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CONVERGENCE OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS AND PROFESSIONAL
EMPLOYEES: CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION VIA
CONVERGENT HYBRID PLANNED AND EMERGENT CHANGE

A Dissertation Presented

by

Michael C. Metzger

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies,
University of Massachusetts Boston,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2020

Higher Education Administration Program

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ABSTRACT

CONVERGENCE OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES: CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION VIA CONVERGENT HYBRID PLANNED AND EMERGENT CHANGE

August 2020

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Higher education institutions are struggling to engage in transformational changes to meet novel environmental forces. These struggles in part may be due to change approaches that lack coordination of professional employee and senior administrator change activity. Kezar's (2012) *Kaleidoscope Convergence*—could address such separation of change agent activity. However, a limited understanding of the approach currently exists. This study seeks to gain a better understanding of how and why convergence is used for institutional transformation and engage in analysis to improve the utilization of convergence methods. Research has been organized for this study with a conceptual framework assessing

institutional context, desired change, and change approach. Case study data was acquired through 24 change agent interviews, site observation, and document analysis collected from Greater Metropolis & City University (GMCU), a public suburban research university, and Hill University, a private urban research university. Identities of the institutions, programs studied, and participants interviewed have been masked. Results of this data analysis supported the premise that convergence can be used to serve institutional transformation efforts, and furthermore allowed conclusions to be drawn on the utilization of convergence strategies leading to revision of the conceptual framework to account for new information. Additional findings showed that institutional context has profound influence on convergence, that convergence requires significant input commitment to generate outcomes, and that transformational change does not have to be an overtly conflict-laden process. These findings led to the development of a new convergence model, called “Transformational Spiral Convergence”. This model more robustly addresses the roles of both groups of change agents and accommodates the spiraling manner through which convergence interaction occurs between professional employees and senior administrators. Recommendations are also presented for practitioners, higher education groups, and future research.

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In the spring of 2014, when I interviewed for this program, I recall answering a question saying that a dissertation is “one long paper, a paper that would require sacrifices in order to juggle life, work, and school.” While conceptually I knew what that meant, I could have not known how challenging it would be. Moreover, I could not have known the number of people who have been champions to me, so thank you to each and every person who has been part of this journey for me. Furthermore, as a qualitative project, this work is influenced by the researcher, me. It engages my beliefs of higher education’s potential to better provide society public good benefits, its need to more openly serve the diversity of world, and that the process to make these changes should be inclusive. These beliefs have been forged through my personal village relationships, and so my gratitude is great for all that have brought me to this point.

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I was teaching painting to the fourth grade. One of my students walked up to me with an uncomfortable look on her face. She explained that she could not finish her painting. I looked at it; she had a wonderful picture, but there was a blank in the middle. She had painted a strip of sky and a strip of ground. She felt something was wrong. I knew, but I realized that it would not help to tell her; she had to find the answer herself. I suggested that she go out on the balcony and look very carefully. She returned all smiles. She finished her painting and discovered the horizon.

Researchers' limited understanding of the changes that planned organizational changes undergo is consistent with a limited and fragmented representation of the field much like the fourth-grade student's representation of the strip of sky and ground. The blank in the middle represents many unexplored questions that confine understanding of the evolution and development of organizational change ... [including the] insufficiently explored, relationship between planned and emergent change in organizations.

(Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009, p. 2)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Higher education in the United States (US) has a storied history that is older than the US itself. Since its foundation in the 1600s, US higher education institutions have survived by transforming to adapt to unique challenges and pressures across time. This agility resulted in positive outcomes including expanding scientific innovation, increasing educational access for students, and creating economic stimulus for affiliated regions. By definition, effective institutional transformation includes changes in curriculum, pedagogy, student learning, assessment, policies, budgets, institutional structures, individual employee or group interactions, attitudes and beliefs, as well as relationships. Such transformation often affects institutional cultures, is deep and pervasive, is intentional, and occurs over a period time (Eckel & Kezar, 2003).

Higher education underwent a pivotal transformation in the years following World War II. After the war, the higher education environment was shaped by war demobilization, specifically the US Federal Government's Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the GI Bill, which provided stipends covering tuition and expenses for veterans attending college or trade schools (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). The GI Bill created an environmental force of a need to educate scores of veterans. To meet this need, higher

education institutions transformed themselves to provide unprecedented levels of access to post-secondary education, enabling nearly 29 percent of veterans to attend higher education institutions, a two-fold increase in enrollment compared to pre-war levels. Transformation in the post-war years at the institutional level is exemplified by actions taken by the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). After the GI Bill went into effect, UCLA transformed into the second largest urban research university in the country, as enrollment reached new heights for the campus. To this end, over a period of 20 years following the end of World War II, wide-sweeping curriculum changes occurred via the shedding of many vocational programs and two-year degrees (Cohen & Kisker, 2010 Regents of the University of California, 2004). In their place, the campus developed new four-year academic programs through 10 new colleges, including a college of engineering, school of medicine, and a school of law. The university also developed a high-caliber research enterprise supported by scores of institutes and research centers.

Today, there is once again a need for institutional transformation, though the driving factors for such change is much different than veterans returning from war. Current environmental forces are in many ways entirely novel, and include the growth of technology, advances in teaching and learning theory, neoliberal managerialism (i.e., a focus on revenue generation, marketing, and business practices), the need for cost containment, the change of faculty roles, changing student demographics, international competition, increasing accountability demands, and diversity/multiculturalism (Deem, Hillyard, & Reed, 2007; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2001; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Newfield, 2016). These forces, according to Sporn (1999), are causing higher education scholars and administrators to voice

concern regarding “misfits between external demands and current responses to change” (p. 6). The combination and number of misfits are making institutional transformation increasingly difficult. Evidence of such difficulty can be found in Eckel and Kezar’s (2003) study of twenty-eight higher education institutions that attempted institutional transformation. In this five-and-a-half-year study, they found that only six of the twenty-eight institutions were successful in their transformational efforts. Failure, they posited, was not due to a lack of ideas, but rather a breakdown in the facilitation of the change process. Additional data about the success or failure of transformational change within higher education institutions is difficult to procure because transformation is less studied compared to other types of change such as innovation, adaptation, and strategic change (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2013a). However, management literature that has studied the topic to greater depth indicates that transformational change has a high failure rate. Beer and Nohria (2000), who have extensively studied change in the for-profit sector, suggest that companies are increasingly being asked to manage change due to pressures from technology, workforce dynamics, restructuring needs, cultural issues, or rapid growth; all issues that are similar in nature to those facing higher education institutions. Beer and Nohria contend that about 70 percent of all corporate change initiatives that are transformational in nature fail. Another scholar highlights that within the business sector successful major change has “prove[n] to be very elusive with many studies reporting a very high failure rate, sometimes 80 percent or above” (Burnes, 2005). Therefore, the business sector’s struggles with transformational change may be the best proxy to represent similar struggles within higher education, though possibly for different reasons.

Concurrent with the transformational difficulties plaguing higher education institutions is the negative trending of several traditional higher education success indicators. Although there is no data to demonstrate significant causality between these two issues, it is reasonable to assume that if institutions are unable to keep up with environmental forces, there will be negative consequences. One of the most prominent indicators of such consequences may be the slipping of higher education's graduation rates. Just a generation ago, the proportion of Americans with college degrees was high enough to rank the US as the best-educated nation in the world (Kanter, 2011). However, the proportion of US citizens with degrees has flat-lined, while other industrialized nations have favorably increased their proportions. As a result, in 2015 the US fell to the twelfth most educated country, behind Korea, Japan, and Canada (Kanter, 2011). The US may continue to fall in rankings as data indicate that US graduation rates are now trending downward (Shapiro, Dundar, Wakhungu, Yuan, Nathan, & Hwang, 2015). Moreover, the United States is losing its global leadership in post-secondary degree holders at a time that the labor market has increased the number of jobs requiring a college degree by 31 percent (Kanter, 2011). Other indicators of diminished success include the tripling of costs for tuition and fees at private and public institutions since 1978, growing inequality in terms of degree completion by income, decreased access for traditionally marginalized students, and graduates and employers reporting a growing dissatisfaction with the level of preparation new employees bring to the workforce (Arum & Roksa, 2014; Cahalan & Perna, 2015; Christensen & Eyring, 2011; Craig, 2016).

Such indicators are causing fear that the quality of United States higher education is declining. For example, a Pew Research Center survey of 1,055 college presidents found that

one in three presidents believes that the “higher education system is headed in the wrong direction. Only one-in-five (19 percent) say it is the best in the world today, and an even smaller share (7 percent) believe it will be so in a decade” (2011). Moreover, media headlines routinely question higher education—*CNN* reported, “Is college worth it? Goldman Sachs says maybe not.” (Long, 2015), *Forbes Magazine* wrote, “Why your child’s college major may not be worth it.” (Long, 2016), and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* wrote, “Crisis of Confidence Threatens Colleges.” (Fischer, 2011). Even the public writ large expresses concern, as fifty-seven percent of Americans feel that higher education does not provide good value for their money (Pew Research Center, 2011).

Fears of higher education’s decline and the potential results of such are discussed at length in the 2006 United States Department of Education Spellings Commission Report. Per the Commission, higher education has become:

...Increasingly risk averse, at times self-satisfied, and unduly expensive. It is an enterprise that has yet to address the fundamental issues of how academic programs and institutions must be transformed to serve the changing educational needs of a knowledge economy. It has yet to successfully confront the impact of globalization, rapidly evolving technologies, an increasingly diverse and aging population, and an evolving marketplace characterized by new needs and new paradigms. (United States Department of Education, 2006, p. IX)

The report warns that history has numerous examples of industries failing to transform to meet environmental forces (i.e., the railroads and steel manufactures). Without urgent

attention, higher education organizations may face a similar fate as the railroads and steel giants: obsolescence (United States Department of Education, 2006, p. IX).

To stem real and perceived fears of United States higher education's decline, higher education can look to improve the success rate of individual institutional transformations. To understand transformation, one may begin with who is involved in bringing about such a desired change. There are two change agent groups frequently leading change efforts (Alpert, 1985; Kezar, 2011; Kezar, 2012). The first change agent group is senior administrators (e.g., presidents, provosts, and vice presidents) who develop institutional vision statements, strategies, and resource allocation plans. These individuals are somewhat distant from the day-to-day institutional operations. The second change agent group is professional employees (e.g., faculty and staff) who are close to day-to-day campus operations, have practitioner-based insights, use highly professionalized skill sets, and, in the case of faculty, are often very involved in national disciplinary communities.

These two change agent groups often pursue change separately from each other, initiating changes at different levels of the organization (i.e., senior administrators work often at the systems level and professional employees often work at the unit level). Additionally, senior administrators frequently employ a top-down planned approach to change that is premeditated, strategic, aligns with organizational hierarchy, and may not encourage the empowerment of lower levels of an organization (Bright & Godwin, 2010; Burnes, 2004a; Burnes, 2004b; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008; Kezar, 2001; Kezar, 2012; Livne-Tarandach, & Bartunek, 2009; Weick, 2006). In contrast, professional employees regularly use a bottom-up emergent approach to change that involves adaptation, is often without prior

intention, and may originate at the grassroots level (Bright & Godwin, 2010; Burnes, 2004a; Burnes, 2005; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Kezar, 2012; Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009; Weick, 2006).

This lack of coordination between change agent groups can lead to superficial, ineffectual change (Kezar, 2012; Kezar 2013b). For example, senior institutional administrators attempting change may have a visionary strategic plan created through a process that did not include professional-level employees. Such a plan may not be accepted by professional employees, resulting in the vision for change remaining ineffectively at the administrative level, and ultimately failure in execution of the plan as well as loss of the end goal of transformation. Another example could be a professional employee grassroots transformational effort not being brought to the attention of senior administrators, who often serve as the gate keeper for resources. This could make it difficult to scale and institutionalize the effort, resulting in its executional failure as well as the loss of any potential transformative effects on the institution.

Coordination between change agent groups could be aided through more careful consideration of the methods and strategies (i.e., change approaches) that they are using. A change approach that might address this lack of coordination is *Kaleidoscope Convergence*. Kezar (2012) described convergence as the joining of professional employee and senior administrator change efforts. It can be thought of as a hybridization of planned and emergent change. The literal definition of convergence may suggest the idea of collaboration. While there is similarity between collaboration and convergence (i.e., a spirit of working together), it is important to note the applied distinction. According to Kezar (2006), collaboration is

defined as groups of people having a common purpose: sharing rules and norms, and pooling of capital, human resources, skills, or expertise. However, this definition does not indicate the purpose behind working together, which in the case of convergence is specifically to manifest change. In contrast, collaboration may occur to effect change, but it may also occur simply during the management of day-to-day operations. Collaboration also does not specify who is involved in working together, whereas convergence refers to the coming together of distinct groups. In higher education, this can be exemplified by the meeting of top-down and bottom-up groups.

Kezar (2012) described several case studies in which convergence occurred. One particularly successful case study documented a faculty group's change efforts toward achieving greater environmentalism in a general education curriculum. While these faculty initiated minor reforms by linking environmentalism to other curricular innovations, such as a more socially-just curriculum, their change efforts were more successful in terms of scale when they converged with their new president's vision of greater capacity for environmental research. To converge with the administration, the faculty identified two faculty who worked in administration and could translate in ways that were mutually beneficial to both groups. Over the course of multiple years, the convergence of the faculty and senior administrators resulted in a new environmental studies program that was reflective of a broad vision of environmental teaching and research.

Nonetheless, while convergence may be a promising approach for organizational change, it is not fully understood (Kezar, 2012). This lack of understanding can be contextualized by a broader review of the higher education literature. The review, more fully

discussed in chapter two, revealed three change approach “camps”: “Planned” (Top-down), “Emergent” (bottom-up), and “Hybrid” (a combination of planned and emergent change). Convergence can be categorized as belonging to the Hybrid change camp. Per Livne-Tarandach and Bartunek (2009), change scholarship generally lacks literature about the Hybrid camp. Out of the 31,904 publications about higher education organization change, only 0.0004 percent discussed a phenomenon similar to Hybrid change (convergence). In contrast, a search for “Planned change” yielded 2,497 results, representing 7.8 percent of the total literature on organizational change, while a search for “Emergent change” yielded 8,425 results, or 26.4 percent. This indicates that Hybrid change approaches, such as convergence, have been at best only tangentially studied compared to other change approaches. Because hybrid change is not well studied, senior administrators and professional employees may lack the knowledge to execute these methods. This, in turn, limits a higher education institution’s organizational change ability to overcome a lack of coordination of professional employees and senior administrators, potentially impairing an institution’s attempt to change via transformation. Citing this sparsity in the literature, this study seeks to contribute to the limited research on the Hybrid change approach.

Purpose Statement

Higher education institutions are struggling to engage in transformational changes to meet novel environmental forces. These struggles may be due in part to change approaches that lack coordination between professional employee- and senior administrator-driven change efforts. An emerging higher education change approach—Kezar’s (2012) *Kaleidoscope Convergence*—could address this disparity between change initiatives.

However, a limited understanding of the Hybrid change approach currently exists in higher education literature. Therefore, the purpose of this dissertation is to gain a better understanding of how professional employees and senior administrators can more effectively facilitate institutional transformation attempts using convergence. Through a multiple case study design, this study seeks to better understand the convergence approach, and ultimately propose an effective and expedient method for its application to transformational change.

Research Questions

The aim of this study is to explore professional employees and senior administrators convergent change efforts to bring about institutional transformation at a higher education institution. The following research questions will guide this exploration:

1. Why do professional employees and senior administrators attempt convergence?
2. How are professional employees and senior administrators using convergence strategies to facilitate institutional transformation?
3. How do context features influence the change approach of convergence?

Significance of the Study

Several groups can benefit from this study. They are practitioners (i.e., senior administrators and professional employees), non-institutional organizations (i.e., professional associations and accreditation bodies), and higher education scholars.

For institutional level change agent practitioners (i.e., senior administrators and professional employees, this study offers improved understanding of how groups such as senior administrators and professional employees can work together to promote transformational change. Specifically, this study could reveal current working strategies at

institutions to promote this hybrid approach of change. These strategies may differ between groups, so an understanding of which change agent group should use them and when a strategy should be applied could yield valuable insight for either change agent group. Moreover, it may reveal challenges that have not yet been studied. While Kezar's study on convergence did indicate several challenges for professional employees, the most notable of which was administrator usurping of professional employee change agendas, it did not describe what challenges may exist for senior administrators. Such an understanding of their challenges may better equip senior administrators as well as professional employees who seek to make change using convergence. Finally, at the institutional level, an understanding of what convergence background dynamics can promote convergence would be significant. Kezar's study did not go into detail about what background dynamics are necessary for convergence, so an understanding of those factors may make the use of convergence more attainable if change agents understand what support framework is required. In short, this work will offer a thorough and applicable study on convergence, making it a more viable organizational change approach in order to benefit institutional transformation efforts.

