cultural, social, and intellectual resources;
- C. Builds and sustains positive relationships with families and caregivers;
- D. Builds and sustains productive relationships with community partners;
- E. Develops effective communication and group process skills; and.

Standard 5: An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

- A. Ensures a system of accountability for every student's academic and social success;
- B. Models principles of self-awareness, reflective practice, transparency, and ethical behavior, treating all persons fairly, equitably, and with dignity;
- C. Safeguards the values of democracy, equity, and diversity;
- D. Considers and evaluates the potential moral and legal consequences of decision- making.

Standard 6: An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

- A. Advocates for children, families, and caregivers by maintaining communications with all members of a diverse community;
- B. Acts to influence local, district, state, and national decisions affecting student learning;
- C. Assesses, analyzes, and anticipates emerging trends and initiatives in order to adapt leadership strategies; and
- D. Understands and develops skills to work with governing boards in shaping policies and practices.

Appendix F: IRB Form

Date: August 13, 2014

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE DEPARTMENTIRB PROTOCOL NUMBER _____
(IRB USE ONLY)

IRB REQUEST
Proposal for Research
 Submitted to the [REDACTED] University Institutional Review Board

I. Research Investigator(s) (Students must list faculty sponsor first)

Department(s) School of Education Graduate Department

Name	Signature	
1. [REDACTED]	_____	Major Advisor
2. [REDACTED]	_____	Research Analyst
3. [REDACTED]		University Committee Member
4. Erin Dugan		External Committee Member

Principal Investigator: Sarah Guerrero
 Phone: 913-406-4743
 Email: slguerrero35@gmail.com
 Mailing address: 8040 Schweiger Dr., Lenexa KS 66219

Faculty sponsor: Dr. [REDACTED]
 Phone: 913-344-1220
 Email: [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].edu

Expected Category of Review: ___Exempt Expedited ___Full

II: Protocol: (Type the title of your study)

Experiential Learning: Internships in the Advancement of Leadership Skills

Summary

In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.

Improving doctoral leadership preparation programs has been a reform topic in recent years. A critical component to a quality, doctoral preparation program is the internship (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr & Cohen, 2007). Quality doctoral programs assess student satisfaction within their program in order to improve and progress. The focus of this research is on █████ University's Doctor of Educational Leadership directed field experience. The purpose of this study is to examine, from the candidates' perspective, how helpful the program's directed field experiences (DFE) were in meeting the expectations and achieving the program goals in ways that were helpful and meaningful to program candidates. This study will measure how helpful candidates and graduates perceive the DFE components to be, based on the leadership principles set by the Interstate School Leaders' Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and Kansas State Department of Education standards. Program components of the DFE include candidate observations and participation, role of DFE mentors including the mentor evaluations, and electronic self-reflections. Participants will be asked to what extent were these components beneficial to the preparation of educational leadership of candidates enrolled in the first ten cohorts of █████ University's doctor of education degree program. Further, this study could aid █████ University in evaluating the Ed. D. program's field experience objective of providing candidates with the opportunity of transferring skills that are developed in the field and making connections between theory and knowledge and real world leadership practices in a way that is reasonable for and applicable to candidates.

Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.

There will be no manipulation used for this study.

What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy.

Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.

Participants will be asked to complete a survey that includes demographic information, Likert style items, and open-ended questions. A copy of the survey is attached. Participants will not encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical, or legal risk.

Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.

Subjects in this study will not experience stress.

Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.

The subjects in this study will not be deceived or misled in any way.

Will there be a request for information which subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.

The subjects involved in this study will be asked to provide personal demographic information. This demographic information includes, gender, cohort number, the number of DFEs completed, the professional position held at the time of the DFE, the level of the position (elementary, middle school, high school, district office, higher education/other), and whether the aspects of their educational backgrounds were helpful during the DFE. Information gathered in this study will not be used to identify individual participants.

Will the subjects be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.

The subjects in this study will not be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading.

Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?

The survey will require approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.

The subjects in this study are aspiring educational leaders who are candidates and graduates enrolled and/or graduated from █████ University's Ed. D. program. Each subject will receive initial contact via e-mail (see attached letter).

What steps will be taken to insure that each subject's participation is voluntary? What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?

Completion of the survey indicates willingness on the part of the subject to participate. Participants will be advised in the initial contact email that their participation is voluntary. Participants will be notified that participation in full, or in part, is completely voluntary and they have the option of not answering any question or discontinuing participation at any time without penalty or loss of participants. Participants will also be informed in the initial contact email about the opportunity to obtain a copy of the results of the study.

