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Leading Transformational Change: Enhancing The Adjunct Faculty Experience Through Narrative And Relationship

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Greta I. Shepard
Leading Transformational Change: Enhancing The Adjunct Faculty Experience Through
Narrative And Relationship

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree
Master of Education in Higher Education

At

Merrimack College

May 2020

Table of Contents

Introduction

For hundreds of years, institutions of higher education across our nation have offered avenues for knowledge creation through research and dissemination of knowledge through teaching (Meixner, Kruck, & Madden, 2010). Contributors to higher education's teaching workforce include the adjunct faculty population, a group of educators who are relied upon to deliver quality educational learning experiences for students (Meixner et al., 2010). Often labeled with broad terms such as part-time, contingent, lecturer, and instructor, adjunct faculty are identified by their institutions with these terms, yet the terms are not used in the same way from one institution to another (Morphew, Ward, & Wolf-Wendel, 2018). An additional variable exists for non-tenure track adjuncts in the variety of reasons for which they decide to teach. Moreover, the utilization of adjunct faculty members differs by discipline and institutional type (Morphew, et. al., 2018). At times, adjunct faculty may feel like a tribe of nomads who travel from one institution to another, while following the different policies and cultural ways that each institution upholds (Harrell, 2019).

According to the Office of Institutional Research and Planning at Trailside College, in the Spring of 2020, the total percentages of course sections taught by adjunct faculty at the undergraduate, graduate (on-ground), and graduate (online) were 29 percent, 44 percent, and 39 percent, respectively (reference anonymized). Likewise, the total percent of hours taught by adjunct faculty were 32 percent for undergraduate programs, 49 percent for on-ground graduate programs, and 48 percent for the online graduate programs (reference anonymized). While adjunct percentages at Trailside College may be lower as compared to other institutions, regardless of the population size, adjunct faculty deserve to be served in the best way possible. The impetus for serving the adjunct population more fully at Trailside lies in the Institution's

mission to enlighten minds, engage hearts, and empower lives (reference anonymized). As professionals in higher education, a sense of responsibility and duty to uphold the mission for all institutional stakeholder populations is warranted for the success of people and the Institution.

To acquire an in-depth view of the adjunct faculty member's experience, this project was guided by the research question: How might the adjunct faculty experience be enhanced at Trailside College? This question, and the change focus of this project are addressed through offering unique approaches to uncover the strengths and to build the capabilities of adjunct faculty in the academic setting. A comprehensive literature review conducted for this project reveals three main themes encompassing an adjunct faculty overview, organizational change and leadership approaches, and institutional change strategies.

To support the three main themes, Bernard Bass's (1990) Transformational Leadership Theory was applied to promote the adjunct faculty member's sense of belonging to the College, an increased level of support in their teaching, and enhanced development opportunities in the academic setting. Consisting of the four "Is," individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation, Bass's (1990) theory provides sound guidance to harness the initiatives described in this project. The three initiatives consist of 1) a dedicated community space named the Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community (AFWLC), 2) the Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query to draw out the narrative, experience and desires of each adjunct faculty member, and 3) a Champion Partnership Program (CPP) designed to pair adjunct faculty members with tenure/tenure-track faculty members across disciplines where mutually beneficial areas of interest and work may be discovered. Ultimately, the larger direction of this project's work aims to promote the value of adjunct faculty and the positive impact this group can make at Trailside College, and to society. An examination into the needs

and challenges of adjunct faculty, and opportunities for their success in institutions of higher education is explained in the following literature review.

Literature Review

Within the world of higher education currently, part-time faculty make up the majority of instructors (Meixner, Kruck, & Madden, 2010). A group of faculty labeled variously as boundary spanners, part-timers, contingent faculty, scholar-practitioners, or adjunct faculty, often straddle two worlds, that of academia and that of the professional (Harrell, 2019). This group of faculty are generally not given the well-deserved institutional recognition or support to be successful in their roles (Morton, 2012). Through an exploration of the literature summarized below, a greater overview and understanding of part-time faculty needs, challenges and expertise is assessed, and through organizational change and leadership approaches, institutional change strategies to support part-time faculty are presented.

The Adjunct Faculty Overview

Adjunct faculty have a unique positionality and face a variety of challenges. Supporting this statement, Burroughs's (2019) essay centered on the lack of control adjunct faculty experience in their teaching roles. The author correlated an adjunct faculty's role to that of being in charge of a train car, yet having no control over the direction of the car. He stated, ". . . ultimately, I have no control over the direction of the train that is the school at which I teach, which is being conducted to destinations determined by others" (Burroughs, 2019, p.307). The author espoused two ways in which adjunct positions and teaching effectiveness are threatened: Through disenfranchisement, and the temptation to reduce rigor in courses they are responsible for. Burroughs's (2019) experience as an adjunct professor and own informative observations revealed that adjunct professors are generally not aided by institutions of higher education in

their inability to garner the skills to move forward in their careers, and not having a voice at the table when it comes to general conversations within the college community. Furthermore, the author revealed that the adjunct role is precarious and the very nature of the role along with certain procedures such as student evaluations make them particularly vulnerable to negative situations and effects. In terms of reducing pressures on adjuncts, Burroughs (2019) expressed that he has broad latitude over his courses as related to content and assignments, but goes on to say how he has no control over how his work fits with curriculum planning or institutional goals. He described the heavy reliance on student evaluations as the only means of feedback for adjunct faculty, and he described the challenge in identifying institutional needs and finding ways to meet such needs. Burroughs (2019) recommended intentional time dedicated to discussions about adjunct faculty teaching.

Burroughs (2019) also noted the importance of communication and an invitation for adjunct faculty to take part in the development of the departmental and institutional direction, faculty meetings and voting. Such initiatives would secure a more supportive environment for adjunct faculty. The author's observations and assertions suggest that the expertise of adjunct faculty is not recognized by institutions, and the necessary support to fully and effectively contribute to their institutions is missing (Burroughs, 2019). One way to lift up adjunct faculty expertise is to create discussion circles where all types of faculty have a voice at the table, and including senior administrators in the circles would help to demonstrate investment in the activity. Herein, discovery of how the needs and desires of faculty members could be harnessed in ways that support institutional mission, values, and goals could be ascertained.

While Burroughs (2019) asserted the uncontrolled and unsupported nature of the adjunct faculty role, Harrell (2019) expanded the examination to reveal additional challenges as well as

areas where adjunct faculty could offer greater value to institutions of higher education. Employed as an adjunct at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC, Harrell (2019) taught in two programs, the seminary master's degree and the course of study that encompassed second career students looking for pastoral appointments. Harrell (2019) reviewed challenges and advantages of contingent faculty, and identified areas where adjuncts with their external knowledge and connections could potentially add greater value to institutions. The researcher critically reflected on both his teaching role and his role outside the institution as a Director of Pastoral Care in a faith-based retirement community. In reality, Harrell (2019) spanned two worlds, that of academia and that of his professional practice. He asserted that the notion of a nomadic faculty member aligns well with the adjunct faculty position (Harrell, 2019). Interestingly enough, Harrell's (2019) dual role status benefited students as many could relate to him because of their own dual roles as a student and an employee. Students often sought out Harrell's (2019) advice because they felt they could relate to their adjunct professor. Furthermore, the researcher noted that he was able to share important information with deans related to student learning, career exploration, and the ability to succeed (Harrell, 2019).

Harrell (2019) described the challenge of teaching and meeting student needs because of the different audiences, the degree and non-degree seeking students, and the preparation and approach that is needed to deliver quality educational experiences for all students. The author stated that many adjuncts teaching in a cross-institutional capacity have great difficulty due to more varied commitments and priorities revealing the likelihood of elevated tensions and an increased need to adapt their teaching for the environment (Harrell, 2019). Contingent faculty work on the margins, yet as Harrell's (2019) experience showed, many bring an alternate perspective that supports student learning. Using Harrell (2019) as an example, the wealth of

external insight and the refreshing dose of accountability he brings to academia are important factors to consider and recognize in shaping successful educational experiences for students. Harrell (2019) may serve as a role model for other educators as he elevated and reminded his audience of the importance in understanding students' learning needs and challenges through individual consideration.

While Harrell (2019) provided a personalized view of part-time faculty based on his own experiences, researchers Meixner, Kruck, and Madden (2010) provided a broader view through a survey analysis in order to determine the qualitative experiences of eighty-five part-time faculty. In their study at one public/mid-sized undergraduate institution, Meixner, et. al. (2010) explored the experiences, needs, and interests of contingent faculty in order to help fill the void of research in this area. The researchers identified ways other institutions could adopt efforts related to advocacy, service and program adoption. In the context of this article, active programming referred to programming where adjuncts are fully involved in the activity. Passive programming required little involvement by the adjunct. Revealed in the research are tensions related to institutional reliance on part-time faculty and how colleges and universities utilize this population of educators.

Meixner, et. al. (2010) conducted a survey to determine the qualitative experiences of contingent faculty. The questions asked pertained to part-time faculty challenges in teaching, areas of desired knowledge and skill development, how individuals saw themselves included within the college community, and suggestions for how part-time faculty could be connected to the community (Meixner, et. al., 2010). Data was captured and the results were disseminated into three core themes: those receiving outreach, those navigating challenges, and those who were interested in or needed skill development. Inconsistent institutional outreach was a prevailing

comment by almost all respondents as related to email communications, the need for dedicated work-space, and services and programs specific to contingent faculty (Meixner, et. al., 2010).