Extending beyond institutions, a better understanding of convergence could help professional associations and accreditation bodies that advise institutions on change. Frequently, change at the institutional level is supported by individuals seeking out professional development through associations, their conferences, and literature, which currently lack resources on Hybrid change. In the case of accreditation bodies, their regular reports help shape the course of an institution's change agenda. A lack of convergence

knowledge could result in incomplete recommendations that do not consider the necessity to include professional employees and senior administrators in large scale changes.

Moreover, higher education scholars could benefit as the forthcoming literature review will reveal in detail that higher education scholars have yet to fully embrace the study of hybrid change. While this idea of hybrid change is not new as management scholars have looked at the concept previously, this study's literature review will demonstrate that for the most part, higher education researchers have looked at the topic of change either as a planned or emergent activity. According to Bobko (1985), this bipolarity approach (i.e., one thing or the other) has been a common approach in scientific study. When scholars transcend bipolarity, it enables a more complex reflection of social phenomena, including organizational structures and operations, which adds to the original bipolarity holism and complexity. Therefore, the possibility of researching the both/and hybrid camp, while a departure from traditional higher education scholarship, may more fully capture the complexity of change as it is and should be practiced in the field. Doing so could in turn help practitioners who are seeking change using an either/or approach or may be struggling to maneuver the both/and of a hybrid approach.

In short, as UNESCO (2015) stated, "the world is changing—education must also change. Societies everywhere are undergoing deep transformation, and this calls for new forms of education to foster the competencies that societies and economies need" (p. 3). Higher education must therefore transform itself or it will face the possibility of obsolescence, and convergence offers potential to support such transformation.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The topic of change covers a broad body of literature; therefore, it is helpful to apply a framework that can focus its study. Kezar (2013b) wrote that “successful change agents use multiple approaches to create change that are matched in the type of change desired and the context within which they are pursuing it” (p. XIV). This quote defines the conceptual framework that will guide this literature review and subsequent study. From it, three critical change pieces can be identified: 1) Understanding the context in which the change will occur, 2) knowing the type of change that is desired, and 3) assessing the change approaches that a change agent has at their disposal. Through this application of Kezar’s words, a rudimentary framework can be visualized (Figure 1).

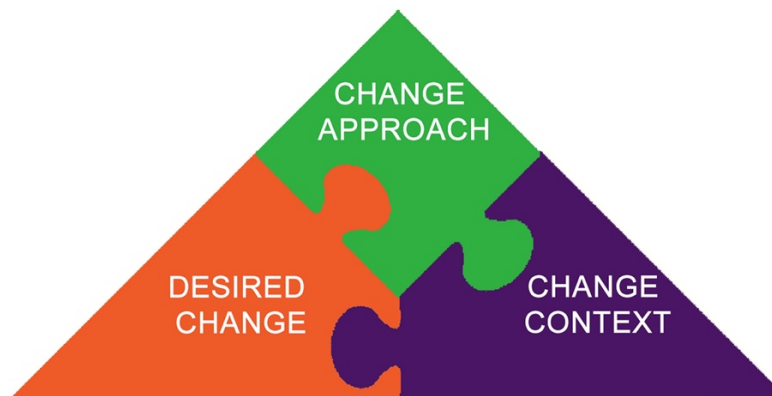


Figure 1. Conceptual framework. Adapted from Kezar (2013b).

Each element of the framework will be discussed in the following literature review. This review will be structured in four areas: (a) higher education as a change context, (b) higher education institutional transformation, (c) organizational change approaches, and (d) Kezar's convergence approach. First, it will be necessary to understand broadly the context of a higher education institution. Such an understanding can help this study identify concepts that are fundamental to higher education's operations and should be looked at closely when examining convergence. Concepts include higher education's organizational nature as a professional bureaucracy, affiliation of numerous sub-units that are not always directly connected, and decision making through a shared governance model that is declining in its effectiveness. Next, the desired change that this study aims to help change agents bring about—institutional transformation—will be explored. Having a working understanding of the elements that make up this type of change will be helpful when looking at the effectiveness of convergence in bringing about such a change. Subsequently, this chapter will look at the change approaches which are known. Change approaches are often drawn from change scholarship, which has been written about extensively within and beyond higher education. Therefore, an understanding of what approaches are available to change agents, as well as their respective strengths and weaknesses, can help determine where convergence fits into the change landscape. This section will focus on two “camps” that are well established in the change literature, Planned and Emergent change. This section will also discuss a developing camp—a Hybrid approach to change that combines elements of Planned and Emergent change. Finally, this chapter will look at convergence itself as a form of Hybrid change in the higher education context. A discussion of how it is currently conceptualized

within higher education and beyond is necessary so that this study may expand the understanding of the phenomena.

The Higher Education Institutional Change Context

As previously discussed, and visualized in the rudimentary conceptual framework, understanding the context in which a change agent or agent groups is attempting to make change is important. The importance derives from the necessity to fit the change approach with the desired change and its context (Kezar, 2013b). The literature pertaining to higher education institutional context clustered around the complexity of a higher education institution and the order generating rules that provide organization within that complexity. The rules included operating as a professional bureaucracy, loose coupling of units, and shared governance.

Institutional Complexity

A higher education institution's complexity can best be understood with a brief overview of general higher education history. Higher education in the United States had its humble beginnings in the 1600s, making it older than the United States itself. During its founding years, higher education institutions were fundamentally simple, consisting of a president and tutors (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). Presidents had authority for college operations in the areas of teaching assignments, fundraising, and enrollment, as well as student discipline. The focus of early colonial institutions was almost exclusively on the teaching of white, male, Protestant students. These institutions borrowed principles from European higher education, but also invented new ways of organizing. They also maintained strong affiliations with religious organizations. Curriculums were geared toward the advancement

and preservation of what was known, with a focus on religion and language. Colleges were overseen in many cases by lay boards, providing the early seed for shared governance. Funding was derived from a variety of sources, which varied based on individual institutions. Over the course of more than 380 years, colonial colleges grew and were joined by a multiplicity of institutions (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). These years are marked with overall trends of: expanding the role for higher education in local, regional, and national economics, a diversifying student body, growing access, a professionalization of the faculty curriculum that has vocational elements paired with the liberal arts, secular governance that is increasingly multifaceted, expanding public funding linked to growing accountability demands, and an importance for knowledge production through original research.

To bring higher education from its humble beginnings in the United States to its present state, some unique organizational factors have evolved. Such factors include attempting to respond to the external environment without wasting resources, meeting the personal needs of employees while delivering organizational goals, and the creation of a culture that is stable and open to refinement (Bess & Dee, 2012). These factors, and others, have resulted in higher education institutions that are very complex (Birnbaum, 1988; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2001). In fact, Alpert (1985) articulated their multifaceted nature as “one of the most complex structures in modern society” (p. 241).

The complexity of an institution is in many ways different from complexities of other types of for-profit or non-profit institutions. Within a college or university, complexities can include: (a) a strong collegial disposition due to disciplinary affiliations, (b) a distinct culture that resists for-profit management techniques but is increasingly measured using

management- type metrics, (c) a values-driven orientation, (d) organized, anarchical decision-making, and (e) goal ambiguity due to the diversity of offices and sub-missions within an institution.

While these complexities can create higher education institutions that operate in dynamic and unpredictable ways (Burnes, 2005), complex institutions are often presided over by order generating rules that provide a shape for the interactions between staff, offices, and initiatives. A review of the literature on the nature of higher education revealed three such rules: (a) a professionally bureaucratic organizational arrangement, (b) loosely coupled relationships between institutional units, and (c) a tradition of decision-making through shared governance. Understanding each rule is critical, as misunderstanding higher education's complexity and/or its associated guiding rules can complicate organizational change efforts (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 2011; Burnes, 2005; Kezar, 2011; Kezar, 2013b).

Professional Bureaucracies

The first guiding rule of higher education's nature is that institutions are predominately organized as professional bureaucracies (Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2013; Kezar & Lester, 2011). Bureaucracies are characterized by the division of labor into specific tasks, standardization of procedures, formalization of rules, promotion based on competence, and having a well-defined hierarchy (Bess & Dee, 2012; Kezar, 2006). Such a bureaucracy is a type of mechanistic structure that includes high levels of formalization, rigid configurations, various specialties, and many fragmented units.

As stated by Buller (2015), a professional bureaucracy is specifically defined by a “dual power and authority system” (p. 17). This dualism means that power and authority are not centralized at the top of an organizational hierarchy; rather, they are shared across multiple levels, groups, and/or people of the organization. Birnbaum (1988) labeled this as a dualism of controls. The two groups that compose higher education’s dual controls are administrators and professionals (Alpert, 1985; Altbach, Gumport, & Berdahl, 2011; Birnbaum, 1988; Buller, 2015; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Tierney, 2006). Unlike corporate or governmental organizations, where the administrative group controls primary activities (e.g., setting organizational goals and performance standards), higher education professionals typically control primary activities, leaving the administrator group to control secondary activities (i.e., administering the activity carried out by professionals; Birnbaum, 1988). Being responsible for higher education’s primary activities means that professionals are typically semi-autonomous workers. In the case of faculty, autonomy is formally granted through academic freedom, which limits administrative oversight over research and teaching (Altbach, Gumport, & Berdahl, 2011; Tierney, 2006). Staff also have a high degree of autonomy due to their possession of specialized skills. Because of this autonomy, professionals conduct “[their] own evaluations, develop policies governing their working conditions, and plan as well as coordinate much of their work on their own” (Buller, 2015). In other words, the professional group has a high degree of autonomy via self-policing and peer evaluation that is typically not enjoyed by this group outside of higher education’s dual controls (Buller, 2015; Kezar, 2014).

While this dual system of control can be regarded as a distinct strength of higher education, it also can create several problems for change (Birnbaum, 1988; Buller, 2015; Kezar & Lester, 2011). The first issue is that both groups have control structures that exist in parallel (Birnbaum, 1988). These parallel structures can cause confusion about which group is responsible for what and how to move an issue through the bureaucracy, which can slow or impede change efforts. A second challenge pertains to a new managerialism that is emerging in neo-liberal higher education (Deem, Hillyard, & Reed, 2007; Newfield, 2016). This growing trend for the professional bureaucracy is challenging the professional group's oversight of some primary activities in favor of administrative oversight (Birnbaum, 1988). Such challenges are due in part to growing complexity of institutions, which requires new levels of expertise that may not exist within the professional group. The administrative group's increasing prominence is problematic, however, for change efforts, as the two groups often have different views of change. For example, Kezar and Lester (2011) suggested that work to increase diversity is often an area that is viewed differently by administration (i.e., diversity is used to steer and promote programs) and professionals (i.e., diversity is thought about in terms of historic power relationships and the oppression of groups in society). Such different views can complicate and frustrate change due to a lack of common understanding.

Unit Couplings

The second guiding rule is that relationships between institutional units have a degree of coupling (Bess & Dee, 2012; Birnbaum, 1988; Kezar, 2001; Weick, 1976). Coupling refers to the linkages between an institution's colleges, departments, or areas (Bess & Dee,

2012; Dee, 2006). Coupling also refers to the degree of closeness for those connections (Weick, 1976).

The strongest coupling connection is a tight coupling and is known for a lack of unit autonomy, but more controlled responsiveness. In a tightly coupled organization, external scanning is often centralized, which eliminates professional employee scanning abilities and can reduce the amount of data available about the environment. In tightly coupled systems, a unit may be unable to isolate itself easily and each unit must be then individually responsive to environmental catalysts, which can be time and resource intensive.

The weakest coupling is decoupling, where units are autonomous and lack responsiveness. Decoupling may push a unit towards siloing, isolation that occurs when employees or entire departments do not share information or knowledge with each other (Alpert, 1985; Keeling, Underhile, & Wall, 2007). If widespread siloing occurs, it can fragment an institution. Such fragmentation can lead to “local norms, values, and languages tailored to the requirements of that unit’s work” (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981, p. 290). This makes change difficult, particularly considering that change can require adjustments to resource allocation, which in an organization that has a diversity of local norms, values, and languages can be difficult to realize.

The mid-range coupling, which is frequently the type of coupling higher education units operate within, is called “loose coupling”. This kind of connection allows for autonomous units with responsiveness. Coordination of loosely coupled units is often minimal, so localized adaptation is common. The overarching advantages of a loosely coupled organization for change are high levels of external scanning, ease of adaptability,

and the potential for isolation (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Weick, 1976). The potential for isolation can be particularly useful as the necessity of units within a higher education organization may ebb and flow, therefore as an institution changes to meet current conditions, the decline of a unit that is no longer necessary for current conditions should not directly impact the rise of another that is more critical. For example, declining enrollment in a classics department should not impact a growing fundraising office that is charged with raising dollars to offset a falling public subsidy. However, loosely coupled units can frustrate change agents, due to their lack of predictable interactions, which makes planned change difficult. Additionally, they have minimal coordination, making wide-scale change problematic, and they can drift towards decoupling (Alpert, 1985; Birnbaum, 1988; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2001).

Shared Governance

The final guiding rule that emerged from the literature is a tradition of collaborative decision-making through shared governance (Birnbaum, 1988; Buller, 2015; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2011; Kezar, 2013b; Kezar & Lester, 2011). This concept stems from higher education's dualism of controls and loosely coupled units as a decision-making process that shares decisions amongst the senior administrators and professional employees, providing a mechanism for loosely coupled units to cooperate. Shared governance is widely accepted as the dominant decision-making process since the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) issued their Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities in 1966 (Birnbaum, 2004; Gaff, 2007). Shared governance on a campus can take many forms such as faculty or academic senates, joint faculty-administrative committees, student

government, or campus-wide taskforces. Minor (2003) found that more than ninety percent of four-year universities and colleges use faculty senates or other faculty bodies as mechanisms for faculty participation in governance. For faculty, the AAUP statement granted oversight of academic matters, which is a core responsibility of faculty senate bodies (Duderstadt, 2004; Birnbaum, 2004), and connects with professional employee control of primary activities.

Change agents seeking to make change must be mindful of campuses' shared governance tradition (Buller, 2015; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2001). With change agendas increasingly coming from administrators, Buller (2015) argued that shared governance's relationship with change is of importance as faculty can view an administrative case for change as an "indictment of them" (Buller, 2015, p. 18) given faculty's traditional control of primary activities. Therefore, a poorly couched but well-intentioned case for change from administrators may be a non-starter for professionals. This could cause administrators to work around shared governance structures. Another reason administrators may be working around shared governance structures is the structures' reputation as having a slow pace (Kezar, 2013b). Such work-around tension between administrators and professionals may be causing shared governance to weaken.

Indeed, the literature does indicate that the current state of shared governance is not as effective as it once was (Kezar, 2011; Kezar, 2013b; Kezar & Lester, 2011). In a monograph about professionals leading, Kezar and Lester (2011) argued that there is "evidence to suggest that [shared governance] does not always allow for faculty voice to operate as intended regarding garnering faculty input into decision making" (p. 24). They

also argued that evidence supporting the decline includes administrators increasingly defining the agenda for shared governance, the results of shared governance being more and more supportive of administrative goals, and the growing frequency of a more corporate, hierarchical model of decision making. The result is an eroding trust and a loss of common interests between administrators and professionals (Kezar, 2013b), which challenges change.

In short, while higher education institutions are highly complex, there are guiding rules: (a) a professionally bureaucratic organizational arrangement, (b) loosely coupled unit relationships, and (c) a tradition of decision-making through shared governance. This background context is helpful when considering the next piece of the conceptual framework, the type of desired change.

Institutional Transformation

What is institutional transformation? To properly answer that question, this section will provide a definition for institutional transformation, discuss and provide examples of the specific concepts that exist within institutional transformation, and highlight issues that can limit institutional transformation.

Definition

For a precise institutional definition, it is helpful to look at Eckel and Kezar's (2003) monograph. In it, they describe a complex phenomenon that often involves interrelated change approaches. It involves change agents at multiple levels of the organization working together to bring about the transformation. It also involves professional employees assuming leadership and leadership from the department level as well. During a transformation, a number of strategies are necessary, such as setting of expectations and pairing expectations

with accountability, persuasive and effective communication, new interactions, changes in governance processes, outside perspectives, senior administrative support, collaborative leadership, flexible vision, staff development, and visible action. In short, they define institutional transformation as “(1) altering the culture of the institution by changing underlying assumptions and overt institutional behaviors, processes, and structure, (2) deep and pervasive, affecting the whole institution, (3) intentional, (4) occurring over time” (Eckel & Kezar, 2003, p. 17). This definition is the one this study will employ for the concept of institutional transformation.