How will you insure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.

Completion of the survey will indicate consent of the subject. Participants will be notified that participation in full, or in part, is completely voluntary and they have the option of not answering any question or discontinuing participation at any time without penalty or loss of participants. Participants will be informed of this consent in the initial contact email.

Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.

Data from this survey will not be made part of any permanent record.

Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? If so, explain.

No data from this survey about the fact that a subject did or did not participate will be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher, or employer.

What steps will be taken to insure the confidentiality of the data? Where will it be stored? How long will it be stored? What will be done with it after the study is completed?

Individual names will not be recorded or reported in the results of this study. Identifying information will be reviewed by the researcher and will remain confidential. Information will be stored on a personal computer, which will provide a safe and secure location for the materials. Data will be kept for three years after the completion of the study and then destroyed. Data will not be kept for use in further studies without the knowledge and consent of the participants in the current study.

If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?

There are no risks involved in this study. This study may be used to guide ██████████ University's resolve in its continuous program improvement and may also provide a framework for how doctoral programs in educational leadership can design field experiences that provide doctoral candidates with opportunities to increase their capability in working with the day-to-day responsibilities and decisions the educational system presents.

Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.

No archival data will be used in this study. All data gathered will be provided by the subjects through their responses on the survey.

Appendix G: Approval letter from IRB

September 11, 2014

Dear Sarah Guerrero and [REDACTED],

The [REDACTED] University IRB has reviewed your research project application and approved this project under Expedited Status Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

Please be aware of the following:

1. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
2. Notify the IRB about any new investigators not named in original application.
3. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents of the research activity.
4. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.
5. If the results of the research are used to prepare papers for publication or oral presentation at professional conferences, manuscripts or abstracts are requested for IRB as part of the project record.

Please inform this Committee or myself when this project is terminated or completed. As noted above, you must also provide IRB with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If you have any questions, please contact me at CTodden@[REDACTED].edu or 785.594.8440.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED] EdD
Chair, [REDACTED] IRB
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] EdD
[REDACTED] PhD
[REDACTED]

Appendix H: Email to participants

Email to participants

From: "slquerrero36@gmail.com via surveymonkey.com"
<member@surveymonkey.com>
Date: September 19, 2014 at 7:01:06 AM CDT
To: <squerrero@piperschools.com>
Subject: **Survey for Doctoral Candidate Sarah Guerrero**
Reply-To: <slquerrero36@gmail.com>

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by [REDACTED] doctoral candidate, Sarah Guerrero. The purpose of this study is to examine, from the candidates' perspective, how helpful participation in the DFE was to the preparation of educational leadership by determining if candidates found the program's DFE to adequately prepare them for their professional responsibilities based on the leadership principles set by the Interstate School Leaders' Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and ELCC standards.

By completing this survey, you are willingly consenting to being part of this study. Data from this survey will be used for the sole purpose of this study and will not be reported or recorded in any other way. No data from this survey will become part of any individual's permanent record that could be made available to a supervisor, teacher, or employer. Individual names will not be recorded or reported in the results of this study. All information is confidential and no individual respondent will be identified when results are published. Only summary information will be given. Participation in full, or in part, is completely voluntary and you have the option of not answering any question or discontinuing participation at any time without penalty or loss. If you would like the opportunity to obtain a copy of the results of this survey, please send an email to slquerrero36@gmail.com.

Please click on the link below to begin the survey.

Your time is greatly appreciated.

https://surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=tN1NILDdsdanP_2ff6GBWLhw_3d_3d

https://surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx?sm=tN1NILDdsdanP_2ff6GBWLhw_3d_3d

Appendix I: Follow-Up e-mail to participants

Follow-Up e-mail to participants

From: survey-noreply@smo.surveymonkey.com [survey-noreply@smo.surveymonkey.com] on behalf of slguerrero36@gmail.com via surveymonkey.com [member@surveymonkey.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2014 9:02 AM
To: Guerrero, Sarah
Subject: Second Email--Survey for Doctoral Candidate Sarah Guerrero

Dear University X candidates and graduates,
On September 19, 2014 you received an invitation to participate in a survey for Doctoral Candidate, Sarah Guerrero. If you have already responded, thank you and please disregard this email.
If not, I would appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete the survey now. The survey will close at 10:00 pm on October 1, 2014.

Here is a link to the survey:
https://surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=aPdEowG4wzL1A53bztDhw_3d_3d

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.
https://surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx?sm=aPdEowG4wzL1A53bztDhw_3d_3d