Furthermore, contingent faculty challenges noted in the open-ended comments related to teaching, student engagement and learning, community disconnect, and the integration of the work-life balance and the quality of it. About one half of the respondents indicated a desire to form new knowledge in four areas, general and specific technology assistance, peer-review and sharing of teaching strategies with other part-time faculty, course planning strategies, and student motivation. Comprehensive results from this study revealed that part-time faculty need advocacy from full-time faculty, department chairs, associate deans, and college deans. The authors noted three areas institutions could focus on: sending a personalized thank you to contingent faculty from the president or provost, an institutional audit to ensure listservs are current, and the addition of a senior level administrator (such as the vice-president level) to advocate on behalf of adjunct faculty (Meixner, et. al., 2010). Involving part-time faculty in meetings pertaining to curriculum planning and best-practices in teaching would enable part-time faculty feel like they are supported by their campus community and valued for the expertise they bring to the classroom.

Organizational Change and Leadership Approaches

Gillespie, Robertson, and Bergquist, (2010) discussed organizational development within higher education and explained the importance of two lenses specific to faculty development—relationship and context (Gillespie, et. al, 2010). The two critical lenses inform educational developers, meaning the change agents, facilitators, and/or leaders of an institution in their work. Organizational development in education, ". . . involves relationships between and among individuals and groups and relationships between and among units and subunits of an entity"

(Gillespie, et. al., 2010 p.382). The authors' declared that learning in higher education occurs in a broad context, and assessing the framing, functioning, the people, and the constant change within the academy is a necessary activity. Gillespie, et. al. (2010) went on to proclaim that matters of personnel are at the forefront in organizational development and involve scrutiny of factors such as policy and processes, reward systems, and roles of faculty.

The authors' exploration of relationship within an institution took into account the human and structural components of the working environment, all the while knowing that context varied greatly from one institution to another (Gillespie, et. al., 2010). The "organizational web" (p.382), as indicated by the researchers, casts a wide net to include structures for faculty governance, and allocation of physical space. Within the web lies context, where policy and practice frame decision-making and inform the work of those within higher education. Gillespie et. al., (2010) also commented on the nature of culture, how it reflects the values of an organization, and how it evolves as change is introduced.

Through the lens of organizational development, with contingent faculty in view, higher education professionals can plan strategically and look to the future in order to, ". . . design and sustain communities of meaning and hope, communities that will offer all their members opportunities to learn and grow, to make contributions, and to be seen and recognized for who they are and what they bring" (Gillespie, et. al., 2010, p.393). To support a culture of value through a people-centered approach, recognition of part-time faculty, one-on-one interviews and regular follow-up could be conducted by institutional administrators in order to reveal and understand part-time faculty expertise, desires, and achievements. This "space" is also where institutional needs could and should be strategically met.

While Gillespie et. al., (2010) focused on relationship specific to faculty development, Morphew, Ward, and Wolf-Wendel, (2017) focused on relationship specific to institutional mission advancement. The aim of this study was to understand the relationship between the contingent faculty role and institutional mission advancement (Morphew, et. al., 2017). They emphasized the importance of trust in the studies as related to job uncertainty and how that trust shaped relationships within institutions. The researchers discussed faculty types and related factors of composition, expectations, and roles. Multiple definitions of contingent faculty exist therefore, the term is used differently from one institutional type to another. In this study, contingent faculty encompassed, ". . . different groups of faculty in non-tenure-line positions and short term contracts" (Morphew, et. al., 2017, p.68). Notably, the researchers highlighted social exchange theory, a theory defined by how people garner relationships with organizations through the exchange of resources and shared commitment (Morphew, et. al., 2017).

This study addressed the question, "How do different types of faculty, including contingent faculty, contribute to the teaching and missions of independent colleges?" (Morphew, et. al., 2017, p.70). A data analysis showed that adult, graduate, and professional degree programs were more likely to utilize part-time faculty as compared to the traditional undergraduate program. Additionally, they included data gleaned from a 2015 Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) survey of chief academic officers (CAOs) regarding contingent faculty and their involvement working with students inside and outside the classroom in both teaching and advising. Evidence showed that contingent faculty were hired to meet the demands of enrollment changes. Additionally, ninety-four percent of CAOs expected full-time faculty to stay current, while only one quarter of part-time faculty were expected to stay current in their field. On-campus programs were taught by tenure track faculty while new delivery, or new

student populations, were taught by contingent faculty. Ninety-three percent of respondents offered orientation to full-time and tenure track faculty, and sixty percent of contingent faculty were offered orientation. Evidence reported in this study reveals that, ". . . it is vital for all faculty to be oriented to and integrated into the fabric of institutional life," (Morphew, et. al., 2017, p.79) thus, contingent faculty must be included and regarded more intentionally in higher education practices such as hiring, teaching, professional development, and governance.

Researchers Morphew et. al. (2017) focused on the importance of contingent faculty types as related to the organization, while researcher By (2020) widened the view of organization through the suggestion of a change in thinking, and a reframing of how people work within institutions of higher education. By (2020) discussed the notions of change and leadership in higher education and amplified his plea to alter the course of scholar and practitioner research for the advancement of the greater good. The researcher explained that scholars and practitioners must actively engage in change and reject heavily engrained illusions in order to visualize new and creative ways forward in higher education and society. By (2020) suggested reframing organizational change and challenges inherent in scholar and practitioner leadership.

This spirited Norwegian academic and expert in organizational change and leadership based his article on personal experiences in higher education in the UK as well as from his long-time position as editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Change Management*. By (2020) asserted that researcher and practitioner efforts need to collectively alter the course of organizational change and research surrounding the topic of leadership. The expert intended no disregard to anyone performing research, rather he pointed toward the change as, ". . . combined efforts for our work to stay relevant" (By, 2020, p.1).

By (2020) listed several illusions in his article pertaining to research that, ". . . crystalize the quagmire stagnating our work" (p.3), and he explained human resistance to change and the exploitation of the same old information, rather than challenging what is well-known to inspire relevancy. One illusion revealed, "We exist in a reality of managers vs employees" (By, 2020, p.3) indicating the reality of us vs them. The researcher stated that "No matter the organizational role, we should all be on the same team pulling in the same direction, and no roles can function nor deliver in isolation" (By, 2020, p.3). A second illusion indicated the importance of individual change agents rather than any one organizational role, yet By (2020) ultimately focused less on the *who* (people) and more on the *what* (agency). A third illusion revealed that, "Leadership is something [formal] leaders do" (By, 2020, p.4), and is described in terms of, ". . . power structures and relationships between the haves and the have nots rather than the essentials of leadership" (By, 2020, p.4). The researcher revealed here that research defining the leader (who) rather than the leadership (what) occurs nine times out of ten and does nothing to help reframe challenges (By, 2020). He noted that "Breaking the mould is tough – and it is those that dare to do so who will truly make a difference and be remembered beyond the latest change initiative . . . " (By, 2020, p.1).

By's (2020) essay set the stage for change, for an upheaval of traditional ways of thinking in higher education. One segment of higher education stakeholders, adjunct faculty, can be overlaid as one of many lenses through which to invite flexible and creative thinking in organizational change and leadership. For a change initiative of this magnitude to take hold, senior leaders in higher education need to embrace a common language, and commitment to building an institutional culture that supports the value of such innovative thinking.

Institutional Change Strategies

Tarr (2010) asserted three important aspects to consider pertaining to adjunct faculty--types, perceptions, and needs-- when working with adjunct faculty. The researcher supported the role that adjunct faculty play in the life of institutions, and defined the importance of providing continuous support to promote high quality learning experiences for students. Exploration of the concept in supporting adjunct faculty showed that institutions hire adjunct faculty because 1) there is a needed level of expertise that is not currently available, 2) there are financial reasons, 3) allocated teaching times are less desirable (such as nights and weekends), and 4) flexibility in staffing is needed (Tarr, 2010).

Noteworthy in Tarr's (2010) exploration were the categories used to define adjunct faculty types: the career enders, the specialists, experts, professionals, aspiring academics, and the freelancers. These categories illustrated why adjuncts choose to teach, and the author notes the importance of delivering professional development differently according to type (Tarr, 2010). Selected areas for assisting and improving adjunct faculty support were to offer teaching awards for part-time faculty, and including them in discussions with full-time faculty to cultivate a higher level of respect for each other's area of expertise (Tarr, 2010). Furthermore, the author noted that a systematic collection process within each unit or school, or through a central office could aid in capturing adjunct faculty narratives (Tarr, 2010). A plan to include intentional inquiry on behalf of higher education administrators and department chairs throughout the life of the institution/adjunct faculty relationship could support the process of utilizing adjunct faculty more effectively.