To provide additional clarity on the definition of institutional transformation, it is helpful to compare it with other types of change such as innovation, adaptation, and strategic change (Eckel & Kezar, 2003). While some may perceive an interchangeability among these change types, each is unique and distinct from the others. Innovation refers to the advent of a new specific product, process, service, or procedure. Examples include a new pedagogy or use of a computer-model to aid in research. It is deliberately integrated with the intention of positive benefits to the institution. Additionally, it tends to focus on a response to a perceived crisis (e.g., escalating costs), disruption, or a technological revolution (Mintz, 2016). Such changes are narrower in focus than transformational change, though transformational change may include innovations of a disruptive, technological, or crisis response nature. Adaptation is an adjustment in response to the external environment (Cameron, 1991). It is often a process rather than an event, such as the introduction of a new product. It is evolutionary and often it responds to environmental stimuli. An example could be the adaptation of a professional school’s curriculum to a new accreditation requirement. Strategic change is

about an institution taking specific action to change its position in the marketplace relative to competition. It often focuses on strategy and patterns of activity, with emphasis on the actions of top managers, such as the chief executive officer, and has a focus on plans for the future (Boeker, 1997; Mintzberg, 1997). Examples can include the introduction of a new degree program by a dean in an area with limited market saturation.

While transformational change may incorporate elements of the other types of change, transformation tends to be the most widespread and deepest form of change (Eckel & Kezar, 2003). When transformation is compared with innovation, an innovation is likely necessary for transformation, but transformation is more than a single new product. As compared to adaptation, transformation tends to be more intentional, while adaptation occurs in a less planned, more organic manner, therefore it is often felt at a local rather than institutional level. Finally, when compared to strategic change, transformation affects culture whereas strategic change is less concerned about culture and more about the strategy driving institutional competitiveness.

Concepts and Examples

Drawing off the above definition of institutional transformation, this study proposes five key concepts involved in institutional transformation. These concepts theorize that an institutional transformation is: (a) deep and pervasive, (b) occurs over a period of time, (c) is intentional, and (d) affects institutional culture. In terms of the first concept, “depth” refers to the impact that the change has on the underlying conventions that guide an institution and its practices. The “pervasiveness” refers to the far-reaching nature of the transformation; it is not isolated within a unit, rather it spans boundaries and touches much of the organization’s

structural units. Because transformational change is deep and pervasive in nature, the change unfolds gradually. This is not a revolutionary type of change that happens quickly, but in essence an evolution made up of many changes culminating in the desired transformation. Next, it is an intentional type of process. Change agents make decisions to promote institutional transformation that will ultimately affect culture; it is not something that occurs by chance. According to Schein (1984), organizational culture is,

The pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (p. 3).

Culture is comprised of artifacts (e.g., architecture, technology, employee dress, visible behavior patterns, and documents), values (i.e., underlying reasons for visible artifacts), and assumptions (i.e., unconscious beliefs that drive values). Institutional transformation often must alter values and assumptions to promote new behaviors necessary for the transformation.

These concepts are exemplified by Eckel and Kezar’s (2003) study. In this work, they describe an institutional transformation of Midwest College, a liberal arts school. The school was facing declining enrollment, which was particularly concerning for the president due to the college’s tuition-dependent nature. Enrollment challenges were exasperated by a racial incident that garnered national attention. These forces were drawing the institution to the brink of closure. The case study chronicled a transformation that included a new mission that

was guided by widely accepted values as well as culture alteration that led to changes in college operations, priorities, curriculum, pedagogy, and expectations for students and faculty. The transformation resulted in more students, as well as a higher caliber of students that were more serious about their studies and had a greater belief in the college's values. Another case in Eckel and Kezar (2003) describes the transformation at Central State University, a regional doctoral granting university that had adopted a series of technological enhancements that led to advanced computing capacities across the campus. Against this backdrop, the campus struggled to articulate its identity in a state that had two research universities and a set of open-admission colleges. Faculty-leaders initiated campus-wide conversations that led to a decision to steer the campus mission toward teaching excellence through technology. To do so, the school engaged in widespread curriculum and academic program changes, efforts to advance the quality of the student body, and an increase in the size of its honors program. Efforts included a culture shift to shed a sentiment of the institution as a second-tier institution. The transformation resulted in positive effects for the student experience, pride from students in attending the institution, and a sense that their technology-rich education was preparing them well.

Both cases illustrate the power of institutional transformation to rescue a campus from seemingly eminent closure, and emphasize how establishing clarity of purpose aligned technology, faculty, and students. The cases also present examples of institutional transformation concepts. Both cases engaged large numbers of campus members and reformed missions as well as everyday teaching practices, which speaks to the deep and pervasive concepts. The cases chronicled about five and half years, which align with

conceptually progressive rather than immediate transformation. The intentionality of both these cases came in the form of change agents deciding that change was necessary and that it could not be left to the standard adjustment or innovation processes that the campuses were engaging in. Collaboration occurred at Midwestern via a framing of the issue from the president and charge to the campus community to generate the solution, while at Central State it occurred via ongoing conversations between the president, provost, deans, and faculty, around the nature of scholarship and teaching. Importantly, both transformations reformed the institutional culture, especially at Central State where the change repointed a “second-best” culture to a top-tier one that instilled institutional pride. While these cases demonstrate successful institutional transformations, many times the process does not end in success. The next section will discuss factors that limit success of institution transformations.

Issues that Can Limit Change

As discussed in chapter one, transformational change efforts are complex and, in the context of higher education, frequently unsuccessful. Eckel and Kezar’s (2003) study found that only six of the twenty-eight institutions were successful in their transformational efforts. Failure can also be found outside of higher education where “many studies report a very high failure rate, sometimes 80% or above” (Burnes, 2005). In general, this high failure rate may have its root in the nature of organizations. As defined by Buller (2014), organizations resist change because “the whole purpose of any organization is to act in ways that are regular, consistent, and predictable” (p. 2). The argument can be made that such regularity, consistency, and predictability is incompatible with change and must be overcome by change agents.

Specific factors that can limit change include higher education traditions, and mismatching the change approach to the change context. In the case of tradition, US higher education has many traditions that can be traced back to the colonial era or earlier, with traditions borrowed from European models of higher education. Tradition can be revered within an institution to the point that it impedes progress (Berrett, 2016; Christensen & Eyrin, 2011; Gee, 2009). General traditions include robes and hoods on academic regalia, faculty disseminating lectures, exams for students, and academic freedom for faculty (Bess & Dee, 2012). A tradition that can have a direct impact on transformational change is faculty tenure. The challenge can arise when long-time faculty are presented with a case for transformational change. Such a declaration that change is necessary can be “tantamount to concluding that the members of the organization ‘got it wrong’ when they first set those policies and procedures” (Buller, 2014, p. 19). Such change may emanate from presidents, provosts, and deans who desire to make their mark at the institution (Buller, 2014), and who often do not have the same institutional memory as tenured faculty due to a lack of tenure within the administrative career path. If faculty feel indicted by the change case, they may elect not to support the change effort, inhibiting the necessary collaboration of tenured faculty and senior administrators. This is problematic as Alpert (1985) pointed out that “no one group in the university has all the factors necessary for institutional change” (p. 244), therefore senior administrators may have a difficult time moving transformational change forward without the support of the most experienced group of professional employees—tenured faculty. Without collaboration of these groups, senior administrators may be more likely to mandate transformational change in order to achieve their goals, which, according to

Buller (2014) would likely result in failure of the change effort. Therefore, negotiating a careful joining of these two groups, senior administrators and professional employees, without judgement around the preceding real or perceived shortcomings of previous policy, is critical in organizations that have a tradition of longevity of professional employees and a predisposition to senior administrators wishing to make their mark through change and who may lack institutional history.

Additionally, the literature also revealed that change can fail because change agents may not consider that a higher education institution's complexity requires implementation of multiple change approaches (Eckle & Kezar 2003; Kezar, 2001). Moreover, mistiming when to use a certain change approach may contribute to failure of the effort. Thus, an understanding of change approaches is pivotal to the transformational change process; to this end, change approaches addressed in the literature will be discussed next.

Change Approaches in Higher Education

Scholars have long studied organizational change, resulting in an extensive body of literature (Alpert, 1985; Birnbaum, 1988; Kezar, 2001; Kezar, 2013b; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). According to Kezar (2013b) change is the bringing about of a positive outcome for the overall organization. Study of change approaches often results in a theory about how to analyze change or how change unfolds.

Van de Ven and Poole (1995) engaged in an interdisciplinary literature review of social, biological, and physical science material followed by an inductive examination that resulted in four schools of thought for change, the first being life cycle. This concept reflects a line of thinking that an organization has a natural progression from commencement to

cessation. Additionally, the life cycle school of thought argues that change is imminent and, to some degree, prefigured by the context and nature of the organization. The second school is teleological, which makes the case that change occurs in a rational linear way; an organization's development proceeds in a purposeful manner toward a goal or end state. Followers of this school argue that change is based on goal formation, implementation, evaluation, and adjustment of goals based on the learning that occurred. The third school of thought is evolutionary, which argues that change occurs in a natural selective manner through competitive survival. This school's change-generating force is based on scarcity of resources and competition. The final school in the Van de Ven and Poole schema is dialectic, which argues that change is based on the balancing of opposing forces in the Hegelian tradition of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (new thesis). The dialectic school employs conflict and conformation as the primary drivers of change. These schools of thought were posited in the context of general management.

Change theories have been appearing in higher education- specific literature with increasing frequency. In a seminal higher education change monograph, Kezar (2001) attempted to standardize the literature-specific language. The result was revised and updated schools of thoughts for higher education change. Kezar kept the evolutionary, teleological, and life cycle schools, but did not include the dialectic school. Additionally, she added three other schools. The first was political, which involved negotiation and power. The second was social cognition, which involved learning and altering paradigms. The third addition was cultural, which focused on symbolic long-term nonlinear change.

In 2003, the Kellogg Foundation sought to define how change unfolds within higher education. In this five-year funded study, Eckel and Kezar (2003) suggests that change involves five strategies—senior administrative support, collaborative leadership, flexible vision, staff development, and visible action. The first strategy of senior administrative support includes elements such as focusing attention on the issues related to the change, provisioning of resources, guiding the process, and creating new structures to support the change effort. Collaborative leadership involved the participation beyond those with formal leadership positions who are participating in the change. The flexible-vision strategy describes change agents creating a “picture of the future that is clear and succinct but that does not foreclose possible opportunities that might emerge” (Eckel & Kezar, 2003, p. 78). The next strategy of staff development consists of making professional development accessible to individuals related to the change agenda to promote the necessary new knowledge and skills that could make the change effort successful. Finally, visible action entails continuous accomplishment that contributes to the transformational agenda. Per the authors, each of these strategies are necessary for change.

In another seminal monograph, Kezar (2013b) proposes six schools of thought for higher education change: Scientific Management, Evolutionary, Social Cognition, Cultural, Political, and Institutional. Each of these schools of thought has specific associated strategies. For Scientific Management, strategies include strategic planning, restructuring, incentives, professional development, consultants, and benchmarking. The Evolutionary school of thought includes strategies such as capacity expansion, the creation of a steering committee, the use of flexible structures, proactivity, and the inclusion of broad-based input. In the case

of Political, strategies encompass coalitions, allies, a formal change agenda, a collective vision, negotiating, considerations for power dynamics, persuasion, relationships, and the mobilization of human and physical resources. Social cognition includes data infrastructure, use of systems thinking, encouraging sense-making, and dialogues. Cultural pertains to examining history and context with consideration of underlying values, changes to formal missions, the development of new rituals, and storytelling to shape values and understanding. Finally, Institutional includes examination of external theories and alignment of interests to support a change direction.

A study by Oreg, Vakola, Armenakis (2011) offers a possible analytic tool for change. This study conducted a meta-analysis of quantitative empirical studies of change published between 1948 and 2007. The sample for the analysis was approximately 700 published articles. Through a process of inductive coding, the analysis yielded hundreds of variables of which 79 were presented in their study. The variables coalesced into a model that contained pre-change antecedents (e.g., change recipient characteristics), change antecedents (e.g., the change process), explicit reactions (e.g., affective, cognitive, and behavioral attitude components), and change consequences (e.g., work and personal consequences).

From these examples, and a larger review of the change literature, it was evident that there was no single unifying conceptual framework for change. This observation seems to agree with a change scholar's argument that there is no integrated theory for understanding change in organizations (Beer & Nohria, 2006). Nonetheless, the change literature did yield two main camps for change approaches, namely Planned and Emergent (Burnes, 2004a; Burnes, 2005; Bright & Godwin, 2010; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008). While these two

camps are widely accepted, the literature also points to the development of a third Hybrid approach that bridges the top-down nature of Planned change and bottom-up nature of Emergent change (Bright & Godwin, 2010; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008; Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009).

Planned Change

Within the change literature, there has been a large focus on the Planned approach to change (Kezar, 2001). In the Planned approach, change is premeditated, strategic, aligns with organizational hierarchy, is manager executed, and often may not encourage the empowerment of lower levels of an organization (Bright & Godwin, 2010; Burnes, 2004a; Burnes, 2004b; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008; Kezar, 2001; Kezar, 2012; Weick, 2006). In a monograph on organizational change in higher education, Kezar (2001) provided an example of Planned change via a business school that decided to implement a new technology within their classrooms over a three-year period, due to pressures from peer business schools implementing the same technology. This fits the definition of Planned change, as it was calculated as well as strategic in response to environmental pressures.

Kurt Lewin's scholarship is generally agreed upon as the genesis of the Planned change approach (Burnes, 2005; Weick, 2006). Lewin's idea was that change in a planned fashion involved three stages: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. Unfreezing involves creating a perception that a change is needed. Changing involves moving toward the desired state through different behaviors. Lastly, refreezing involves solidifying those modified behaviors. Lewin's "ice-cube model", as it became known, was popular from the 1950s until the 1980s as it offered an orderly, linear, rational approach. Nonetheless, its prevalence in the

change literature is not without criticism, specifically of the static state that it assumes organizations to have (Burnes, 2005), as well as “a high probability of relapse [post a planned change], uneven diffusion among units, large short-term losses that are difficult to recover, less suitability for opportunity-driven than for threat-driven alterations, and unanticipated consequences due to limited foresight.” (Weick, 2006, p. 227).

Robertson, Roberts, and Porras (1993) assessed empirical support for a theoretical model of Planned change. The researchers used a model which proposed that a planned intervention would have an impact on an organizational work setting (e.g., social factors, technology, physical setting, and organizing arrangements), which would impact individual organizational member behaviors, in turn impacting organizational outcomes (e.g., organizational performance and individual development). A meta-analysis of 52 studies was used to test a hypothesis that planned organizational change interventions would lead to positive change in work settings. The data confirmed their hypothesis, suggesting that the Planned approach is a valuable tool in organizational change. Robertson and Seneviratne (1995) enriched this finding in a subsequent study that looked at the effectiveness of planned change within the public sector using a meta-analysis of 52 organizational development empirical studies. Through statistical analysis of planned intervention’s effects on organization variables (e.g., work setting, individual behavior, and organizational outcomes) the study found that Planned change can be equally effective within the public and private sectors. This is a significant finding, countering the notion that Planned change cannot be as effective in the public sector (Robertson & Seneviratne, 1995), which includes higher education.

The change agents that most frequently employ the Planned approach to change are senior administrators (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2011; Kezar, 2012). Senior administrators are keystone for change as they control adjustments to administrative and governance processes, set priorities, have linkages to the external environment, manage incentives, and oversee financial resources (Eckel & Kezar, 2003).

Senior administrators executing Planned change frequently employ “top-down leadership” change strategies. This term refers to change activities that are initiated by individuals in positions of formal authority (e.g., senior administrators) and are directed towards professional employees (Buller, 2015; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2012; Kezar, 2013b; Kezar & Lester, 2011). Advantages of this type of change include the contribution of senior administrators’ breadth of perspective and strategy formulation tendencies, the availability of high-level power, and perspectives that span organizational boundaries (Beer & Nohria, 2006; Conger, 2006). Concomitantly, there are three main disadvantages for this typology (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2001; Kezar, 2012). The first is a lack of solution complexity, meaning a top-down change initiative is overly simplistic and unable to address the complex nature of the problem. The second disadvantage is a lack of buy-in from professional employees, which an excessively autocratic change initiative can cause due to top-down leadership disempowering professional employees. The final constraint is leader dependency, which is due to a top-down change effort remaining within the hands of a few senior administrators. Leader dependency is a challenge, as senior administrators often have multiple priorities that can pull them away from one change initiative, resulting in the initiative stalling out. These disadvantages could explain why many research studies report a

very high failure rate for top-down change efforts, as high as 70% as reported by Kezar et al. (2013b). Even management guru Warren Bennis (2006) said that top-down change is “wrong, unrealistic, and maladaptive” (p. 113). Overall, while Planned change engages the strengths of senior administrators, it lacks engagement of professional employees, which can prohibitively limit change efforts.

Emergent Change

This approach to change involves adaptation, without prior intention, often originating at the grassroots level (Bright & Godwin, 2010; Burnes, 2004a; Burnes, 2005; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Kezar, 2012; Weick, 2006). It is often made up of ongoing accommodations or adaptations in response to daily, front-line conditions. Emergent change’s advantages include sensitivity to the context of individual units, real-time experimentation, swift implementation, and utilization of professional employee knowledge. However, substantial drawbacks to this approach exist. Emergent change efforts may be fragile, lacking the support of senior administrators who act as resource gatekeepers. Additionally, this type of change is difficult to institutionalize as Emergent change can occur organically without connection to a larger strategy, making such change seem faddish and temporary, secondary to the core long-term mission and activities of the institution. Finally, Emergent change can result in sub-optimization across units due to lack of coordination, potentially leading to multiple units each making changes due to a common problem, resulting in incompatible resource allocation.

The change agents that most often use the Emergent approach are professional employees (Altbach, Gumport, & Berdahl, 2011; Bess & Dee, 2012; Perry, 2014; Kezar,

2011; Kezar, 2012; Tierney, 2006). Change from professional employees is apt to produce changes that senior administrators would not themselves produce due to specific operational constraints associated with high-level change agents. (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Professional employee changes are often tied to teaching and learning missions because of the closeness of this type of change agent to such missions (Narum, 2009).

The change strategy that professional employees often employ are grassroots change strategies (Bergquist, 1992; Meyerson & Scully, 1995; Kezar, 2012; Kezar & Lester, 2011). Typically, this type of change is carried out by those who lack formal positions of authority or power. This kind of strategy is adaptive, facilitating the collaboration of professional employee change agents, who have great technical expertise to work on complex and messy problems (Bennis, 2006). Kezar, Bertram Gallant, and Lester (2011) completed a qualitative study that employed an instrumental case study design to look at tactics utilized by grassroots leaders. The sample consisted of five higher education campuses and analyzed the nine tactics used by their grassroots leaders. The tactics were: “organizing extra-curricular intellectual opportunities, creating professional development, leveraging curricula and using classrooms as forums, working with and mentoring students, hiring like-minded activists” (p. 129). While grassroots leaders often lack formal power and authority, these tactics were helpful in creating change on their campuses.

In some ways, the grassroots strategy is akin to the practice of community organizing (Kezar & Lester, 2011). However, unlike community organizing, higher education change agents operate within a hierarchal framework of rewards and punishments (i.e., those higher up in the hierarchy dole out promotions, committee assignments, or amount of service

obligations to those at the lower ranks). Scholars, therefore, have argued that the radicalism that can appear in traditional community-organized grassroots movements could threaten those in higher education's formal power roles (Kezar & Lester, 2011). This can put professional employee change agents and their grassroots changes in jeopardy. To manage this grassroots-associated risk of professional employee change agents challenging senior administrators, the literature has suggested a sub-strategy known as "tempered radicalism" (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Mayerson & Scully, 1995).

Tempered radicalism was first studied by Mayerson and Scully (1995). In this seminal work, the authors conducted a grounded theory qualitative study that included interviews and a review of archival materials. The study's aim was to better understand the experience of people who work within mainstream organizations and who wish to transform them. They found that successful tempered radicals often remain ambivalent toward the pressures exerted from the establishment and those seeking change. This ambivalence enabled tempered radicals to continue to participate in the establishment and active in the change movement without diminishing their radicalism through compromise or abandoning their change attempts. Often, tempered radicals were found to be critics as well as champions for the status quo and radical change. Tactics for a tempered radical strategy often were incremental, small-scale, experimental, collaborative, organic, and avoidant of confrontation with authority figures (Buller, 2015; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Meyerson & Scully, 1995). Additionally, tactics relied on broad visioning by many change agents; changes were often not labeled as final and were flexible as well as opportunistic. For example, tempered radicals in higher education often utilized "concept papers, speaker series,

letter writing, posting signs, informal meetings, working through translators, using data, sending information to administrators, and having students present information” (Kezar & Lester, 2011, p. 231). Moreover, they frequently negotiated with those in formal power roles.

Overall, while Emergent change engages the strengths of professional employees, it lacks engagement of senior administrators. This creates a direct challenge to success as senior administrators often serve as resource gatekeepers and help coordinate work across a multitude of units, features which are beneficial for wide-scale transformational change.

Hybrid Approach to Change

While the Planned and Emergent camps are widely accepted in higher education, their separate nature seems to present an opposition: a mentality that change can only be approached using one approach, at the mutual exclusion of the other. (Bright & Goodwin, 2010). As literature indicates, Planned or Emergent change on their own are flawed and may not serve organization change well. Indeed, Kezar (2013b) argued that this either/or mentality could cause high failure rates for change. A developing trend points to a less discussed third camp, which believes in a both/and approach, that views planned and emergent change as complimentary, attempting to combine elements from both approaches to address each respective approach’s short-comings (Bright & Godwin, 2010; Burnes, 2004a; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008; Livne-Taranduch & Bartunek, 2009). While I was unable to locate a formal name for this camp, I have labeled it as “Hybrid approach to change,” Or “Hybrid camp.”

To gauge the prevalence of this camp within the higher education literature, I conducted a search for articles on the Hybrid approach in the peer-reviewed literature

contained within the UMass Boston Healey Library UMBrella tool. This comprehensive search engine indexes all of UMass Boston's electronic collections including ERIC, ProQuest, JSTOR, and more specifically, journals like the *Journal of Higher Education*, the *Journal of Change Management*, and the *Journal of Organizational Change Management*. I began my search using the subject terms "higher education" and "organizational change." Rationale for these search terms was based on their inclusion in the EBSCO listing for Kezar's 2012 convergence article, which was my first exposure to the Hybrid camp. This resulted in 31,904 articles, including the Kezar 2012 study. At each subsequent stage of my search filtering, I checked to make sure Kezar's study remained in the results as an indication of the search not being overly restrictive. I then narrowed the search by using the key concepts from Kezar's 2012 study of "bottom-up" and "top-down." This strategy yielded 81 results. The search was then filtered to display results appearing in peer-reviewed journals (72 results). Next, as the first mentions of a Hybrid approach to change (i.e., the interplay of planned and emergent change) were in the early 2000s (Liebhart & Garcia-Lorenzo, 2010), articles before 2000 were eliminated, leaving 67 results. Titles of the 67 results were then reviewed for phenomenon matching Hybrid change. The Kezar 2012 article aside, 12 additional articles closely resembled Hybrid change or a potential elemental part of it. Therefore, of the initial 31,904 articles about higher education organization change, only 0.0004 percent discuss a phenomenon like Hybrid change. In contrast, a search of UMBrella using the terms "higher education," "organizational change," and "planned" with a filter of peer reviewed journals yielded 2,497 results, roughly 7.8 percent of the literature on higher education organizational change within the UMass Boston UMBrella tool. The terms "higher

education,” “organizational change,” and “emergent” with a filter of peer reviewed journals yielded 8,425 results, 26.4 percent of the literature on higher education organizational change within the UMass Boston UMBrella tool. This search confirmed the sparsity of Hybrid change literature in higher education, given the fractional coverage provided to the topic compared to the other two more common camps.

Acknowledging the paucity of literature on the Hybrid camp for higher education, this section will start by discussing Hybrid research from the management discipline, as there it has been more extensively discussed. Additionally, this section will review the limited higher education literature on the topic that are recent additions to the change literature base. In short, both the management and higher education literature that does exist suggests that the Hybrid approach often involves loose structures and high participation from both professional employees and senior officials, in higher education’s case administrators.

Hybrid Change Outside of Higher Education. Bright and Godwin (2010) studied the Hybrid approach to change, specifically how to integrate Planned and Emergent change approaches for social innovation (i.e., improvements for organizations that want to create value for the public, as opposed to specific private interests). They looked at a case study of a non-profit organization, which combined elements from the Planned and Emergent change approaches to retool the organization’s focus. They found that such an approach maximized the opportunity for social innovation. Reasons for this result included a loose structure that was created by senior management to guide the change agenda complemented by the engagement of a broad base of employees who could suggest and refine potential future

projects that fit within the loose framework of senior management. This study suggests the value of the Hybrid approach for complex organizations seeking organizational change.

Orlikowski (1996) studied the implementation of changes within a single non-higher education organization during a two-year period. She found that the change that occurred was Hybrid in nature, specifically that Planned and Emergent change each fueled the other in an iterative fashion. For example, as change was implemented in a planned fashion, Emergent change in the form of experimentation to respond to troubles with the planned change occurred. This experimentation created shifts in the procedure and general implementation of Planned change. Such a finding indicates that the capacity for Hybrid change may exist within all organizations and that one approach to change may be a catalyst to the other if the right conditions are present. These findings are echoed in Cunha and Cunha (2003). This study conducted eight focus groups with 106 Cuban executives and management scholars on the topic of state-direct Planned change and Emergent grass-roots change. Cunha and Cunha found that the hybrid changes that were occurring at the time of the study in Cuba had a recursive nature to them, as institutional agents influenced individual grassroots reforms and vice-versa.

Hybrid Change Inside of Higher Education. Hybrid change has been studied previously within higher education. One such example is Kondakci and Van den Broeck (2009), a study that looked at organizational change at a West European institution that attempted to internationalize. To analyze the case, the authors used semi-structured interviews via snowball sampling, observations in meetings and classrooms, and document analysis. Open coding was used, resulting in a narrative report. The study found the iterative

nature of Hybrid change. The case began with senior administrators who created a planned institutional imperative for campus internationalization. Once this planned change was announced, Emergent change met the planned change. Such Emergent change included alterations, modifications, extensions of teaching content, and admissions processes, neither of which were modified by official Planned change edicts; rather, they evolved through the work of professional employees. To realize the full potential of these emergent changes, professional employees then approached senior administration with needs for additional training resources, increased student services, and support for new teaching skills. These requests were declared by senior administration part of the official planned change. This case demonstrated the value of Planned top-down change being paired with Emergent bottom-up change, which is the spirit of Hybrid change.

Hybrid change, which can be thought of as the parent change approach for convergence, relies on change agents from all levels of the organization coming together, pulling in both senior administrators and professional employees (D’Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2014; Dunphy, 2006; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2001; Pearce & Conger, 2002). Research by Kezar (2001, 2013b) indicated that such a joint effort that is shared and inclusive of these two groups is likely to be a successful change endeavor. While there are potentially numerous ways in which such a coming together could occur, Perry (2014) offered the following as an example: senior administrators could work to create an organizational climate for change, while professional employees could simultaneously work to develop a change agenda from a front-line perspective. To come together effectively, there must be a culture of trust between these two groups (Kezar, 2013b). However, such a culture

can be difficult due to the complex nature of higher education. Additionally, higher education's nature as a professional bureaucracy with mechanistic structures may not be a natural match for this change. Instead, a more organic structure might be more effective as it contains work roles that permit flexibility, broadly-defined job descriptions, a low degree of formalization, a high level of teamwork, and structures that are adaptable (Bess & Dee, 2012). Structural incompatibility aside, collaboration between these two groups can enable change agents to break out beyond their silos, spark creativity, and foster creation of new perspectives, which research positively links to effective change (Buller, 2015; Eckel & Kezar, 2003). Additionally, coordination between these two groups can help overcome legitimacy issues of planned change by senior administrators and the difficulty of institutionalizing emergent change by professional employees (Kezar, 2013b).

Kezar's Convergence as an Example of Hybrid Change

Within the higher education literature, an approach for Hybrid change appeared in Kezar (2012). The Kezar study's concept of convergence was selected as the framing concept for this work for several reasons. The first was that it is the most recent attempt in the higher education literature to advance the under-researched hybrid camp. Second, it features insight into how professional employees merged with senior administrators, offering concrete concepts for use in this study's framework. Third, the technique of convergence offered potential to negotiate change, but had not been examined by Kezar in a transformational context and therefore was ripe for deeper analysis. Finally, the techniques used by senior administrators to promote convergence were not discussed in depth in the Kezar study, suggesting that a future line of research needed to explore this area in greater detail.

In their study, Kezar proposes “Kaleidoscope Convergence [a] Model of Bottom-up/Top-Down Leadership” (p. 748). This approach merges Planned and Emergent change. Kezar contends that convergence is the joining of professional employee- and senior administrator- change efforts. Kezar studied strategies used by professional employees to support convergence with senior administrators. The sample for her study included five higher education campuses representing various institutional types. To create the sample, Kezar did initial outreach to key campus leaders that generated the first round of participants who were known on their campuses as grassroots innovators. Kezar expanded this sample with snowball sampling. In total, 84 staff and 81 faculty members were interviewed.

Kezar found three outcomes for the approach. The first was “significant change” that professional employees felt could not have been possible without senior administrative support. This was the best outcome possible, as in this case the approach successfully combined elements from Planned change with elements from Emergent change to produce an outcome satisfactory to professional employees and senior administrators. A second outcome observed was “mixed results.” This outcome speaks to the possibility that convergence may produce positive change for some involved in the change effort, while for others it may produce an absence of positive change or even negative change. The third outcome recorded was that a professional employee-initiated change was “compromised” by too much senior administrator support. In this outcome, the amount of convergence exercised by senior administrators potentially overwhelmed professional employee-initiated efforts.

In this section, Kezar’s 2012 findings of strategies leading to positive convergence outcomes as used by professional employees will be discussed. Additionally, this section will

assess challenges that could create negative convergence outcomes. Finally, this discussion will analyze possible concepts that could form the foundation for yet-to-be studied senior administrator convergence strategies, to evaluate relationships to the known professional employee strategies and challenges associated with this approach.

Known Convergence Concepts

Kezar wrote about several conceptual parts that make up convergence. These concepts include: (a) The overlapping interests of professional employees and senior administrators that are not common, but occur at key moments, (b) The interaction between professional employees and senior administrators, but how the nature and pattern of those interactions result in different paths based on interests, communication, and strategies involved in convergence, (c) That convergence is focused on professional employees' convergence with senior administrators, but it may occur in the opposite manner, though more study is needed; (d) How specific strategies are employed to create convergence (e.g., translators, managing up, sensitizing those in power, and negotiation); and (e) the existence of challenges such as senior administrators usurping professional employees change initiatives.

Professional Employee Convergence Strategies. While Kezar's convergence approach suggests that convergence can occur in either direction (e.g., professional employees converging with senior administrators or vice-versa), Kezar focuses on what strategies professional employees utilized to converge with senior administrators. She found nine strategies for professional employees attempting to converge their change efforts with senior administrators. These strategies included assessing whether the timing was right,

capitalizing on and being open to opportunities, using translators as a communications channel with senior administrators, sensitizing those in power/managing up, securing membership on key committees, skillful negotiation, creating coalitions with other professional employees' change efforts, garnering outside financial support, and a moderated use of skepticism and suspicion of senior administrator support (Table 1).

As discussed in Kezar's (2012) case studies of convergence, these strategies can lead to positive outcomes for convergence efforts. For an example of assessing timing, Kezar offered a professional employee-initiated change that resulted in a successful convergence outcome that was in development for 10-15 years before convergence was attempted. Those development years were utilized to build justification of the change effort, but perhaps more important for convergence, to wait for the right mix of senior administrators who the professional employees felt would be open to convergence. Another example dealt with the use of the translator strategy. Kezar argued that professional employees often can get so involved in their change initiative that those outside the initiative, especially in senior administration, may not understand the language of the initiative. A translator, or someone who can communicate between the two groups, can offer a communications connection that may not typically exist. A final example is the use of moderate skepticism and suspicion as a strategy. Kezar found that skepticism and suspicion can be helpful for professional employees to be on guard against the two-change agent groups having different reasons for attempting convergence on an issue, which sometimes are incompatible. For example, a faculty-initiated change to diversify an institution's workforce to bring more culturally representative and responsive faculty into the instructional workforce could be supported by

senior administrators because of their interest to market a campus's globalization to generate more out-of-state tuition revenue. While both are reasonable justifications for engaging in convergence, professional employees may reject the senior administrators' revenue rationale as being too far out of alignment with their student success rationale for change. Kezar (2012) recommended careful use of these strategies, as improper use may hinder convergence.