Tarr's (2010) and Buch, McCullough, and Tamberelli's (2017) research both focused on an understanding of adjunct faculty and their particular needs, however, Tarr's (2010) study was developed, in part, through data collected from the National Center of Education Statistics, while

Buch, et. al.'s (2017) research was conducted through the lens of a longitudinal study. Buch, et.

al. (2017) conducted their study at a large-research intensive university for a three-phase study,

and the researchers focused solely on part-time adjunct faculty. Phase one involved a needs

assessment survey that was conducted through the institution's Center for Teaching and Learning

(CTL). The survey contained five open-ended questions and was emailed to 390 adjunct faculty.

The questions pertained to what kinds of professional development support they received, what

support would be helpful, and what might make them be more willing to take part in professional

development opportunities. Results revealed that less than 10% were content with the

institutional support received; administrative support was the highest reported type of support

offered; and those who received instructional support were less than one quarter of the faculty

surveyed. Additionally, pedagogical/instructional and general orientation supports were most

desired by adjunct faculty. Likewise, challenges related to disconnect were felt by participants as

revealed in their written responses (Buch et. al., 2017).

　　　　Phase two of the study, conducted at the same institution, focused on formal support

assistance through broad adjunct orientation and instructional/pedagogical support (Buch et. al.,

2017). Both in-person opportunities to learn and the availability of online resources were major

needs identified by the respondents to reduce their feelings of disconnect. In response, Faculty

Learning Communities (FLCs), the teaching and learning training that breaks the level of

disconnect through cross-discipline initiatives, were developed by the researchers. Lastly, phase

three involved the use of an adjunct post-survey that was administered two and one-half

academic years after the initial needs assessment. The FLCs were desired most by survey

participants, and other desired supports included the use of an adjunct website and online

orientation (Buch et. al., 2017). The development and delivery of needs assessment surveys by

higher education administrators in support of the adjunct faculty population may prove to be a positive institutional change strategy in garnering stakeholder satisfaction.

The research conducted by both Buch et. al. (2017) and Morton (2012) offered the importance of intentional focus on adjunct faculty needs and ways an institutional may provide support for this group of faculty. Morton (2012) examined the importance of adjunct faculty, and wanted to determine what initiatives could lead to adjunct faculty and institutional success. An understanding of the needs and requirements of adjuncts were central to this researcher's work. The study indicated that adjunct faculty are not given the support or recognition they deserve, and institutions of higher education have a responsibility to provide for this population of educators. Morton analyzed adjunct faculty needs through five areas outlined by the leading scholar, Richard E. Lyons (2007). Orientation, adequate training, a sense of belonging, initial and ongoing professional development, and recognition of quality work were the five areas examined. An analysis was conducted through reflection upon the author's experience at Ashland Theological Seminary, and practical ideas were woven into the five areas outlined above (Morton, 2012).

Based on Lyons' (2007) five areas, Morton proposed several correlated suggestions (Morton, 2012). The author stated that institutions need to create opportunity by providing orientation follow-up and office space specifically for adjuncts. Additionally, creating supervisory needs initiatives based on technology, writing a quality syllabus, resource attainment, and mentoring by a full-time faculty member were key considerations. The study also revealed that creating community through afforded opportunities and advancement through modes of professional development would aid the adjunct population. Finally, creating an environment of respect through adjunct recognition was deemed a quality initiative. This study's

findings revealed that institutions need to be thoughtful, strategic, and creative in how they welcome and provide ongoing support for adjunct faculty members. Adjunct faculty feelings related to belonging and success in their roles on college and university campuses can lead to improved organizational performance and success, thus creating structured opportunities for the cohort to thrive professionally.

Both Morton (2012) and Baron-Nixon's (2007) research focused on ways to support part-time faculty and institutional success; differently than onboarding, Baron-Nixon (2007) embraced the idea of institutional success with a wider view through the whole professional, meaning that of the teacher and scholar as one. Seeking to elevate the typically underutilized body of part-time faculty in teaching and scholarship, Baron-Nixon (2007) offered concrete ideas and suggestions to promote the importance, connection, and advancement of non-full-time faculty within institutions. In the exploration of the concept, built upon studies and theory, the researcher suggested that current systems within higher education do not support the part-time faculty cohort. The researcher offered two little known facts regarding part-time faculty: 1) part-time faculty have interest in producing scholarly work, and 2) scholarly grants and fellowships, such as Fullbrights and Guggenheims, have been awarded to part-time faculty (Baron-Nixon, 2007).

Evidence supporting the previous facts were revealed in poll results delivered by the *Adjunct Advocate Magazine* that encompassed a one-year time span (Baron-Nixon, 2007). The results indicated that sixty-two percent of part-time faculty participants published scholarly books, articles, or other publications. Those engaged in their field's research topped sixty percent. Furthermore, part-time faculty who applied for grants reached fifty-four percent (Baron-Nixon, 2007).

Baron-Nixon (2007) suggested that commitments made by institutions regarding access and promotion of part-time faculty scholarship through appropriate support systems should become engrained in academia. The researcher identified and suggested the avenue of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) combined with the part-time faculty population as a solution. Five actionable ideas were offered by the researcher to support part-time faculty and include adjunct access to information, field application opportunities, the use of professional portfolios, advanced degree completion opportunities, and knowledge sharing in multiple ways (Baron-Nixon, 2007). The ability to think differently and imagine possibilities that will improve teaching and learning is warranted in today's rapidly changing realm of higher education, and professionals both inside and outside the academy could further explore initiatives, such as the five listed above, to advance the intentionality of work between full-time and part-time faculty.

In offering ways to connect non-full-time teacher scholars to the work of the institution, as posed by Baron-Nixon, researchers Webb, Wong, and Hubball (2013) provided further concrete suggestions to support the professional development of adjunct faculty to, ". . . enhance scholarly approaches to university teaching and learning practice" (p.231). Webb, et. al. (2013) undertook a reflective examination at the University of British Columbia (UBC), a research-intensive university, to create and disseminate professional development approaches for the adjunct practitioner population. Two professional fields of study were studied—dentistry and education. Scholarly approaches to teaching and learning were the focus of the examination and how, through specialized learning, adjunct practitioner's needs could be best served. Considerable time and effort are needed when implementing these approaches, and the foundational underpinnings are based in a blend of theory and practice in the field work that many adjuncts undertake (Webb, et. al., 2013).

The work of adjunct practitioners does not typically exist without challenges (Webb, et. al., 2013). The authors' examination elevates the voice of the community, the expertise outside of academia, that when harnessed and understood well could enable an adjunct to feel connected to the campus environment, supported in their academic role, and ultimately to be a solid contributor to scholarly teaching and learning. In the study, the researchers' revealed the importance of professional development and delivery methods to part-time practitioners. Suggested were flexible and responsive initiatives situated in communities of practice, specifically observation, evaluation, formative feedback, and ongoing discussion throughout. As the study unfolded, professional identities were revealed in the flexible communities of practice, active learning and reflection experiences. Inclusive communities of practice were expanded in this study, and the adjunct practitioner's sense of isolation decreased (Webb, et. al., 2013). Initiating flexible communities of practice for adjunct faculty members' professional development may lead to improved teaching, learning, and scholarly output.

Similar to Webb et. al.'s (2013) study that revealed a reflective examination of scholarly approaches to teaching and learning professional development, researchers Wasserman and Kram (2009) offered related insight regarding the scholar-practitioner role and what challenges and opportunities these educators encounter. In their 2009 study, the authors studied the narratives of scholar-practitioners to find the meaning behind the term, what it meant to those who ascribed to it, and what the implications were for knowledge generation. The term scholar-practitioner, as the researchers' found, was defined differently by each individual (Wasserman & Kram, 2009). The researcher Edgar Schein was interviewed by Wasserman and Kram (2009), and defined the term as, "a professional who knows how to abstract out new knowledge from experiences in organizations," and as, "someone who is dedicated to generating new knowledge that is useful to

practitioners" (p.19). As scholar-practitioners go about their work, each identifies differently with the term and therefore, challenges arise for these individuals. Alternatively, opportunities exist if there is a shared understanding between the players and through the organizations they work for (Wasserman & Kram, 2009).

The researchers interviewed 25 participants, and several areas of focus were used in the authors' selection of participants (Wasserman & Kram, 2009). Those who defined themselves as scholar-practitioners, those who were interested in gaining new knowledge to uphold change, and those who attained their Ph.D. made up the population of subjects. Ages of the participants in the study ranged from early 40s to early 80s, and diversity related to culture and gender were all identifying traits in the selection process. Wasserman and Kram (2009) asked nine specific questions of their subjects related to the scholar-practitioner role, and one overarching question purported by the authors stated, "How do those who identify as scholar-practitioners define, navigate, and resolve dilemmas and opportunities they encounter as they go about their work" (p.13)? The researchers found that unique scholar-practitioner narratives were foundational in forming knowledge generation and these individuals, in their dual roles, are critical actors in the consolidation and understanding of new knowledge. Wasserman and Kram's (2009) study may lead higher education administrators and leaders to define intentional activities to encourage stakeholder discussion in the many ways that new knowledge is formed through the adjunct faculty community. Additionally, and more broadly, one may argue that this discussion may be a useful exercise for all types of faculty.

In conclusion, adjunct faculty are challenged in their roles as educators as they often do not feel like they are supported or that they belong in the academic community. An understanding of adjunct faculty experiences in the context of their roles in higher education and in the

professional world coupled with their unique needs and those needs of the institution is

imperative to glean from the research as well as the institutional culture in which they work.