Challenges for the Convergence Approach. Kezar (2012) found that five challenges emerged when professional employees and senior administrator change efforts converge. These challenges are (a) miscommunication or manipulation between the two change agent groups due to differences in change agenda interest, (b) too much skepticism, (c) a need to prove that as a professional employee change agent, one has not "sold out" to senior administrators, (d) unbalanced power dynamics, and (e) the real or perceived propensity for senior administrators to usurp professional employee-initiated change. These challenges indicate that there is tension in how convergence currently understands the merging of professional employees and senior administrators, though acknowledging that at times the groups may engage in conflict.

Miscommunication or manipulation occurred when the interest of the change agent groups seemed compatible, but that compatibility was only surface deep. Kezar (2012) describes a case in which professional employees felt misled about or confused by senior administrator goals for supporting their change initiative, which led to the initiative stalling out.

A case of too much skepticism and suspicion may prevent professional employees from attempting convergence that could help them realize their change initiative. Another

*Table 1.
Professional Employee Convergence Strategies*

<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Assessing timing	Successful convergence of change effort initiated at the professional employee level occurred when the effort had at least five years of existence at the professional employee level. This time was used to create the vision, network, and support that garnered productive convergence with senior administrators.
Capitalizing on and being open to opportunities	In several of Kezar's (2012) cases, professional employees tested the waters with senior administrators to see if convergence was possible. Opportunities included new administrative hires.
Using translators as a communication channel with senior administrators	Translators, such as faculty who were serving/had served within administration, seemed to be a particularly useful strategy. These individuals helped professional employees package their change effort in ways that resonated with senior administrators. They also helped professional employees guard their changes from total senior administrative usurpation. They also provided a means of interaction that did not normally exist between the two change agent groups.
Sensitizing those in power/managing up	This strategy centered on the managing of those in power by producing for them a narrative about the change initiative that was flattering in nature. Tactics included concept papers, sending information, having student present about the change, letter writing, speaker series, workshops, and faculty development.
Securing membership on key committees	A venue that was fruitful for convergence for professional employee initiated change efforts was committees or taskforces. Such groups were representative of a campus and therefore provided a way for the change agent groups to interact and exercise influence.
Skillful negotiation	While convergence can be a method for change agent groups to come together, the process of coming together often involved bargaining around the nature of the joining. For example, one change agent group may want to expand the other's proposed change vision, while the other is hesitant about the change being broader than their proposed narrow scope. Negotiation in such a case could involve overplaying the desired expansion or narrow firmness, so that negotiation results in a change that feels right in size to both groups.
Creating coalitions with other professional employees' change efforts	This strategy boosted the viability of a professional employee proposed change by pairing it with another effort to show broad support.
Garnering outside financial support	Outside money seemed to impress senior administrators, making it easier for them to contribute additional resources.
Skepticism and suspicion of senior administrator support	Kezar suggested that these two separate change agent groups often do not share the same goals for change initiatives. Therefore, professional employees should question senior administrative motives to better understand their interest in convergence.

case study from Kezar (2012) revealed the difficulty of power dynamics for convergence. In the case, a group of driven female faculty emerged from the grassroots to champion the cause of diversifying the institution's workforce. While senior administrators initially embraced them, as the group's power began to grow, administrators felt threatened by the group. This in turn eroded the convergence between these two groups and led to the decline in effectiveness for the diversification effort. The final issue recorded in the study was usurping of the initiative by senior administrators, which theoretically could lead to the appearance or reality of senior administrators taking credit for professional employee work.

While the first three challenges can be traced back in some way to the strategies employed by professional employees, the last two challenges (i.e., power dynamics and usurping the effort) are more closely associated with strategies that senior administrators employ or reject to engage in convergence. Attempting to support professional employee empowerment to engage in change only to scorn the professional employees when too much power is accumulated may indicate a lack of intentionality about power dynamics by the senior administrators. Additionally, a real or perceived deficit in recognizing the work of professional employees or wrongful attribution of efforts may also suggest a lack of collaborative leadership intentionality. These issues dictate the need for senior administrator convergence strategies that can account for or prevent these challenges from arising.

Potential Senior Administrator Convergence Concepts

Kezar (2012) chose not to study the concepts that senior administrators use to support convergence. While this choice makes sense considering Kezar's research questions, her findings suggest that more research is necessary on what senior administrators do, or could

do, to help or hinder convergence. This is a logical conclusion, as any Hybrid change approach requires efforts from both elements in the hybridization. The concepts of power, organizational learning, and effective group work could be relevant concepts for senior administrators looking to support convergence.

The first concept is power and its dynamics. Kezar (2012) found that an ineffective power dynamic was a challenge for professional employee-originated convergence efforts. Each change agent group has different amounts of power that are inherent to the group they operate in (i.e., senior administrators traditionally have more power than professional employees due to the high-ranking nature of their positions). This power imbalance, if not managed properly, can impede the effectiveness of a convergence effort. As power tends to be a tool more frequently used by senior administrators, intentionality about power dynamics may be a strategy that senior administrators could use to promote more effective convergence. Therefore, an understanding of the concept of power and how it operates in higher education is necessary.

Power. Power is an ability to mobilize to get what a group or individual wants; it is about producing change and coordinating activities (Baldrige, 1971; Birnbaum, 1988; Bolman & Deal, 2011). There are several prominent sources of power that scholars have identified including: (a) reward, (b) coercion, (c) legitimate authority of one's position, (d) referent—the reputation or likability of an individual, (e) expert—the technical knowledge of an individual, and (f) control over opinion forming and power tools, such as meeting agendas, finances, information, and personnel (Baldrige, 1971; Bolman & Deal, 2008; French, Raven, & Cartwright, 1959; Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

As power operates differently in higher education than in business or government, power may seem like an ambiguous tool for higher education change agents; nonetheless, it is very much an institutional force. Therefore, special attention to the operationalization of power in education is warranted (Baldrige, 1971; Birnbaum, 1988; Kezar, 2001). Recall that as a professional bureaucracy, higher education power is disbursed throughout the organization. Therefore, administrative or professional employee power can rely on referent, expert, or positional power. Referent power results from one's liking of another person, identification with them, or respect for an individual. Expert power is influence due to specialized knowledge that a person may have. Positional power is derived from the authority that a position holds. Power for administration is often based on positional power, while professional employees rely on expert power. An analysis of whether and how senior administrators utilize power, through this study during episodes of convergence, may reveal that this group is using excessive or improper types of power to influence professional employees during convergence. For example, professional employees may be championing a change based on their expert power, while senior administrators may respond to a professional employee convergence attempt with positional power to influence the change. Professional employees may feel that positional power offers them no choice but to accept the senior administrator influence, causing the professional employees to feel that the change is diminished, leading to mixed results. Referent power relying on relationships could be a more effective play by senior administrators, as it depends on respect and identification with a person, which could assume a certain level of closeness that may lead to a more constructive give and take that might prevent a weakened change. In short, ineffective power

dynamics can be detrimental to convergence; therefore, senior administrator awareness and intentionality about power dynamics could lead to more effective convergence.

Organizational learning. Kezar (2012) wrote that senior administrators and professional employees often converge “through learning from each other” (p. 730). This type of learning may be a third foundational element for senior administrative convergence strategies. Learning within an organization has a subset of literature within the scope of organizational change literature called “organizational learning”. This subset describes a dynamic process in which organization members create and recreate a shared knowledge base (Bess & Dee, 2012; Dill, 1999; Huber, 1991). For higher education, which is steeped in tradition, overcoming strands of the organizational DNA can require significant effort. Effective organizational learning could help senior administrators support a culture of openness, information sharing, and problem solving, which might telecast to professional employees a willingness by senior administrators to support convergence overtures.

For organizational learning to occur, organizations should have a culture that is open and ready to create new understandings about core processes with the goal of improvement. This type of learning can take two forms. The first is a direct experience; that is, experimentation or daily operations that teach the organization something. The second is organized programs of self-education. Using a case-study methodology, Dill (1999) studied how organizational learning was used at universities seeking to improve their teaching and learning. The study found four distinct elements that led to organizational learning. These elements were: (a) increased coordination, communication, and accountability; (b) a culture of evidence; (c) internal and external scanning for solutions; and (d) structures that could

transfer the learning to improve core processes. While these elements were important findings, they were not observed in the sample evenly, which may speak to the varying degrees to which they occur across higher education.

Organizational learning may vary at different stages of the convergence process. For example, in the beginning it may be used to learn about the organization's environment and its relationship with that environment. A tool such as double-loop learning (Bess & Dee, 2012) may provide the outside vantage point to introduce new insight necessary to formulate problem statements or identify opportunities for transformation.

During the transformation, organizational learning may shift to the state of the organization's culture, or as Bess and Dee (2012) put it "understanding of core values and shared commitments among organizational members" (p. 478). This may be important for senior administrators to consider during convergence, as shared interests are an important convergence building block. Additionally, institutional transformation has a critical element of culture and therefore alongside imposed change efforts continual monitoring needs to assess how culture is responding, supporting, or detracting from the change efforts. They may do this monitoring through reviews of webs of meaning, which shape culture and mirror the individual institution's history. Such webs are co-constructed by senior administrators and professional employees through the process of sense-giving and making. The historic webs of meaning may present to senior administrators incongruencies with the change agenda that may need to be negotiated for transformation to occur. In this way, organizational learning can help avoid these tensions if the learning occurs in advance to them formally being experienced or as a post-employment mitigation tactic . Additionally,

professional employees may engage in organizational learning themselves through structured agendas of self-learning that may include regular program and service assessments, collecting student learning outcomes, and documenting the student experience.

Finally, organizational learning may be used at the end of a transformational process to measure progress and calibrate next steps. In this way, organizational learning takes the form of institutional assessment, internal program reviews, or external accreditation studies. This type of learning can be folded into strategic planning processes by providing all-encompassing definition of critically important goals: the metrics for those goals, the measurement approaches for those metrics, and the evidence used to support those measurements. This form of organizational learning relates with communication as progress and results must be deftly communicated to build trust and provide motivation as well as direction for professional employee bottom-up efforts. The repeated sharing of the outcomes of learning and progress will be added to organizational memory, which in turn can serve to support the sense-making and giving as well as webs of meaning previously described in this section.

Organizational learning can be challenged by several factors that arise due to the nature of higher education (Bess & Dee, 2012, Chickering, 2003). A higher education institution's professional bureaucratic structure with loosely coupled units, which can drift toward decoupling, makes the open and frequent communication necessary for organizational learning difficult. Additionally, the number of units and the various degrees of connection can make learning occur at an uneven pace. Moreover, organizations must not only learn about themselves, but they must also apply that knowledge, which can be difficult due to the

shared governance challenges previously discussed. There are also traps that may derail organizational learning. These are: (a) superstitious learning: incorrectly linking a cause and effect, (b) ambiguity of success: trouble sourcing the origin of a successful effort, (c) competency trap: institutionalization of an innovation decreasing its desirability to change agents, (d) familiarity trap: using known solutions that may not speak to a unique problem, and (e) maturity trap: using what has worked in the past regardless of its current suitability. Finally, organizational learning initiatives need to contend with the issue of learning “cherished beliefs, relationships, and accustomed patterns of behavior” that may be potentially challenging to modulate (Bess & Dee, 2012, p. 669).

Finally, it is important to note that there are limitations to the amount any organization can learn (Bess & Dee, 2012). Postmodernists suggest that there is inherent chaos and disorganization, even with guiding rules and the nature of higher education as a bureaucratic organization. Moreover, the loose couplings of an institution may prevent wide-scale learning, as fragmented learning may be more functional and achievable for some institutions. Such limitations mean that transformation may need to unfold without a complete picture of the environment and/or internal institutional context.

Groups. Finally, Kezar (2012) described convergence as often transpiring in groups. She pointed to committees and taskforces as places where bottom-up and top-down leadership could merge, as these groups often had representation from multiple levels and different functional areas of a campus. Therefore, senior administrators who can consider committee memberships and task forces may want to consider greater intentionality of

membership for these groups as well as the dynamics to maintain effectiveness within these groups as a foundational element for a senior administrator convergence strategy.

Other research points to the importance of groups for both Planned and Emergent change. A grounded theory study of change within eight large organizations by Mohrman, Tenkasi, & Mohrman (2003) found that the successful use of networks (groups) made a significant difference in the organization's implementation of fundamental change. The study found that groups promoted a learning orientation, which was a helpful catalyst for change efforts.

A group can be thought of as a collection of individuals who labor on interdependent tasks (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). These collections of people often share responsibility for outcomes, "are seen by others as an intact social entity embedded in one or more larger social systems... and manage their relationships across organizational boundaries" (Cohen & Bailey, 1997, p. 241). Group work can be difficult due to overly-dominating participants, the greater activation energy required compared to an individual acting unilaterally, and the increased susceptibility to outside pressures (Maier, 1967). Nonetheless, groups are increasingly common (e.g., senior leadership teams, cross-campus teams, project groups, task-forces, committees, and problem-solving groups). They offer the potential for fast responses by avoiding hierarchal approval processes and they can draw on multiple resource pools. Groups also often report higher levels of creativity, group solutions can be accepted more readily than a solution that lacked group input, group work can bring about alliances of disparate parties, and groups can be more thoughtful problem solvers due to a range of

perspectives (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 2014; Maier, 1967; Northouse, 2016).

For group work to be successful, an organization's culture must be conducive to high levels of employee involvement in decision making (Northouse, 2016). Such a culture can be a challenge for higher education organizations given the control structure of institutions, which often creates parallel decision-making structures that do not offer many opportunities for collective or joint decision-making (Birnbaum, 1988; Buller, 2015; Kezar & Lester, 2011).

Broadly, there are four types of groups: work, parallel, project, and management groups (Balkundi & Harrison, 2006; Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Maier, 1967; Sundstrom, De Meuse, & Futrell, 1990). Work groups are responsible for production and are the most commonly used type of group. Project groups support new product development or the creation of new services, often as one-time outputs. Management groups coordinate sub-units or processes. While each of these can be found in higher education, the parallel group seems to have the most applicability to the convergence strategy. This type of group “perform[s] functions that the regular organization is not equipped to perform well... [existing] in parallel with the formal organizational structure” (Cohen and Bailey, 1997, p. 242).

Groups often operate in complex ways that can challenge their study. Nonetheless, Tuckman (1965) as well as Tuckman and Jensen (1977) proposed a stage-based framework that is useful for studying groups. A small group will proceed through five developmental stages including: (a) forming, (b) storming, (c) norming, (d) performing, and (e) adjourning. A group's forming stage is centered on group member introductions. Common characteristics

include a sense of exploration, some focus on similarities and differences, and most importantly first impressions. Interpersonal issues, competition, jealousy, negativity, rule breaking, and arguments can cause the conflict storming stage. Characteristics that exemplify the norming phase include cohesiveness, new standards, new roles, and opinions expressed in an appropriate manner. The performing stage includes task focus, resolution of group structural issues, and general support of accomplishing a goal. Finally, the adjourning stage can include feelings of sadness, disengagement, or affection. While this framework was theoretical in nature, its construct validity was later empirically validated by Miller (2003) via a retrospective questionnaire administered to university students engaged in group work.

Tuckman and Jensen's stage-based framework for group development speaks to several important considerations for the understanding of group dynamics (Cohen and Bailey, 1997). For example, the forming stage speaks to an argument that Maier (1967) made, that a group could only engage in problem-solving after mutual interests have been formed. The framework does, however, lack a way to evaluate a group's effectiveness. Northouse (2016) suggested that groups could be judged by their performance of tasks and the development of the group itself (i.e., how did group members work with each other to achieve their goal). Measuring the effectiveness along the task and development dimensions of a group can occur by monitoring a group's clarity of purpose, the assembly of group members that contribute to the goal, the degree of group unification around the group's purpose, clarity of group norms or operating procedures, and the role of collaborative leadership that may emerge to address stages of a group's process (Hackman, 2012; Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

A common obstacle for group effectiveness is conflict (Baldrige, 1971; Bolman & Deal, 2011). Relationship dynamics within the group, such as tension, animosity, and annoyance, can be the source of conflicts (Jehn, 1995). Conflict may also arise due to disagreements within the group about the tasked directive due to viewpoint or opinion differences. In a study of 105 workgroups to determine the outcomes of conflict on group performance, Jehn (1995) found that relationship conflicts are detrimental to group productivity, while task conflicts can be beneficial. Bolman and Deal (2011) agreed that some conflicts may be positive as they can challenge “the status quo [and] stimulate interest and curiosity... [as well as] new ideas and approaches to a problem” (p. 207). The beneficial nature of a task conflict can occur when the group is charged with non-routine tasks that require a variety of viewpoints and opinions to better understand the complexity of the issue. Additionally, Jehn (1995) found that the norms of a group regulating group member behavior, a stage in Tuckman and Jensen's framework, can influence how a group perceives and manages conflict, which in turn influences the group's performance.

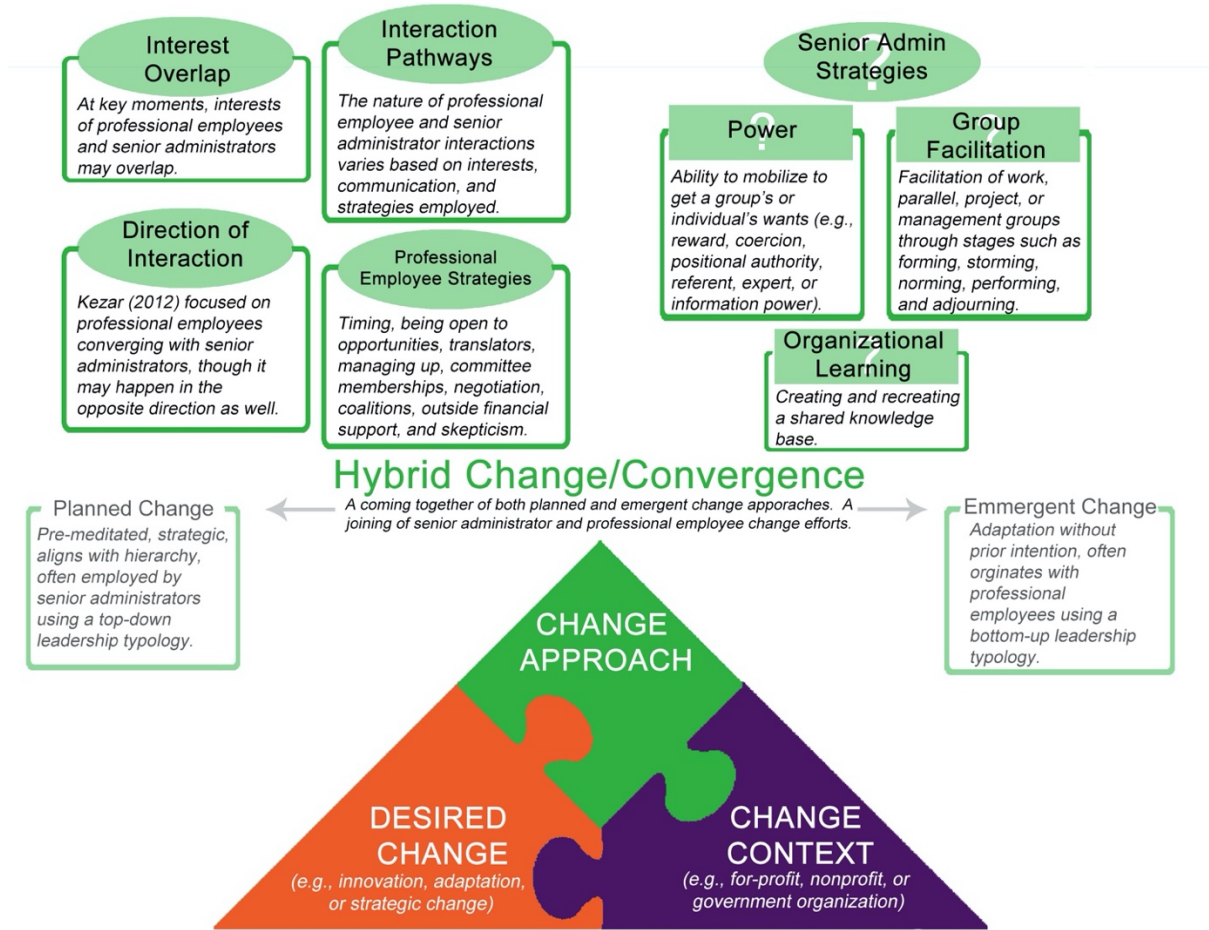
Conceptual Framework

The preceding literature review revealed several concepts that are important to add to the rudimentary conceptual framework visualized in Figure 1. The first is that the change context is a higher education institution, which is often presided over by order-generating rules. Such rules include a professionally bureaucratic organizational arrangement, loosely coupled relationships, and shared governance. Additionally, the desired change that this study aims to look at is transformational change. Such change is deep and pervasive, has a degree of intentionality, occurs over time, and affects institutional culture. Moreover, the

literature review found that change approaches are attempted by practitioners and studied by scholars in a variety of way that primarily fall into two accepted change approach camps—Planned and Emergent. The literature also offered the possibility of a third, Hybrid, camp. This change approach includes the phenomena of interest for this study—convergence. Convergence, as theorized by Kezar (2012), includes overlapping of senior administrator and professional employee interests, has particular interaction pathways whose directionality will vary based on the nature of the change, and includes bottom-up strategies. As this study aims to understand convergence more fully, other concepts that may be at work in the phenomena include top-down strategies, power, organizational learning, collaborative leadership, and group dynamics. These additional concepts from the literature have been accounted for in the conceptual framework (Figure 2).

Summary

The literature confirmed that convergence is an understudied phenomenon in the higher education literature, in fact only one study was located that clearly defined the merging of top-down and bottom-up change approaches. Convergence or convergence-like concepts have been mentioned in only 0.0004 percent of the higher education organizational change literature; an amount dwarfed by the multitude of publications that exist about Planned change or Emergent change. The literature gap represents a practitioner-knowledge deficiency, meaning senior administrators as well as professional employees likely do not know how to use this change approach effectively. This study seeks to address this literature-gap by studying the convergence phenomenon in more detail. The phenomenon of convergence as proposed by Kezar offered a



Adapted from Kezar, 2013b

Institutional Transformation A Higher Education Institution

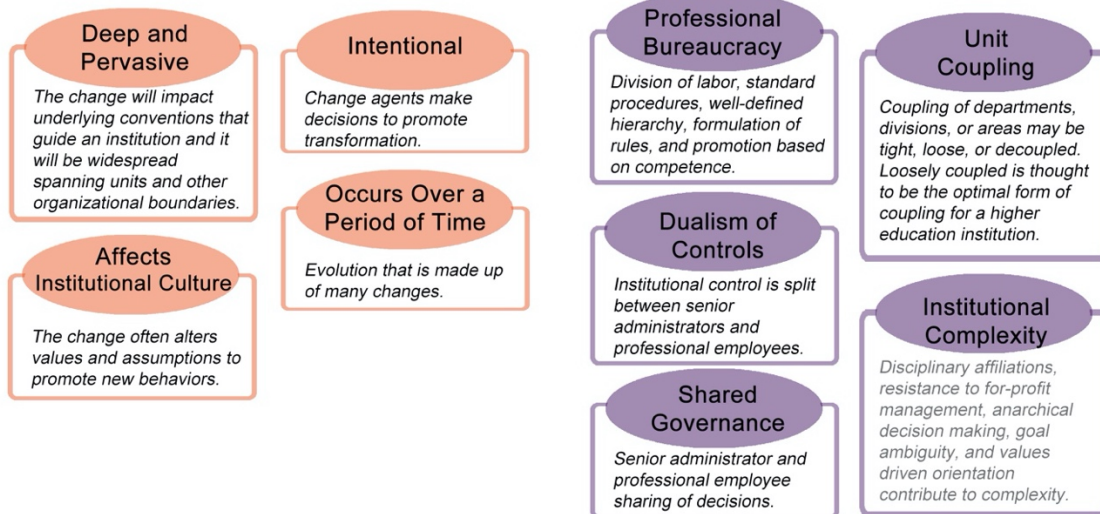


Figure 2. Detailed Conceptual Framework.

current higher education-specific approach to hybrid change work, and a template to build from based on Kezar's work to flesh out strategies from a bottom-up perspective. Better understanding the concept of convergence is important as it will provide insight into how change could work in a hybrid top-down and bottom-up manner, which could better prepare administrators as well as professional employees for success in using this change approach. Per Kezar (2001), using change approaches accurately has been demonstrated to affect the success or failure of a change effort. Subsequently, more knowledge about convergence could improve the effectiveness rates of transformational change, as what is known about convergence is its potential to result in "significant changes that bottom-up leaders felt they could not have accomplished without top-down support" (Kezar, 2012, p. 746).

Additional study that expands the knowledge-base to more effectively account for the perspective of senior administrators may also reveal a positive outcome for this change agent group. Such positive outcomes are urgently needed by change agents to enacting the necessary transformational changes to meet environmental forces and promote the success of higher education institutions. Therefore, with greater understanding, convergence could be a valuable change approach for efficient and impactful transformational change.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter describes the research design and rationale for this study. The phenomenon of interest is convergence of senior administrators and professional employees as a change approach that contributes to higher education institution transformation. As previously discussed, a general lack of understanding exists as to how these change agent groups can work harmoniously to promote transformational change. Due to this knowledge shortcoming, this study seeks to establish a better understanding of the joining process between these two groups. Specifically, this study seeks to explore if, how, and why professional employees and senior administrators engage in convergent change approaches to affect transformation of a higher education institution. The following research questions will guide this exploration:

1. Why do professional employees and senior administrators engage in convergence for institutional transformation?
2. How are professional employees and senior administrators using convergence strategies to facilitate institutional transformation?
3. How do context features influence the change approach of convergence?

With this study's research questions in mind, this chapter outlines: the research paradigm that grounds this study (pragmatism), the research approach (qualitative), the strategy of inquiry (multiple case study), proposed sample sites, the methods that will be used to collect data, and planned data analysis techniques. Additionally, this chapter will discuss the measures that will be used to promote trustworthiness.

The Research Paradigm -- Pragmatism

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) a paradigm is the “net that contains the researcher's epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises.” (p. 22). This “net” is important because research is fundamentally interpretive and research interpretations are guided by the researcher's world view or their paradigm. One's world view can influence every stage of the research design from the broadest selection of research approach (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods) to the most focused detail of the research (e.g., the framing of an interview question for a participant). Therefore, it is helpful to ground the methods chapter in a declaration of the paradigm that I employ as a researcher.

Cresswell (2014) argued that there are four researcher paradigms. These include post-positivist, which seeks to determine cause-and-effect due to a belief in an absolutist nature of reality, constructivism, which assumes that multiple realities are possible and those realities are created by individuals, transformative, which brings an advocacy approach into research to strive for change, and pragmatic, which is problem-centered. As this research is fundamentally interested in the problem of higher education organizational change approaches ineffectively supporting institutional transformation, pragmatism is a natural research paradigm choice. Such a selection has a key consequence for the research design:

pragmatism is fundamentally not concerned with the nature of reality being absolute (i.e., positivist or post-positivist) or socially constructed; rather, its focus is locating a truth that can resolve a problem. It is solution-oriented and concerned with application of what works due to a focus on real-world practice.

Researcher Positionality Statement

Due to the selection of pragmatism as this study's research paradigm, it is important to discuss the author's position as a researcher in this study's endeavor. Accordingly, when I consider my relationship with higher education, it is that of a practitioner. I have had the great privilege to serve within three very different academic communities in roles of increasing responsibility: the University of Connecticut, American University, and currently at the University of Massachusetts Boston, as Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor. At each step in this journey, I have taken great pride in the problem solving I have accomplished and the changes I have championed through these roles. My career thus far has been about finding solutions, which is why pragmatism is especially pertinent for this study. Over the course of my career, my practice has led to three fundamental considerations: (a) higher education institutions need to change, (b) change is needed at four-year non-profit institutions, and (c) the labeling of change's results is an individual's decision.

The first consideration is that the pressures and associated challenges that institutions are facing are deeply rooted. Therefore, change that can address such fundamental challenges must transform the core of higher education organizations. Transformation of a higher education institution is caused by large, overarching, and continuous modification within the organization (Burnes, 2004a; Burnes, 2005; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Gee, 2009). It is often

depicted as a non-linear process in which multiple actions are occurring simultaneously. It can involve multiple change agents and is most successful when coupled with an innovative environment. It seeks to address survival needs that organizations have, which are typically changes to meet a shifting environment. The modifications associated with transformative change are often at the core of an organization, offering a way to engage major reformation. Schools that take on transformative change agendas often look to reform resource allocations, teaching and learning, scholarship, and service. Eckel and Kezar (2003) argued that “many signs [which are] difficult to ignore suggest that more institutions over the next several decades will have to engage in institutional transformation” (p. ix). Nonetheless, as previously discussed, such major reform does not occur within higher education organizations with high rates of success. Therefore, if transformative change will be more important in the future (Buller, 2015; Eckel & Kezar, 2003), it is necessary to have a greater understanding of what organizational change models, such as convergence, can support transformative change.

The second consideration is that transformative change needs to occur at non-profit four-year institutions because of their important leadership role in US higher education, despite the difficulty presented by this type of institution. I choose to look at four-year institutions and exclude two-year institutions from this study as two- and four-year institutions have very different histories (Cohen & Kisker, 2010); therefore, they have different missions, constructions, and nuances. By focusing on four-year schools, I attempt to avoid comparisons of two- and four-year institutional type differences that could distract from this undertaking.

The third principle is that change can be perceived as “positive” (beneficial) by some and “negative” (detrimental) by others. This study will use the Aristotelian definition of change: “giving matter a different form from the one it possessed previously” (Buller, 2015, p. 32). Therefore, some may find the changes that this study will look at as positive, while others may find them negative. Such an occurrence can be found in Kezar (2012) who highlighted a case study of science faculty that sought to change their pedagogy. The group used convergence strategies to connect with a presidential agenda of STEM innovation. The president sponsored seed grants to fund professional development and the testing of new experimental pedagogies. While the faculty that sought the innovation in conjunction with the president were pleased, others expressed concerns, namely, if the need for the change in pedagogy was justified, how these efforts were detracting from the reputations of senior faculty not engaged in the pedagogical experiments, and how the efforts could impact tenure for junior faculty. Thus, some found the change a positive occurrence, while others saw the change as a negative. As the sense-making process in determining the positive or negative nature of change is a complex topic in and of itself—involving the creation of frames of reference that facilitate comprehension, explanation, and interpretation of events (Bess & Dee, 2012)—sense-making is beyond the scope of this study, therefore this study will not engage in value judgements about the change initiatives for the cases. Rather, it will seek changes that may be breaking new ground or returning to a previous state, but it will be different from the status quo.

In short, the position from which I come to this research is that of a practitioner whose experience has indicated that higher education institutions have problems and they

need the ability to change. Change is needed at four-year institutions and change should be an alteration to the present status of an institution. It is important to disclose my world view as my research paradigm of pragmatism indicates that it will influence my research from broad design to the more granular details of my work. While this will no doubt occur, it is also important to note that this is an acceptable occurrence in this paradigm.

Strategy of Inquiry – A Multiple Case Study Methodology

To better understand embedded processes, this study carries out a qualitative research approach as it offers strength in understanding embedded processes and human behavior; it can de-mystify complex phenomena by providing rich detail, and it can help explain how the macroscale of institutional transformation translates into the microscale of everyday practices, such as convergence strategies.

Within the qualitative research approach, there are numerous strategies of inquiry or methodologies, each of which offers distinct advantages and disadvantages. This project has selected case study. Historically, case study research has a heritage that was aligned with medicine and law, but other disciplines such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, management, social work, and political science have made contributions to its use as a research strategy (Merriam, 1988). In the 1960s and 1970s, the popularity of case study in education grew due to the US federal government funding studies of school integration and STEM curriculum. According to Creswell (2014), case studies are often used to evaluate “a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (p. 14). This definition offers synergy with the aim of this study, as it seeks to evaluate the convergence process. Other definitions suggest that within case study, a specific case is bounded by time and activity,

and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures. Per Baxter and Jack (2008), case studies are used to portray a phenomenon in its natural context using several data sources. Yin (2003) added that case studies can be particularly useful when the distinction between the phenomenon and its context are difficult to discern. Stake (1995) also noted utility of this strategy when one seeks to understand a case's "embeddedness and interaction with its context" (Stake, 1995, p. 16).