Furthermore, connecting and relating adjunct faculty to other institutional stakeholders and

institutional mission and values through systematic processes, professional development,

collaborative activities and recognition can support the underserved faculty cohort. Lastly, a

reframing and understanding of relationships, and considering the ways that higher education

faculty and administrators think and work within their unique contexts and organizations, is

worthy of consideration. In keeping with these observations, this project will outline the benefits

of transformational leadership as related to three intentional activities in support of adjunct

faculty at Trailside College.

Bass's Transformational Leadership Theory

Leaders in higher education can look to Bernard Bass' (1990) Transformational

Leadership Theory when assessing and supporting their people and institutions. The theory can

be utilized as a catalyst for organizational change through a leader's understanding of the

existing culture and their ability to alter current routine and practice (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

When a leader begins to generate awareness and purpose around a group's mission, and when

self-interests are intentionally minimized for the benefit of the group, the transformational leader

may be successful in his/her ability to enact change for the benefit of the people and the

organization (Bass, 1990).

According to Bass and Avolio (1993), the relationships and behaviors between a leader

and followers, and the work they collectively undertake, are areas of focus that are central in

transforming an organization. Vital to the theory is the intentionality and the strategy of the

transformational leader to realign a culture, based on vision, that will benefit both the people and

the organization's future success. The researchers noted, "Leaders who are concerned about organizational renewal will seek to foster organizational cultures that are hospitable and conductive to creativity, problem solving, risk taking, and experimentation" (Bass & Avolio, 1993, p. 115). The catalyst for change may be visible in leaders who seek to promote positive change in organizations through Bass' (1990) transformational leadership theory, and through their own unique ways of relating to others.
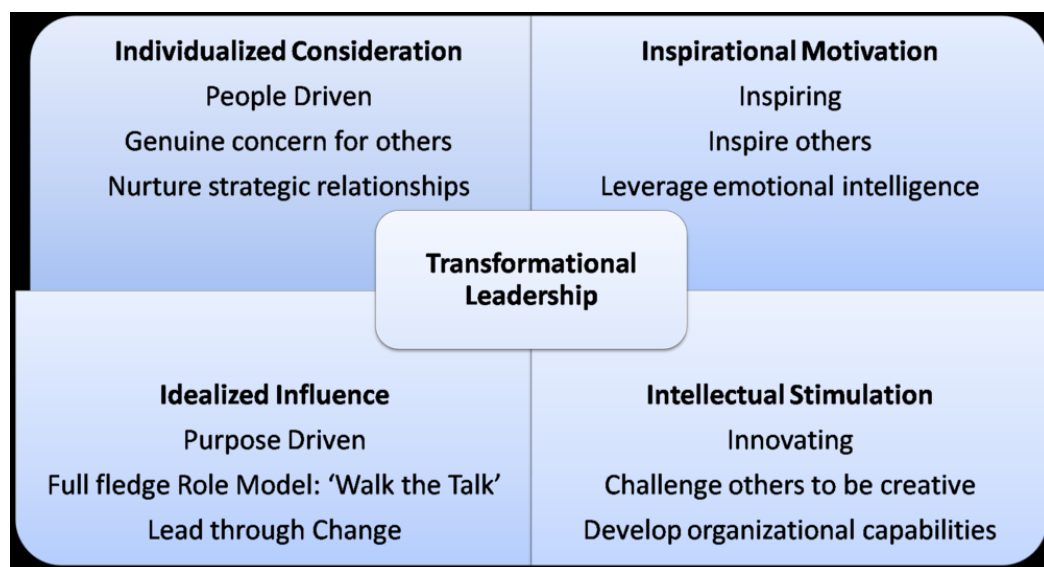
Figure 1. Bass's Transformational Leadership Theory (Nikimac Solutions Inc., 2020)

The foundation of Bass' (1990) Transformational Leadership theory is characterized by four components as seen in *Figure 1*.: idealized influence (or charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1990). The components were developed, ". . . based on the findings of a series of surveys and on clinical and case evidence" (Bass, 1990, p.21).

According to Bass (1990), providing a sense of mission and vision, imparting pride, and acquiring respect and trust are facets of a leader who employs idealized influence in their daily

work. Additionally, these "Charismatic leaders inspire and excite employees with the idea that they may be able to accomplish great things with extra effort" (Bass, 1990, p. 21). Herein, Bass (1990) points toward purpose and a shared leadership approach, one where all employees may become a critical part of the process. When employees are included in a process, they own, believe in, and support the process they have worked hard to build.

The second component, inspirational motivation, may be revealed to followers through the transformational leader's communication of high expectations, the sharing of important purposes in simple ways, and through the use of symbols to focus efforts (Bass, 1990). With others in mind, the transformational leader may build and manage the incentive among employees in order that they become connected emotionally to the work and symbols represented in their workspace.

Thorough problem solving and rationality promotes intellectual stimulation in followers, the third component. The transformational leader shows a willingness and ability to reveal "to their employees new ways of looking at old problems to be solved, and to emphasize rational solutions" (Bass, 1990, p.21). Leading others with innovative approaches reveals that change will occur. Balancing the comfort levels of others with the changes, and providing support throughout the process, is part of the transformational leader's responsibility.

Lastly, individualized consideration provides the personal attention, the mentoring and advising through customized treatment of each individual (Bass, 1990). Here, the transformative leader is acutely attentive to the individual differences of employees, and may act as a role model for those needing assistance in their professional growth and development (Bass, 1990). The concept of considering the individual is an essential leadership element to promote the success of

people and organizations. Extensive time, work, and deep thought are needed to accomplish the growth and development of others, however the potential for reward is significant.

The concepts of transformational leadership that Bass (1990) put forth may be applied to initiatives designed to better support the adjunct faculty population; the reasons for additional support are two-fold. First, adjunct faculty are a group of unique educators embodying a variety of names or labels, backgrounds, and expertise (Harrell, 2019). Second, while each adjunct faculty member possesses a different narrative, they are typically similar in their marginalized status on campus (Burroughs, 2019). Revealed in the literature review are the many challenges adjunct faculty face, such as no sense of belonging to the campus community, a lack of teaching support, no involvement in governance and/or curriculum decision making, and a lack of recognition, (Burroughs, 2019).

With regard to the utilization of and support for adjunct faculty, and really all faculty, a leader utilizing Bass's transformational leadership theory, ". . . may broaden and elevate the interests of their employees" (Bass, 1990, p.21) thereby initiating the opportunity for a shift in culture. A transformational leader's ability to inspire others to think creatively in how they utilize adjunct faculty, and how the group may be supported through the leader's strong ethical and moral values may be a catalyst for change (Bass, 1990). High standards and expectations set by the leader may show not only that the leader believes in the abilities of adjunct faculty, but that there exists stimulation within the adjuncts to examine and inquire about their own beliefs and values and those of their leader. The leader who listens to adjunct faculty needs and issues, and acts as a mentor to foster and promote the realization of talents and potential within themselves may likely create a more robust culture of success through Bass's (1990) transformational leadership approach. Ultimately, in a culture of transformation, ". . . there is generally a sense of

purpose and a feeling of family" (Bass & Avolio, 1993, p.116) that may bring institutional

stakeholders together.

Aspects of Bass's (1990) theory have informed this project, and the purpose of the project

is to bring to light the undervalued and underutilized population of educators known as adjunct

faculty. Offered are new ways to solve old problems in order to create positive change at both the

individual and College levels. The 4I's framework offered by Bass (1990) provides a person-

centric focused approach to leadership that can be the right strategy for advancing institutional

culture and community. The deep interest and passion of a transformational leader may fuel

positive relationships to promote efficiency, and the leader may thus enable adjuncts and others

to become woven together through a united mission as one large, collective and flexible fabric

that operates effectively in times of change for the benefit of others and for the greater good of

society.

<div align="center">**Project Plan**</div>

Introduction

As noted in the literature, adjunct faculty are often unsupported in their role, and

generally feel a sense of disconnect from the academic community (Buch, McCullough &

Tamberelli, 2017). To remedy this, I am proposing an Adjunct Faculty Working & Learning

Community (AFWLC) at Trailside College to enhance the adjunct experience in order that they

may acquire a greater sense of belonging, community and connection to the Institution. The

community space, at the most basic level, will provide adjuncts from all disciplines with one

centralized location that is an appropriately and thoughtfully planned space with adjunct faculty

needs in mind. Within the space, Trailside's adjunct faculty will find a sense of place within the

academic community, and where new relationships will flourish to benefit the Institution and its people.

Two distinct activities will be implemented to initiate the Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community's existence and value to the College. In addition to the construction of a space for adjunct faculty, a unique resource known as the Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query will serve as a personalized questionnaire to provide administrators with a holistic sense of the adjunct, and their particular circumstances and perspectives. Additionally, the creation of a Champion Partnership Program (CPP) will enable administrators to fully consider the adjunct and potential beneficial working relationships between each adjunct, and the tenure-track and tenured faculty members.