Baxter and Jack (2008) outlined four conditions that should be met when considering case study. These conditions are: (a) the use of how and why research questions, (b) the inability by the researcher to manipulate the behavior of the research participants, (c) the desire to uncover contextual clues that are relevant for the phenomenon, and (d) the lack of distinction between the phenomenon and the context. This project seeks to answer a how question—specifically, how are professional employees and senior administrators using convergence to facilitate attempts at transformational change? In terms of the second consideration, an inability of researcher manipulation, I will not be researching where I am currently employed as a potential case study site; therefore, it is very unlikely that I will have any ability to manipulate the behavior of the research participants. Moreover, this is not an experimental or quasi-experimental design, as I do not seek to manipulate the behavior of research participants. Furthermore, and to Baxter's third point, the context in which convergence occurs may reveal important insights about enabling or sustaining factors for the phenomenon. For example, a culture of improvement as opposed to rigid followership of institutional traditions may help facilitate convergence.

With the above rationale in mind, case study will be used as the strategy of inquiry for this dissertation. This study defines a case as an institution's attempt at transformational change. Such a definition is important to this study as the convergence phenomenon in support of attempted transformational change likely will be institution-wide, not defined by vertical (i.e., divisional organizations such as academic affairs) or horizontal (i.e., specific classification of employees such as associate vice-presidents) boundaries. It is important to note that institutional transformation is a large, complex endeavor that may take many years to complete— if it is ever complete, based on the nature of change as an ongoing phenomenon. It is also lofty goal in the change world, with less difficult forms of change such as adaptation, strategic, or innovation possibly being misrepresented or misunderstood as transformation. Therefore, this study will look at institutional attempts at transformational change but will not comment in length at the degree of success or failure in their transformation process, as time or local understanding of transformation is beyond the scope of this study. Rather, the study will focus on how convergence does or does not support transformational attempts based on the stage in the transformation that the institution is in, or however transformation may be locally understood.

Specifically, the project will employ a multiple case study design, which can be referred to as a “collective” case study design. Such a design derives from the instrumental branch of case study research that seeks to provide new insight or complicate a known generalization (Stake, 2005). The multiple case study design takes the instrumental approach and extends it to multiple sites, providing the added benefit of analyzing or comparing individual cases to learn more about a general issue. Therefore, this dissertation will aim to

look at more than one institution attempting institutional transformation. Limiting this study to a single case would have reduced the potential to understand the phenomenon and may have also impacted the trustworthiness of the endeavor, the promotion of which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Sample

For each case, the units of analysis will be the change approach actions of professional employees and senior administrators that have contributed to attempts at institutional transformation, while accounting for institutional contextual features. Therefore, this study's sample must secure institutional subjects that are attempting transformation, and find individuals—senior administrators and professional employees—that are engaged with the institution's change processes used to bring about transformation. To arrive at such a sample, two important considerations must be made, namely selection of case sites and selection of participants at each site.

Site Selection

Criterion sampling was used to select case study sites Hill University (HU) and Greater Metropolis & City University (GMCU). Per Mertens (2014), this technique requires the researcher to establish criteria and then to identify sites that potentially meet those criteria. The criteria that were established were as follows: (a) four-year, non-profit college or university, (b) a primary location accessible to the researcher for a minimum of one visit, (c) has achieved national recognition for innovation as certified by an appearance on the *US News and World Report's* "Most Innovative School" list, (d) is a recipient of a 2014 or 2015 US Department of Education First in the World innovation grant, and (e) maintained an

institutional six-year graduation rate increase of at least six percentage points between 2008 and 2015.

The rationale for each criterion and details about each sample site's satisfaction of each criterion were systematically justified. The first criterion for four-year, non-profit institutions is in concert with my research positionality statement, reflecting the desire to study non-profit, four-year institutions. To determine which institutions met these criteria, a list of all institutions that were classified in 2015 for the Carnegie Classification system was acquired. This list included 4,666 institutions of higher education. Next, two-year institutions were removed from the list, leaving 2,924 four-year institutions. Institutions beyond the New England (e.g., Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) and Mid-Atlantic (e.g., New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia) regions were eliminated, which left 791 institutions.

As Kezar's original study did not expressly seek to study convergence at institutions that were attempting transformation, criteria needed to be considered that would yield a pool of institutions that were attempting transformation. To that end, a half-dozen professional higher education associations were contacted to gain potential insight into their knowledge of criteria for such sample sites. However, no useful criteria emerged from such effort. As an alternative measure, I created the remaining three criteria. The first two use innovation as a proxy for institutional transformation and the last criterion measures a major outcome of innovation—graduation rate improvement. Using these requirements, the list was further narrowed first using the criterion of a spring 2017 appearance on the *US News and World Report's* Most Innovative School list. Appearances on these lists are the result of college

presidents, provosts, and administrators nominating institutions because of their cutting-edge changes in the areas of curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology, or facilities. Schools received at least seven or more nominations to be listed (Morse & Brooks, 2017). This criterion narrowed the potential sample list to sixteen institutions. To further narrow the list, institutions were excluded that did not receive a 2014 or 2015 “First in the World” US Federal Government Grant. Over the two years of this program, the Obama administration awarded \$135 million to US higher education institutions that proposed innovations to improve student outcomes (US Department of Education Press Office, 2014, 2015). This criterion narrowed the potential sample list to the three institutions and one system. The final criterion was a six-year graduation rate increase of at least six percentage points between 2008 and 2015. The National Center for Education Statistics IPEDS online Data Center was utilized to secure the necessary data. The time range spanned from 2008, the earliest year that graduation data was available, to 2015, the most recent year that reported final release data. After this criterion was applied, three institutions were left: Hill University, Granite University, and the Greater Metropolis & City University. Granite University was excluded from the final sample site group due to their prohibition of external researchers collecting data about their campus.

Greater Metropolis & City University (GMCU). GMCU is a public doctoral university that is part of a system of universities. GMCU considers itself to be a trailblazer in inclusive excellence and have a strong commitment to undergraduate student success. The campus enrolls nearly 14,000 students. The institution was recently named one of the world’s top universities by the Center for World University Rankings. The 2018 *US News & World*

Report named it as one of the top schools in the United States for undergraduate teaching. In addition, it has received numerous mentions on the nation's top academic workplaces list.

The campus is about fifteen minutes away from the downtown center of the county. GMCU first opened its doors in the 1960s, with a focus on liberal arts. It was founded in part to serve a large demographic of people of color from the greater metropolitan area. Being open to all races was unique for GMCU's home state, as up until that point public higher education in the state was segregated, making GMCU the first public integrated college in the state. These early years saw post-World War II baby boom enrollments grow at an annual rate of 8%, twice that national enrollment growth rate. While GMCU's spirit of inclusion was critical to the fabric of campus, it was part of a complicated tapestry of a start-up endeavor. In a history of the campus's faculty development office, Lizzie, a professional employee, recounted that as a new campus GMCU faced numerous challenging demands in the areas of rapidly growing enrollment, development of new programs, expanding research capacity, and the recruitment of faculty and staff.

Physical signs of the campus's sixties roots abound, with functional, almost brutalist architecture being the primary visual aesthetic, occasionally interrupted by newer, modern glass buildings. Large brick edifices with concrete patios line the pedestrian spine that makes up the main avenue of the campus, which is enclosed by a canopy of tree cover. Many of these buildings date back to the original campus groundbreaking and were designed to be a visual break with the state's traditional Georgian and Gothic college architecture that a campus historian described as being tied to the state's "long history as an aristocratic, conservative, racially segregated state." The administration building rises high above the

landscape, resolute in its stature. Newer, more modern buildings with clean lines, bright spaces, and visible staircases, can be found flanking the older buildings. Slogans giving positive affirmations and to inspire the students were applied to building entrances, light pole banners, and sidewalk kiosks. The diversity of the community is prominent and feels authentic to a city that has a majority of people of color. Languages other than English are heard on campus, and those conversations in English are often about serious topics like calculus or the learning of a second language.

Hill University (HU). Hill is a major private university in the heart of a major city. It enrolls approximately 17,500 students and is a nationally ranked research university with a focus on experiential learning. Prior to 1996, its reputation was as a regional commuter school of which one local newspaper openly said “accepted nearly all ... who applied.”

The area surrounding the campus includes homes that date back to the 1800s and modern housing apartment and condominium complexes. The school’s neighbors include museums, quirky coffee shops, small college student-friendly restaurants and pubs, as well as other higher education institutions. The neighborhood has an academic feel to it with hundreds of students often visible on the sidewalks. Many arrive at the campus via one of the city’s subway lines. On either side of the subway stop are glass buildings that display marketing for the campus including phrases that represent values the campus holds such as “we discover,” “we explore,” and “we inspire.”

The school’s roots can be traced back to the late 1800s when the local community organization began offering courses to local men that did not have the resources nor the social standing to attend the area’s ivy league institutions. In the early years, the curriculum

grew to include an evening school of law. Other schools followed, which led to the formation of Hill College around 1920. During the depression, the college transitioned into Hill University, incorporating, resulting in total independence from the original community organization. In the 1950s, Experiential Internship Program (EIP) in Hill's engineering school was expanded to be a university-wide initiative. The 1950s also saw Hill grow to accommodate the post-World War II veteran boom and to help meet the nation's space goal. By the mid-1970s, Hill became one of the nation's largest private institutions by student enrollment. The 70s and 80s saw the growth of academic centers and research institutes. A dramatic decline in enrollment occurred in the 1990s coinciding with a national recession and decline in high school-age population. Administrative measures in response to the decline included budget reductions, salary freezes, and layoffs.

Following the recession, Hill's Board appointed a new president. His charge was to reposition the institution. Modulations included shifting the school's reputation to one of greater admissions selectivity, more ambitious faculty scholarship, and cultivating a national reputation. One of the school's proudest accomplishments during this period was a 47-position jump in *US News & World Report's* rankings. There was also a focus to elevate the school's traditional core values into a student-centered, experiential-based urban institution.

Signs of the school's 20th century roots are visible in one of the main quads of the campus, which is lined by buildings that date back to the 1930s. These structures represent the austerity of the depression era, echoing design elements of the earlier highly embellished art deco style, but are more reserved and less ornate. Going beyond the main grassy quad, one will encounter almost many more buildings. Various architectural styles and finishes can

be found as one follows winding tree-lined pathways and small side streets. One may even arrive on the edge of the campus, where its crown jewel is now located—a stunning new complex that was named one of the most beautiful buildings in the city. Straddling the seam of the campus with the adjacent residential neighborhood, the building was designed with a deceptively low profile from certain angles so that it could blend with its residential neighbors. The exterior is clad with materials such as wood paneling, steel ribbons, and sweeping walls of glass breaking up its edifice. The interior reveals a massive central atrium, terraces on each level, and an abundance of natural light. Students, faculty, and staff can often be seen lounging, studying, or meeting in one of the building’s many open “living room” like spaces.

The two sample sites present variation in several factors such as campus size, geographic location, type of transformational change, and likelihood of involvement of academic and non-academic employees. Such variation, per Mertens (2014), enables the researcher to analyze what is unique about each case and what may be common between them.

Based on these profiles, informal informational conversations were conducted in March of 2018 with two individuals, each of which are familiar with one site’s recent history. These individuals were drawn from my professional network. The interviews helped narrow the case site profiles to the following potential cases of transformational change that is being attempted at each institution. These interviews also confirmed the potential of convergence being utilized and early bindings for the cases. For GMCU, the transformation is about the campus taking on an identity as “Honors University” that serves a diverse, urban student

body. We also spoke about the openness of the campus's strategic planning process for widespread feedback, a culture of robust shared governance, a president that builds internal bridges, and the advancement of student success through inclusive excellence. For HU, our conversation focused on the institution's transformation to offer experiential education at a scale which would propel the school in national rankings. Additionally, we spoke about each academic college formerly owning their co-ops which are now more centrally controlled, the overall globalization of co-ops, top-down energy for "robot-proof education," the development of a change agenda for a next generation EIP.

Participant Selection

For these cases, I used my professional network to identify key informants at each site. Key informants included senior administrators as well as professional employees. I asked key informants to help identify other participants for the study at the site, thereby using what Mertens (2014) called "snowball" or "chain sampling."

For each interview, or link in the chain, my last question was, "are there other senior administrators of faculty/staff you would recommend I talk to?" Sometimes this question sparked further conversation about my aim to talk to individuals who were closely involved in the transformation. In some interviews this led to further conversation about specific roles of certain individuals, "heavy lifters" as one interviewee put it, that were often tapped to bring about change that I needed to speak to, or people who have practices that could be considered transformational or particularly "convergent," though no participant used that word. I would then conduct background research on referred individuals reviewing their responsibilities and histories that were publicly accessible. Some were ruled out as being

beyond the binding of the cases. Some were ruled out for having left the institution years earlier and were working at other institutions, as such temporal disconnect was seen as a risk to data integrity. In some instances, individuals' names came up in multiple interviews, so these individuals were prioritized for interviewing. For referrals that only came up in one interview, participants were interviewed with respect to the greatest degree what of Mertens (2014) called "maximum variation sampling for participants"—that is, achieving the greatest diversity within the participant group. I attempted to have a balance of senior administrators and professional employees; participants with long and short histories at the case study site; faculty as well as staff; in addition to well as tenured faculty and non-tenured faculty.

In some situations, interviewees did not refer me to a person, but to a program or office that they felt was transformational or convergent in its approach to change. In these instances, I reviewed the area's staff, their profiles, and contacted individuals with a focus on interviews that would aid the maximum variation sampling I desired. While there were a few dead ends including non-responses from referrals, no additional names being offered from an interviewer, or names offered that were already interviewed, this level of intentionality provided a pool of interviewees that by in large could speak with specificity about the transformational and the convergence approaches of this study, though again, they were never referred to with that term.

In terms of the number of participants, Kezar's original 2012 study on convergence reported interviewing 165 employees at five institutions, which is approximately thirty-three individuals per site. As Kezar's study was part of a larger project, this study interviewed twenty-five individuals between the two sites, resulting in sufficient coverage.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was accomplished through three methods: document analysis, individual interviews, and observations.

Document Analysis

Documents are helpful in gaining a sense of the background that exists for a phenomenon. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described two types of documents, items that are prepared for official reasons (e.g., meeting minutes, budgets, and white papers) and items that are prepared for personal reasons (e.g., diaries, field notes, and letters). For this project, official record-type documents were utilized such as monographs, marketing webpages, mission statements, white papers, press articles, operational documents, meeting minutes, and reports. As these documents were all extant texts, meaning they exist prior to the research and therefore require a contextual understanding or interpretation (Mertens, 2014). A full list of the 36 documents that were analyzed can be found in table 4 of Appendix B. This table also documents the type of document, date added to NVIVO – a proxy for when the first coding pass of the document was completed, the document’s original publication date, and each document’s source. Document analysis was the first form of data gathered to help shape the binding of the case through a better understanding of each case’s unit of analysis (e.g., the transformations). Document collection and analysis continued during interviews and observations as participants referenced documents that were relevant.

Interviews

The second method was individual interviews. These interviews were semistructured (Mertens, 2014), which allows for the researcher to use predetermined questions that are

open ended and can be followed up with additional questions that may deviate from the predetermined questions. Both senior administrators and professional employees were interviewed (see appendix A for a semistructured interview guide). The guide had five sections: desired change approach, seeking to gain perspective of that interviewee's understanding of the institutional transformation; the change approach, which sought to gather change strategies; the change context, which served to investigate enabling and sustaining factors outside of change agent direct control that positively or negatively influenced their convergence attempts; and furthering the sample, where names of colleagues that could be helpful to this project were solicited. While the guide was not altered, early interviews focused more on the desired change and change context to understand the case and its context, while later interviews focused more on change approaches and clarifying reflections that were being formulated during post interviewee memos. Focus came in the form of follow-up questions to those included in the guide as well as informal probes. Each interview was approximately 30 minutes long, with a few going longer as participants desired (table 5, Appendix B). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Most interviews were held via phone, with a few in-person during site visits in spaces deemed as a normal context for the participant, such as an office. In total, a little more than 12 hours of audio data was collected, with GMCU accounting for 6.5 hours of the data and Hill 5.5 hours. Interviews were discontinued for each site at the point at which saturation was detected, (i.e., data was collected that had already been collected in other interviews).