Key transformational leadership components, intentionality and strategy, are critical in enhancing culture to further benefit adjunct faculty and organizational success (Bass & Avolio, 1993). The new space and the uniquely defined activities juxtaposed with a transformational style of leadership will aim to fulfill the Community's outcomes while contributing to the success of Trailside College.

Project Outcomes

In defining the three outcomes for the purpose of this project, first and foremost, adjunct faculty need to feel a greater sense of belonging to the Institution and its culture. Reliable evidence exists to show that currently, part-time faculty make up the majority of instructors on US college campuses (Meixner, Kruck, & Madden, 2010). In many cases, adjunct professors feel disconnected from their institution, and the associated challenges are real (Buch, McCullough, & Tamberelli, 2017). Ample space to work and learn are key considerations for adjunct faculty success (Morton, 2012). Given these three assertions, impetus to support and cultivate a sense of

belonging lies in a centralized, dedicated adjunct faculty space and the dedication and support of higher education administrators. Additionally, data collection activities undertaken within the space will serve to enhance institutional identity and contributions to the College community and society. By providing a welcoming and well-designed dedicated space for adjunct faculty, Trailside College will further validate the role and success of adjuncts, and the center will serve as a home for part-time faculty.

A second outcome describes the need for adjunct faculty to feel an increased level of support in their overall development in the academic setting. Creating community through afforded opportunities and advancement through modes of learning and professional development will aid the adjunct population (Morton, 2012). Likewise, intentional time dedicated to discussions about adjunct faculty teaching is beneficial to institutions (Burroughs, 2019). Intentional activities and opportunities offered to adjunct faculty, will aim to promote part-time faculty success on the College campus. Such activities may come in the form of attending and/or contributing to development opportunities in teaching, research, and skill development. In order for administrators to more fully support adjunct faculty in their development, an understanding of each adjunct's experience, personality traits, desires, and needs for professional development is helpful. Information revealed from the Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query will enable administrators to receive a starting point or platform on which to understand and frame each unique adjunct faculty narrative. The completed query will serve to promote future, mutually beneficial relationships as well as the delivery of opportunities for success.

A third outcome shows that adjunct faculty may contribute in new ways to Trailside College's success. Each faculty member, no matter the type, brings a variety of knowledge and

expertise to the Institution. When the knowledge and expertise is combined with others, a greater value to the Institution may be visible. Therefore, a collective community of all types of faculty who are involved in activities with one another will help to build the number of intellectual and service contributions that Trailside College faculty produce. Such value and unity to be realized across the Institution amongst all types of faculty may arise from the CPP practiced in the Adjunct Faculty Working & Learning Community. The Program, whereby adjunct faculty, tenured, and tenure-track faculty work closely together to form relationships and build new knowledge and contributions through a variety of collaborative activities, will aim to successfully support all faculty and ultimately, the growth of the entire organization. The deliberate harnessing of collective expertise will create more awareness around the benefits of diverse faculty expertise along with an enhanced sense of one team or unified body of faculty. Organizational roles function well when they are not performed in isolation, and by being on the same team, and working in concert with each other, the notion of "us vs them" is eliminated (By, 2020). Captured in the spirit of By's (2020) thinking are the intentional activities outlined in this project.

Intentional Activity #1 – Creation of a Dedicated Space: The Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community (AFWLC)

The construction of a dedicated space to serve adjunct faculty at Trailside College will be designated as the Adjunct Faculty Working & Learning Community (AFWLC) (Appendices A, B, & C)[1]. Placing this center in a visible and centrally located space near other institutional areas of adjunct faculty resources, is an important consideration for the ease of the adjunct faculty

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[1] Photographic renderings and floor plans were created in Autodesk Revit modelling software.

population to carry out their work and learning. With an adjunct's status comes a back and forth

passage from work off of Trailside's campus, perhaps at other institutions or professional

workplaces, to work on the Trailside campus. Researcher Charles Harrell (2019) illustrates the

previous point well through the title of his essay, *Contingent Faculty: More Than a Tribe of*

Nomads (Harrell, 2019). Herein, the author asserts that adjuncts feel like tent dwellers or nomads

moving from one area to another, and ". . . as laborers between programs or institutions. . ."

(Harrell, 2019, p.315).

      The AFWLC's mission statement that will hang in the main entryway will be central to

the work that will be delivered. Adjunct faculty must be included in building the mission

statement, but for the purposes of this project, a sample mission statement is provided below.

> *The Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community provides holistic development of*
> *adjunct faculty while intentionally integrating strategic institutional endeavors. The*
> *unique unification of people and the organization are created through an awareness of*
> *resources, an understanding and cultivation of people, and a new way of thinking for*
> *both. The Community brings together adjunct faculty from across all disciplines to work*
> *and learn in a supportive, collaborative environment that they may call home.*

      The principal means by which the mission is accomplished is through thoughtful and

innovative leadership that supports the notion of serving others. The intentional focus and

purpose of the mission, along with the building of pride, respect, and trust between community

members and their efforts are qualities of the transformational leader—the leader who uses

idealized influence (Bass 1990) to create positive change.

      Adjacent to the mission, along another wall, will hang a symbol of the Community's

leadership that will serve to guide those employed, volunteering, or utilizing the space to be

considered and respected as unique leaders at all levels who come from different places, and

encompass diverse abilities. Coined the Community Leadership Strategy, the wall hanging will

serve as a symbol and will state seven aspirational goals, namely to: 1) always have the needs of

the adjunct faculty community in mind; 2) be fully responsible and accountable for my role and responsibilities, and to follow the mission of the Community; 3) take the time to listen intently to all who enter this space; 4) be considerate, kind and respectful of others at all times; 5) be a creative problem-solver to the best of my abilities; 6) be a trustworthy member of the Community team; and 7) be socially responsible by helping to promote the achievement of one another's success. A small laminated card with the list of aspirational goals will be distributed and made readily available to promote the AFWLC's engagement and outreach efforts. Being mindful and practicing what is outlined on the Community symbol will aid in providing the inspirational motivation that Bass (1990) describes in his theory. In this way, individuals may become more aware of the many ways they can positively impact their social environment.

The AFWLC will be fully staffed to support the many creative initiatives that will emerge from the space. Residing within the unit will be the Community's director, who will oversee the operations and initiatives and will strive to be the creative and strategic driver in garnering relationships between faculty and administrators. The director will plan and strategize the many initiatives and offer exceptional service in support of the Institution and its Community members. A new position at Trailside College will be created specifically for the Community and titled the Adjunct Faculty Administrator (AFA). Two AFAs will be housed within the Community and both will be seasoned adjuncts who possesses some form of leadership skill and a passion for transforming the adjunct faculty experience. Each will serve the Community in a part-time, funded role so that they may tend to their teaching and other responsibilities while serving the College in this administrative capacity.

AFAs will work alongside the director to support Community initiatives and to provide the valuable context of being an adjunct faculty member. Flexibility and creative utilization of

AFAs will be essential given the nature of the adjunct teaching role. Adjuncts who visit the Community will be able to relate to the AFAs, and vice versa, consequently inspiring robust working relationships. The approach in garnering relationships between the transformational leader and their employees may show intentional consideration of employees, thus the age-old hierarchy of manager vs employee will be suppressed and the sense of and advisor, leader or coach may take over (Bass, 1990).

In consideration of the space, the first floor will house a reception area where one graduate fellow or student worker will be located. The Community member will be in charge of a variety of administrative tasks such as booking space, helping the AFAs and the director with a variety of administrative tasks, answering phones, updating social media sites, and greeting and directing people. A handbook will be created to guide the student worker/fellow in their role. Several conference spaces on the first floor offer space for collaborative work among all faculty types and administrators. Additionally, two AFA offices, restrooms, a copy room, storage space, and a kitchenette will be accessible to the Community's members.

Transitioning up the impressive staircase to the second floor, visitors will come upon adjunct faculty workspaces that meet a variety of needs. An open work space and adjacent lounge are dedicated for adjunct faculty only— for the purposes of classroom preparation, grading, and taking a break. Flexible breakout spaces offer adjuncts the ability to meet with other adjuncts or with groups of students. When confidential conversation is required, two small offices may be used for private adjunct/student meetings. In the future, these small spaces may house Community staff members as the need for more staffing arises. The second floor also houses the director's office, a copy room and restrooms.

Within the AFWLC space, adjunct faculty will receive support in managing their overall workload and responsibilities. Each adjunct will be supported differently as their situations are unique from one adjunct to the next. Programs specifically tailored to support an adjunct faculty member's desire to produce research, or to improve upon their pedagogy will stem from the Community's effort. Baron-Nixon (2007) provided insight into nurturing adjunct faculty as whole professionals, meaning teacher and scholar as one. The author described how institutional commitment in promoting the adjunct faculty population through support systems should become routine in the academic setting (Baron-Nixon, 2007). The activities undertaken by stakeholders in the AFWLC will aim to embed supportive routine into daily practice and operation.

Further support offered to those adjunct faculty who may wish to apply for fill-time positions at Trailside College will be provided by the AFWLC. Trailside's adjunct population are already employees at the College and have some degree of experience and familiarity with the academic setting, thus helping them to step into a full-time role would be beneficial to both the adjunct and the Institution. According to Kezar and Maxey (2013), most institutions collect a limited amount of data related to the adjunct faculty population. Through intentional outreach, ". . . leaders can identify and better understand ways that they can improve campus policies and practices, which will result in better informed, strategic planning" (Kezar & Maxey, 2013, p.2). With intentional outreach in mind, adjunct faculty will feel that their ideas and concerns are being heard and their engagement will likely increase (Kezar & Maxey, 2013).

Data collection and assessment efforts will be a part of the AFWLC's deliberate activities and will serve to boost knowledge and awareness among the academic community. One example of data collection/assessment efforts, the Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query, will be described in

the next section of this project. Future surveys and feedback forms related to the AFWLC's

efforts will be designed and distributed to inform practice and signal areas for continuous

improvement.

Intentional Activity #2 – Development of an Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query

To begin the journey of transforming the way adjunct faculty are treated and considered,

one critical point requires the leader to be mindful of the fact that each adjunct faculty member

possesses a radically different narrative, therefore a customized approach to serving adjuncts is

ideal (Tarr, 2010). Leaders who are able to identify and thoughtfully integrate the various

narratives with institutional needs may serve to promote positive adjunct faculty experiences.

The goal of the AFWLC is to improve the typical adjunct faculty experience on higher education

campuses. The typical experience was referenced by Burroughs (2019) as the marginalized,

underutilized, and undervalued status of adjuncts on college campuses.

Taking the time to listen and gather information from adjunct faculty will be one of the

most critically important and foundational initiatives undertaken within the Community. To be

distinguished by their institutions for who they are and what they bring provides a meaningful

working and learning community for adjunct faculty (Gillespie, Robertson, & Bergquist, 2010).

One Community initiative will encourage the adjunct faculty member to complete the Adjunct

Faculty Narrative Query (Appendix E) at or around the time of orientation, or whenever the

faculty member engages for the first time at the Community space. The beauty of the form is that

it can be completed before an adjunct starts to teach, or well after. The purpose of the query is to

hone in on the adjunct's reasons for teaching, areas of expertise, future aspirations, desire to

collaborate with others on research and teaching related endeavors, desire to volunteer at the

college, and other reasons. The query will serve as a customized approach in focusing on the

individual while matching them closely with institutional needs and initiatives, and fulfilling the Community's outcomes.

Utilizing this form, designed with Bass's (1990) individualized consideration, will provide the adjunct faculty member with the personal attention to help fulfill a greater sense of professional growth and development, in keeping with the tenets of transformational leadership (Bass, 1990). The query will be distributed through Qualtrics XM and will allow administrators to attain data specific to each adjunct faculty member. The data will be analyzed and used to promote relationships in the CPP and other activities and programs offered by the AFWLC. Additionally, the survey data may reveal adjunct faculty interest and needs for support in research and grant seeking activities— the activities more commonly associated with full-time faculty. Surprising to some, a portion of adjunct faculty have the desire to produce scholarly work, and many have received scholarly grants and fellowships (Baron-Nixon, 2007). Trailside College's adjunct faculty who are interested in the opportunity to access grants and funding through the Office of Sponsored Programs will then have the ability to do so because of the working partnership with the tenured or tenure-track faculty members.

The Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query will initiate the beginning of an ongoing assessment plan to include the use of future queries in order to inform the Community's work, and to be sure outcomes are being met. Other queries will follow, at least annually, to obtain evidence in how adjunct experiences are transpiring. Future efforts in survey design and collection may also be translated to the tenure and tenure-track faculty groups to further enhance institutional data collection efforts and collective work at Trailside College.

Intentional Activity #3 – Development of a Champion Partnership Program (CPP)

As Bass (1990) described, the intellectual stimulation provided by transformational leaders will provide innovative thinking, a challenge to be creative, and an ability to develop capabilities. One innovative initiative undertaken by the leadership in the AFWLC is the Champion Partnership Program (CPP). The Program will be an integral component of the work performed in the AFWLC space and will support adjunct faculty by pairing them with a tenured or tenure-track faculty member to assist in matters related to student support, teaching, research, and other areas related to being successful at Trailside. It is not out of the question for a new adjunct faculty member to be paired with seasoned adjunct. As faculty begin to use the Community space and to work and socialize with one another, more flexible and creative opportunities to support the CPP will be revealed. One such opportunity, as described in Intentional Activity #1 will provide the adjunct faculty member with guidance on how to navigate from a part-time role to a full-time role at the College.

Utilizing the Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query, the CV/resume, and information gathered from formal and informal discussions will serve to help the Community's leadership in linking faculty with one another. Suggestions for pairings may be made by the leadership, or at the request of the champions—the adjuncts and the tenured/tenure-track faculty. Each will have opportunities to connect with one another through open house and other events hosted within the Community, as well as through an interview process to identify where mutually beneficial activities may reside for both.

Incentive for the tenured or tenure-track faculty member will allow them to use their work with adjunct faculty as an administrative responsibility, or as a service responsibility. Evidence suggests that providing an incentive for tenure-track faculty members to be part of such a program will allow them to utilize their service as a contribution to their dossier for promotion

and tenure (Kezar & Maxey, 2013). All adjunct faculty who participate will receive a stipend for their work in the CPP.

A Champion Plan form will be designed to guide both the adjunct and full-time faculty member in their responsibilities to one another. Each Plan will include the responsibilities of each faculty member, and a commitment to each other that provides evidence for accountability within the working relationship. Goals will be delineated together, and both parties will sign the Plan to affirm their commitment and intent. Through the working relationship, such activities may include classroom observations by the tenured or tenure track faculty member to guide the adjunct in their teaching role. In turn, the adjunct may bring their expertise to the tenured or tenure-track faculty member's classroom and serve as a guest speaker or co-teacher, and may provide industry or other types of experience that the full-time faculty member does not possess. As Kezar & Maxey (2013) described, adjunct faculty should be considered for service in a mentor role and not solely in the role of the mentee.

Findings from the AFWLC's data collection processes will ideally yield greater collaborative work and contributions to research, therefore allowing capacity to increase faculty contributions to the College and to society. Additionally, new light may be cast upon the value of adjuncts and full-time faculty who identify as scholar-practitioners at Trailside College. The reframing of mentorship, and in this case, championing, through the way in which people work and think within the AFWLC will provide forward progress for the individuals and the organization. As researcher By (2020) indicated, for the work of faculty to stay relevant, it takes a conscious effort to reframe the thinking around the work of scholars and practitioners. The Community's CPP will advance the unit's outcomes and better position all faculty to navigate the

many demands of their careers while becoming integrated with the academic community and the community as a whole.

Benchmarking

The practice of benchmarking faculty programs is important because the comparison of context, resources, processes and performance can be measured against those of one's own institution. Valuable insight gained from the benchmarking process can be used to advance faculty programs and their effectiveness. The University at North Carolina (UNC) at Charlotte provides a well-poised, comprehensive example of an institution that supports its adjunct faculty. UNCs Division of Academic Affairs offers valuable webpages specifically for adjunct faculty in the forms of policies, guidelines, classroom guidance, and campus resources (University of North Carolina, 2020). The value of the adjunct faculty cohort is revealed in UNCs statements, "It is important that Charlotte's adjunct faculty understand how much they are valued and the power that they hold on campus. After all, our adjunct faculty make up a third of UNC Charlotte's teaching staff" (University of North Carolina, 2020)! Specific artifacts that symbolize the support of adjuncts are an adjunct handbook, syllabus guidance, and policies (University of North Carolina, 2020).

An Adjunct Faculty Learning Community, facilitated by Kim Buch, researcher and faculty fellow, offers professional development to its adjuncts through active collaboration in support of teaching, learning, and community building (University of North Carolina, 2020). The Community's active learning sessions are offered to all adjuncts, no matter their level of expertise, and provides adjuncts with the chance to participate in small groups throughout the academic year. Adjunct faculty at UNC faculty receive a stipend for their participation in monthly face-to face meetings (University of North Carolina, 2020).

Another robust example of an institution that purposefully considers its adjunct faculty can be found at the University of Southern California (USC) in the Pullias Center for Higher Education (University of Southern California, 2020). As a prominent leading research center, the Pullias Center for Higher Education is led by its director and well-known researcher, Adrianna Kezar. Measures of impact are detailed on the University's website, and most notably for the purpose of this research is the measure that states that "Pullias research and programs have changed faculty policies and practices at hundreds of postsecondary institutions" (University of Southern California, 2020). Although the context of Trailside College is different from USC, intentional examination of well-established programs such as the one in the Pullias Center may feed the Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community leaders' appetite for translating new ideas into the context of Trailside College.

Contributing to the aid of faculty who are off the tenure track, the Pullias Center's Delphi Project strives to bring about awareness related to changing faculty trends through research and data (University of Southern California, 2020). In partnership with the Association of American College and Universities and more than thirty other higher education representatives, the Project demonstrates free tools and resources to delve into for supporting adjunct faculty (University of Southern California, 2020). The essential process of benchmarking UNC and USC allowed me to strategize and develop new and creative ideas in support of adjunct faculty and the AFWLC at Trailside College.

Outreach and Engagement Plan

The Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community will be more meaningful if it does not function in a silo, therefore administrators within the Community must be fully informed and integrated with the many supportive units on the Trailside College campus. Such

units include but are not limited to the library, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), the Office of Sponsored Programs, Professional and Continuing Studies, the Office of Human Resources and other community stakeholders. The Community's administrators and staff shall be mindful of the resources and support through people leading efforts in other areas of the College. New efforts built out of the AFWLC space shall not duplicate other unit's initiatives. The Community's efforts will serve to add different layers of support to enhance the already existing resources at Trailside College. The AFWLC's leadership will be central to the efforts, and will assist in driving opportunity that will serve both adjuncts and the Institution effectively.

In supporting outreach and engagement, open house events will be held within the AFWLC space at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters in order to welcome and familiarize all adjunct faculty to their dedicated space, administrators, and staff support. Efforts on behalf of the Community's director to time events with adjunct faculty orientation conducted by the CETL will promote efficiency and ease for the part-time faculty cohort. Regular tours of the space and the resources offered will be part of the unit's efforts throughout the year. Adjunct faculty may visit and utilize the resources within the Community space whenever it is open. Dedicated evening hours will be available to support those adjuncts who may not have the option to visit the space during the day.

In person outreach will be a large part of the AFWLC's outreach and engagement plan. Likewise, a Linkedin profile for the Community will be developed and maintained by a staff member. Utilization of the Linkedin platform is a strategic choice made by the leadership as the adjunct's connection to the College and to the Community will boost their academic and professional profiles.

Further engagement and outreach will be supported through new College web pages specifically designed for the Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community. Online information is valuable to adjuncts (Buch, et. al, 2017), and the content within the web pages will continuously be developed with Community stakeholder ideas and visions to properly serve adjunct faculty. Maintained and updated regularly, tabs within the webpages will include About Us/Mission, Leadership, Learning Opportunities, and Events. Announcements pertaining to adjunct faculty will be advertised on the web pages as well as in the College's Provost Briefing, and a monthly Adjunct Community Newsletter. Lastly, a College listserve will be utilized to deliver adjunct faculty news and other events to all faculty, administrators at all levels, and staff.

The multiple outreach and engagement approaches detailed above will serve adjunct faculty well through clear, consistent language in various modes of communication. A necessary initiative to maintain the effectiveness of the programs and initiatives will be to attract new adjuncts to the space. Intentional alignment with Trailside's Human Resources Department will be necessary to ensure that all new hires are referred to the AFWLC.

Conclusion

In the context of Trailside College, the adjunct faculty experience will be enhanced through a focused effort in realizing and understanding what will enable this population to thrive in the academic setting. The adjunct population consists of a network of unique individuals with differing backgrounds and reasons for teaching, along with massive talent and capacity to help the College grow. The population moves between the world of academia and their role outside of academia. Therefore, in order for the adjunct to feel and be successful, new and unique approaches to enhance the adjunct faculty experience must include resources and activities that

are central to an adjunct's sense of belonging, their success in their teaching role, and their own development in the academic setting that is meaningful to them.

Three initiatives will begin to transform the adjunct faculty experience and success at Trailside College. First, the AFWLC will provide a dedicated, ample space that will enable adjunct faculty to feel as though they belong to the College community. Symbols and activities to draw the population into the area are key to this Community's success. Second, The Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query will serve as one effort to draw out the narrative of each adjunct faculty member. With a full understanding of each member's experiences, desires, skills, and expertise, the data revealed from the query will more fully equip higher education administrators to strategically utilize adjunct faculty for greater success and impact at both the individual and institutional levels. Third, the Champion Partnership Program (CPP) will provide adjunct faculty members with opportunities to utilize their expertise alongside full-time faculty members, therefore increasing both the adjunct's connection to the College, and the variety and number of contributions that contribute to the organization's success and prestige.

Considering the three main areas addressed in this project, the adjunct faculty overview, organizational change and leadership approaches, and institutional change strategies, capturing the ideas embedded in these areas will aid higher education administrators to advance their people and success of their institutions. Critical to the aforementioned advancement and success is the transformational leadership approach offered by Bernard Bass (1990). Bass's (1990) transformational leadership theory provides an ideal cloak with which to harness the three initiatives described in this project. With the College's best interests in mind, transformational leaders consider the positive potential among the adjunct faculty group. Thus, the implementation of change measures that successfully promote adjuncts and the institution are

possible. Solving the age-old problems pertaining to adjunct faculty through new, creative, and innovative ways is the responsibility of the transformational leader at Trailside College.

As Trailside College administrators strategize meaningful opportunities for its adjuncts, a critical lens of the Organization, its mission, policies, and overall culture must never be overlooked. The strategic work must take into consideration both the needs of the adjunct faculty, and the needs of the Institution. Without the dual-needs approach, any change efforts will be ineffective and fall short for both adjuncts and the College.

On a grand scale, the ultimate receiver of this project's important work is the greater good. Central to all of the work that higher education administrators, staff, and faculty perform, the impetus for the work lies in each person's responsibility and accountability to provide for others. Providing for knowledge and learning opportunities, high-quality service, and ways to advance each individual's capacity to contribute to society are critically important areas for higher education personnel to attend to. Our democratic society provides the people who work in higher education with the distinct honor to serve society in a way like no other entity can. To improve the situations of others through education and the advancement of their economic mobility, higher education personnel have the ability and the choice to find themselves creating greater impact and success upon their institutions and society. Ultimately, at the center of all that matters in this this work is the advancement of humans to benefit our society and the greater good.

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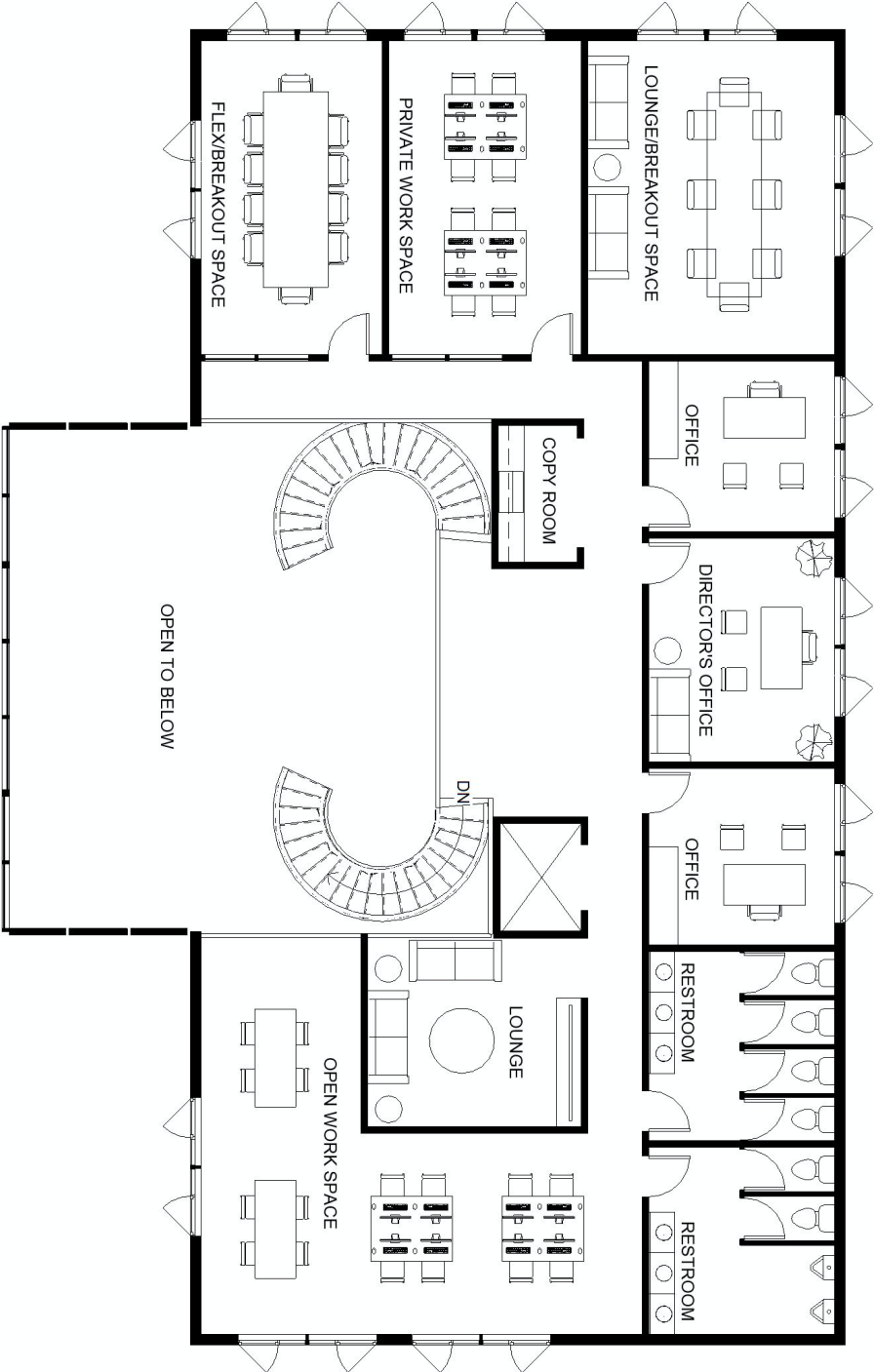in Higher Education*, *25*(2), 231-238.

Appendix A
Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community, Main Entryway

Appendix B
Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community, Floor Plans, First Floor
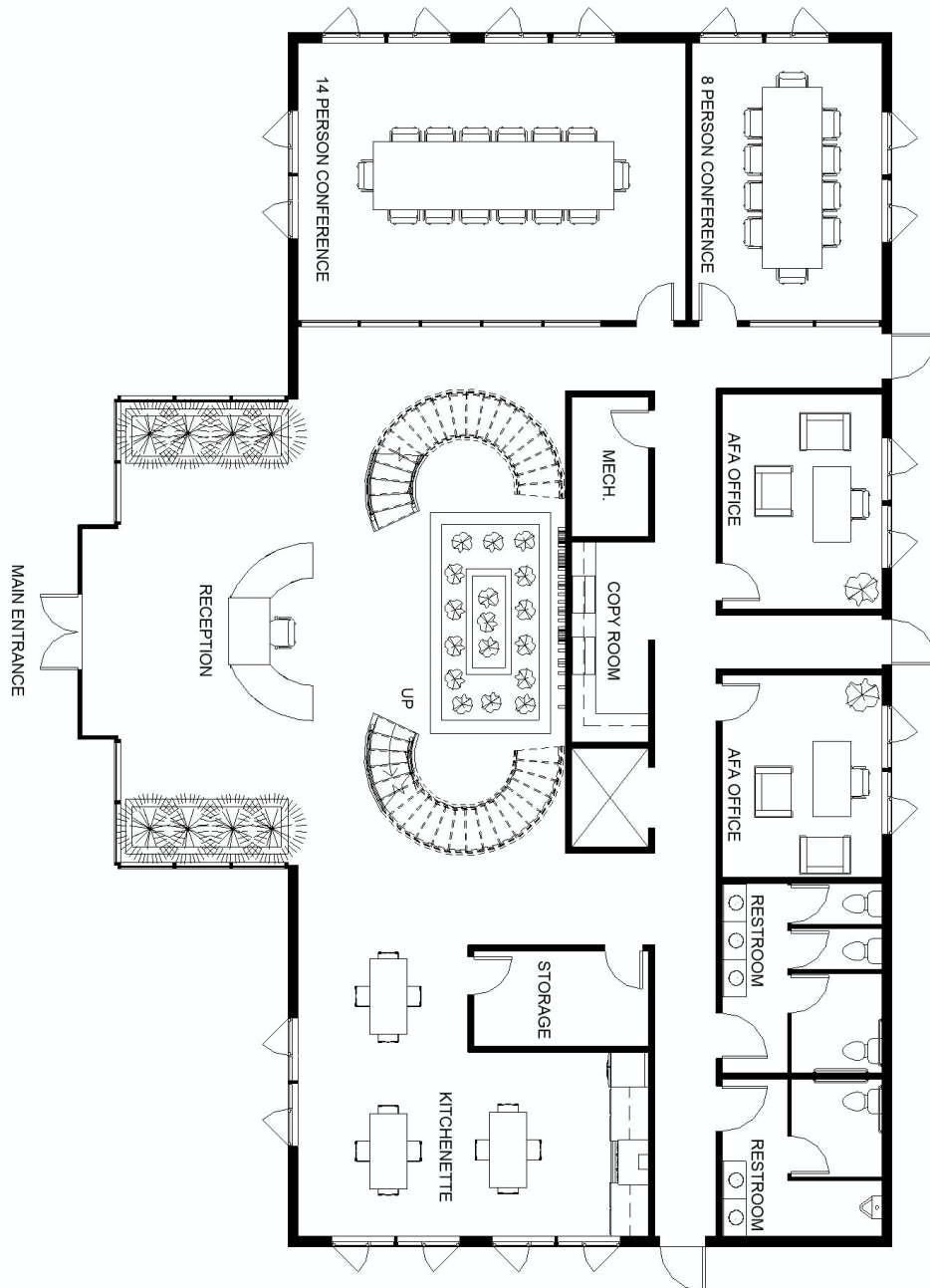
Appendix C
Adjunct Faculty Working and Learning Community, Floor Plans, Second Floor

Appendix D
Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query

The Adjunct Faculty Narrative Query is designed to be administered to all adjunct faculty through the College's Adjunct Faculty Working & Learning Community (AFWLC). Data from the Query will be used for review purposes within the AFWLC to better assist each adjunct faculty member's individual situation and development. Additional benefits from this Query and all future queries will be used to support the effectiveness of the Community as it relates to the Institution. Such areas may include, but are not limited to, the assessment of adjunct faculty engagement pertaining to the tracking of collective work with any type of faculty in research, teaching, service, use of campus resources, and sense of overall connection to the College. With the adjunct faculty member's approval, the data may also be used to inform the adjunct's department chair, other members of the school/department, provost office, and human resources.

Once the Query has been completed, one or more meetings with the Community's director and/or Adjunct Faculty Administrator will take place. The adjunct faculty member's resume is reviewed in conjunction with this completed Query by the Director of the AFWLC and both documents are archived together.

All AFWLC employees thank adjunct faculty members for their participation in the Query. The data will inform the Community's practice, service, and future efforts as related to the unit and the entire Organization.

1. Are you an alum of Trailside College?

   __Yes
   __No

2. Why have you chosen an adjunct teaching position at the College? (choose all that apply)

   __Important source of income
   __Part-time teaching is something I love and I am content in this role
   __I am considering full-time teaching
   __Part-time teaching fits my current lifestyle
   __Other: *(please explain)*

3. Do you have a full-time career outside of the College?

4. Do you have a part-time career outside of the College?

5. Would you prefer to work full-time at this institution if the opportunity arises?

6. Are you currently working towards earning a degree? If so, please list.

7. Are you interested in Executive Education programming at the College? If so, what area(s) would you like to pursue?

8. How many courses are you teaching this term? Please place a numeral after each, as applicable, and list the name of the course and modality.

    Graduate:

    Undergraduate:

9. If you are teaching at the undergraduate level, do you have interest in teaching at the graduate level?

10. If you are teaching at the graduate level, do you have interest in teaching at the undergraduate level?

11. In what modality are you most comfortable teaching? *(choose all that apply)*

    __On-ground (face-to face)
    __Blended (online and face-to-face)
    __Online

12. Considering your role as an adjunct faculty member, in what areas do your greatest strengths and expertise reside?

13. What statements from the list below do you most identify with? Please choose your top four choices (1 = greatest, 4 = lowest).

    __I am a high achiever
    __I am highly adaptable
    __I am a strategic thinker
    __I am competitive by nature
    __I am more reserved by nature
    __I am a lifelong learner
    __I like to feel connected with others
    __I enjoy taking the lead on projects
    __I prefer to follow a leader during a project
    __I like to be highly organized and prepare ahead

__I like to be more spontaneous and go with the flow
__I consider myself more of an introvert (inward looking, reserved, etc.)
__I consider myself more of an extrovert (outward looking, talkative, etc.)
__I consider myself having both introvert and extrovert tendencies

14. Are you new to teaching?

    If not, how long have you been teaching?
    Please list other institutions you have taught at.

15. If you have taught/are currently teaching at other colleges/universities, please describe in a few sentences or more your general teaching experiences (e.g. what were the positive aspects, what were the challenging aspects).

16. Do you have a desire to further your professional development as related to teaching and student involvement while at the College? If so, on campus, online, either?

17. Are you interested in having a tenured faculty member observe your class to offer instructional related feedback and/or ideas to add to your teaching expertise?

18. Are you interested in observing a class taught by a tenured or tenured-track faculty member?

19. Are you interested in becoming a guest speaker in classes taught by other faculty (non-tenure-track, tenure-track and/or tenured)?

20. For you personally, how would you rate the importance of these three categories: Teaching, research, service to the institution, service to the community? *(There is no correct answer.)*

21. Apart from your classroom teaching at this Institution, are you interested in learning about ways in which you could produce intellectual contributions to add to your CV/resume (e.g., scholar or practitioner research/work, grant writing, speaking engagements, service on college committees, etc)?

22. What experience, if any, have you had in the following areas *(mark box as applicable):*

	None	Some	Quite a Bit
General mentoring/curricular guidance for students			
Providing professional/networking advice to students			
Professional speaking engagements/workshops for professional or academic organizations			
Service and/or leadership on professional boards, association, society			
Grant writing			
Articles in professional or academic journals/publications			
Books or Book chapters			
Manuals or research reports			
Patents or new products			
Policy Formulation			
Consulting activities			
Other (please list)			

23. Are you interested in partnering with a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in a research project?

24. Apart from your classroom teaching at this Institution, are you interested in learning about ways in which you could participate in volunteer activities related to the Institution and/or greater

surrounding communities to add to your CV/resume (e.g., mission & ministry, athletics, service learning, food pantry/homeless shelter, etc.)?

25. Do you have any questions or concerns with regard to your role as an adjunct faculty member at the College?

Thank you for participating in this Query. We value your insight, expertise and commitment to the College!

Figures

Figure 1.

Bass's Transformational Leadership Theory