Observations

The third and final data collection method was observation. Observation was used to register behaviors as they naturally occurred. Events that were observed included campus wide town–hall style gatherings and a project meeting of senior administrators and professional employees (Table 6, Appendix B). There are several roles a researcher can have during the observation process. Mertens (2014) described four such roles: complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer, and complete participant. For this project, I sought to be a complete observer, documenting what I see, blending into the background, as to avoid any undue influence on the change process as it unfolds at each site. However, it is important to acknowledge that there was occasion when participants asked for my thoughts or what I am learning about their organization. Engaging with such questions shifted me as the researcher from an observer to a participant role. While I attempted to limit such a shift, occasional shifts to such a role were reasonable given the prolonged engagement with the sites and natural curiosity by participants about how they can improve their change processes through involvement in the study. During the observations, to provide thick description, I documented in field notes the setting of my observation, the participants and their interactions, participant behavior, body language, language that highlights an attempt to utilize convergence, and observing what does not happen (Mertens, 2014). These field notes were then coded as to be included in the general analysis for the project. Observations occurred in the final third of data collected to punctuate any contextual observations that had come up during document analysis and interviews. Observations aided in recognizing change approach strategies that were identified during document analysis and interviews.

Chapters four and five include descriptive reports of the findings for each case's attempt at institutional transformation. I aimed to present what Stake (1995) called a "naturalistic generalization" (p. 75) using thick description. Chapter six will discuss the analysis of the data. While analysis will be discussed at length in the next section, this chapter shall summarily address the research questions and complete cross case analysis.

Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique used was based on Saldaña's (2009) streamlined Codes-to-Theory model for qualitative inquiry. While the goal of this project was not to generate theory, this model provided a technique to move from data to basic codes, categorical codes, and finally themes (see figure 3 on next page). The strategy began with open coding (i.e., deductive and open coding); which was entered into via a pre-step not included in the Saldaña model of sensitizing concepts. Deductive codes were based on this study's conceptual framework and findings from the literature. Inductive coding generated new concepts not previously captured by the conceptual framework and existing literature. Open coding was followed by axial coding to generate categorical codes. Finally, thematic coding sought to generate thematic codes. Saldaña's model also presented the ability to translate themes into theory. While not the goal of this project, themes were able to inform the development of a new convergence model, which will be presented in chapter 6.

In terms of the data analysis procedure, analysis occurred for documents, transcripts of individual interviews and field notes from observations. As transcripts, field notes, and

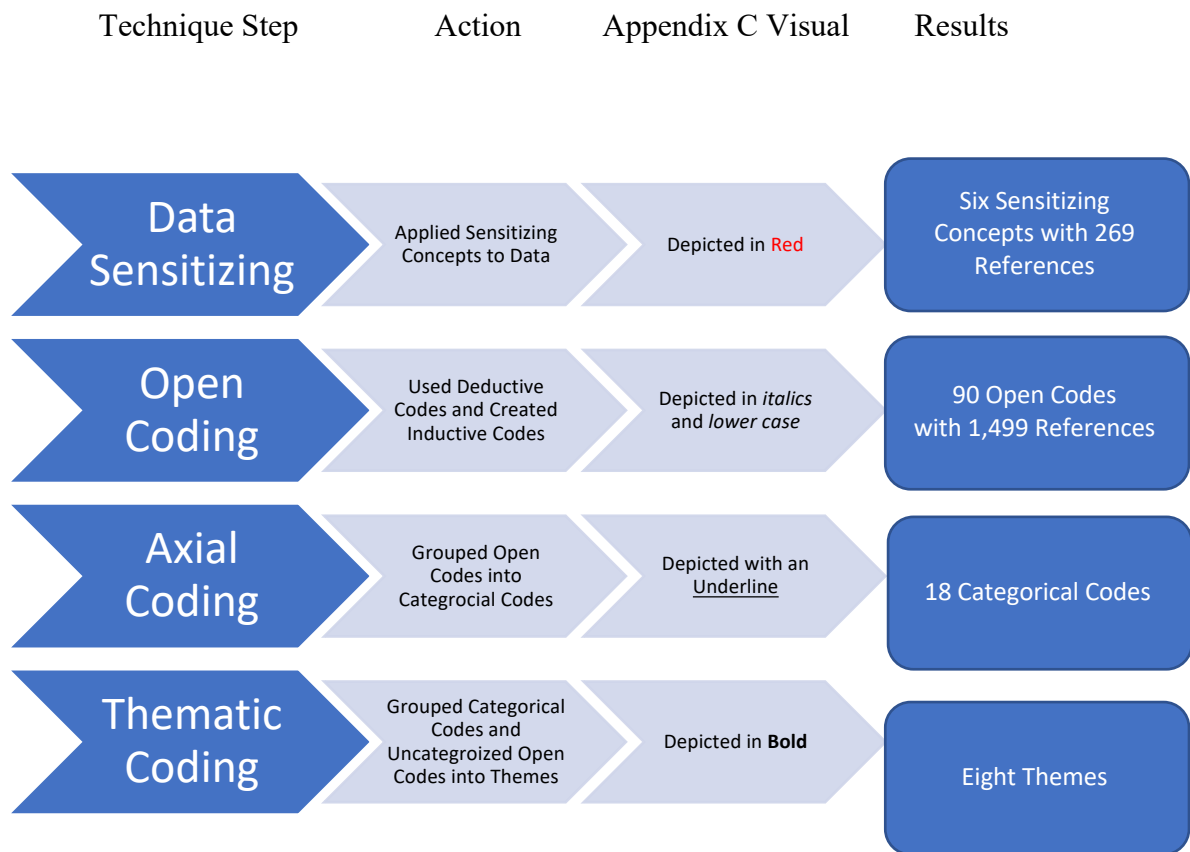


Figure 3. Analysis Technique Summary
 Data analysis used the constant comparison technique, with four steps, here represented by the deep blue arrows.

relevant documents were collected, they were loaded them into NVIVO. Throughout coding, constant comparison analysis was used to continuously compare data to the framework, as well as codes and the framework to the data. Patterning occurred, as did a matrix coding query to compare cases. While no advanced statistical analysis occurred, basic counting provided a sense of commonalty of the codes as well as further evidence of patterns. Results of each phase of coding, including connecting thematic codes to the conceptual framework, are presented in tables 7, 8, and 9 of Appendix C.

Deductive Coding Using a Conceptual Framework

Deductive coding was guided by the conceptual framework previously visualized in Figure 2 of Chapter 2. This framework considers Kezar's (2012) model of convergence, which was focused on the convergence of professional employees with senior administrators, at institutions that were not expressly engaging in institutional transformation. It also adds concepts from the literature that may be present when the scope of analysis is expanded to include senior administrators (e.g., top-down strategies, power, organizational learning, collaborative leadership, and group dynamics). For this study, deductive coding offers the opportunity to confirm, complicate, or contradict convergence, when senior administrators are more fully considered alongside professional employees, as well as when the type of change desired is expressly institutional transformation.

As the conceptual framework includes many different concepts, sensitizing concepts were used to make the beginning attempts of the deductive coding more manageable. According to Bowen (2006), sensitizing concepts offer ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding data as a point of departure for analysis— they serve as an analytical frame. Coupled with constant comparison and inductive coding, they can provide the building blocks for deeper understanding of a social phenomenon. As this study's primary focus is on convergence itself and its inner workings, sensitizing concepts were selected that could inform an understanding of the core phenomenon. Those concepts are (a) interest overlap, (b) strategies, (c) power, (d) direction of interaction, and (e) organizational learning. Interest overlap was selected based on importance of interests coming together between the two

groups (Kezar, 2012), therefore, understanding if this occurs as Kezar described or at a different degree of magnitude (e.g., a higher level of shared

Interests may be necessary beyond a merging of interests) when transformation is being attempted could be helpful. Strategies are important as they will form the backbone of convergence as a viable tool for practitioners, especially for senior administrators as these have not previously been documented for convergence. Effective use or abuse of power may have a particularly important role in convergence, as usurpation of professional employee change initiatives by senior administrators (i.e., a form of abuse of power) was identified by Kezar (2012) as a reason for convergence failure. The direction of the interaction will be conceptually telling; while the joining of these two groups forms the foundation for convergence, the nuances of the joining may be more complicated, positioning one group over another in a more active role at various stages of the transformational process. Understanding how organizational learning occurs at different levels of the organization and its potential role in seeding convergence could help support an established use of convergence for transformational change. Using these sensitizing concepts will provide an orientation to the data as it is collected, guiding inductive coding, which may bring forth new concepts not previously identified in the literature review or scholarship on this topic. This in turn may also enable other known concepts to be applied through the framework, or additional literature not previously reviewed via deductive coding that were not included in the sensitizing concepts.

Inductive Coding

Inductive coding began after sensitizing concepts were applied (Charmaz, 2006). This led to the creation of seventy-three inductive codes. Inductive coding has the potential to add to the understanding about convergence as an approach for organizational change by identifying new, previously unknown information, reaching beyond the study's conceptual framework. For example, the literature review chapter of this document identified power, organizational learning, and group facilitation as potential concepts for use by senior administrators seeking to promote convergence. Inductive coding may confirm, complicate, or contradict the role of these concepts. Such results, much like those of the deductive coding process, will contribute to a fuller understanding of convergence.

Axial Coding

Once open coding was complete, the study engaged in axial coding by clumping codes into code groups (Charmaz, 2006), yielding eighteen categorical codes. These broader categorical codes were entered into NVIVO with capital letters, enabling a nesting of open codes below categorical codes (Charmaz, 2006). Some open codes were distinct enough that no clustering with other codes was possible (e.g., relationships, resources, and spotlight). These open codes were temporarily clumped under the category of "Uncategorized."

Thematic Coding

Finally, categorical codes and open codes temporarily labeled as uncategorized were used to generate themes. Rossman and Rallis (2012) described themes as phrases that describes a subtle and tacit process, a higher level of categories that are more general. This procedure moved all uncategorized codes under themes, eliminating the need for the

uncategorized categorical code. The result was eight themes: bottom-up strategies, convergence background dynamics, elements of a transformation, institutional background, key analysis concepts, participants, strategies irrespective of directionality, and top down strategies. These themes plus their nest categorical as well as open codes were then used to create thick description for this study's findings chapters.

Measures to Promote Trustworthiness

Unlike quantitative research, which has a concern for generalizability, validity of measures, and reliability of measures, qualitative research is concerned with the trustworthiness of the research. This study will promote trustworthiness through three measures: credibility, transferability, and dependability.

Credibility

Mertens (2014) highlighted the importance for qualitative research to have credibility. Credibility can be promoted is through prolonged and substantial engagement. As there are no formal guidelines on what constitutes a proper level of engagement with a phenomenon under investigation, this study engaged with data collection over the course of approximately thirteen months. Engagement with the data occurred between June of 2018 and June of 2019, representing a full year of active engagement with sites. Data that was collected spanned between 1996 to present, though most data came from the mid-2000s to present. One visit to each site occurred. Credibility can also be promoted through triangulation, or the verification of information collected through multiple sources for consistency of findings across the sources (Mertens, 2014). This study employed triangulation by checking information across multiple sources (i.e., document analysis, interviews at each case site, and observations).

Finally, the process of member checking was used to bolster credibility. Member checks enable research participants to review and verify emerging thoughts. Participants were informed at the time of their interview that they would have the opportunity to member check the results of their interview. Within a reasonable period, as dictated by the length of the transcription process, each participant was emailed a copy of an initially coded transcription and memo that resulted from their interview. The memo also included a brief masked profile for the participant as well as their pseudonym so that they could comment on their presentation in the study. Some participants asked for different pseudonyms to reflect personal preferences, which were accommodated. None requested changes to their biographies. Participants were asked to provide any written or oral comments about the memo or transcript within two weeks of receiving the member check email. Most declined, however a few noted transcription errors or wished to clarify statements they had made. All suggestions and general comments regarding transcriptions made during the member check process were made and documented into a final memo on that interview.

Transferability

An additional measure to promote trustworthiness is transferability, which is that findings can be applied to another situation (Mertens, 2014). To achieve transferability, the reader of the research must be able to ascertain the degree of similarity between the study site and their specific comparative context (e.g., the situation they are located within). Yin (2009) argued that multiple cases can strengthen transferability, and therefore this study's use of two case sites will help in this regard. Additionally, Mertens (2014) contended that transferability is achieved through thick description, which is providing of sufficient detail about the case so

that readers can comprehend the complexities and nuances of each research site. A thorough background on each site was created during the data collection process and is presented in the findings chapters. Details such as time, place, content, and culture are relevant for thick description and were recorded through memo writing following interviews and field notes captured during observations.

Dependability

Finally, the study utilized a consideration for the dependability of the qualitative research process employed by the researcher to promote trustworthiness. Yin (2009) argued that for case study research, there is an importance of maintaining a detailed protocol of the steps involved in the research process. Using NVIVO, I documented each step in the process to create an audit trail. This audit trail documented decisions related to sampling at each site, the coding process, and interpretation of data as it was captured in memos. Corresponding NVIVO documentation for these documents demarks timestamps upon addition as well as the creation of codes. Additionally, as previously discussed, post-interview reflections via memo writing and detailed field notes were used to document research thoughts about interviews and observations that did not come across in interview transcripts. At the end of data collection thirty-five memos were logged in NVIVO. Additionally, twenty-four notes were made directly on documents with the same purpose as a memo but connected to that document for ease of researcher reference. Though memos were not coded, they were reviewed periodically during data analysis to refresh or reevaluate topical considerations as necessary. All memos were also formally reviewed once thematic code had been identified to ensure memos supported the thematic codes.

CHAPTER 4

GMCU FINDINGS

The next two chapters will detail the findings for each case study site. Chapter four contains the findings from GMCU and chapter five the findings from Hill University. Chapter six, discussion, will include a cross case analysis. Each of the findings chapters is organized using the same structure: institutional background, a review of the elements of that case's institutional transformation, reporting of the convergence background dynamics present at each site, and reporting on the convergence strategies found.

Institutional Profile

For much of its history, GMCU was viewed as secondary to the system's flagship campus. GMCU was seen, as academic advising staff member, Travis, described it, as being "a regional campus ... in addition to the flagship campus ... or as a branch of the flagship." One example of this stepchild status is that until the 1980s, the campus was led by an administrator who either oversaw the campus in addition to another area public campus in the system or was in administration at the system's flagship. One long-serving staff member said that prior to the arrival of GMCU's first dedicated chief executive, who was not from the flagship, that leadership portrayed an attitude of managing expectations, and refraining from

thinking big. This internal attitude translated to an external perception that GMCU was a “no-name commuter campus.”

Becoming an Honors University

The “no-name” narrative started to shift when the campus’s first true president arrived in the mid-1980s. This president sparked a vision to be a research university serving the urban center that the campus is adjacent to. This first president also recruited a young STEM scientist by the name of Fabian to the campus’s provost office. By the 1990s, Fabian ascended to be GMCU’s second president. It was at that time that the campus’s historic commitment to openness and access began a new chapter. The connection of Fabian to the campus’s transformation is difficult to overstate. Many interviewees spoke of Fabian as critical to the transformation. He championed a bold vision for the campus, to go beyond access and commit to the success of all students. This was a challenge given that the campus had a track record of a six-year graduation rate of around 40%.

President Fabian regarded poor outcomes of the early 1990s as attributable to the campus’s definition of quality. At that time, the campus largely judged quality on the pedigree of the faculty, who came from ivy and Big 10 university training and held students to standards that were not in alignment with the backgrounds of GMCU’s student body. Lynn, a senior administrator for the campus, said of the campus’s pre-honors university days that, “students did not always fair well and succeed at GMCU because there were these very high academic standards and rigor.” John, the campus’s chief technology officer (CTO), and alumnus of the campus, commented on the student success struggles of the pre-Honors University period as a time when, “The faculty had really high standards, they thought

nothing of failing two-thirds of the class.” In part this can be explained by the openness of the admissions process that, for much of the school’s pre-Honors University days, was, as one staff member described, “more or less taking people who showed up.” A lack of consideration for student’s preparation for a high-standards campus was compounded by a campus struggle with a STEM pedagogical culture that saw itself as having a gatekeeper role. This according to one GMCU senior administrator resulted in the “black kids calling the place racist, white kids calling it cold.”

Changing people’s perceptions of GMCU took a transformation of the campus (see Appendix D an abridged timeline of the institution’s transformation). While it is difficult to fully capture a concept as large as an institution’s self-identity, GMCU’s Honors University status can be seen as model of excellence that is built upon inclusivity and connects innovative teaching and learning, research across disciplines, and civic engagement. It is about student success for students of diverse backgrounds whose lives can be transformed by college success and who are often not served with intentionality at other, more mature institutions. It is about a faculty that are committed to undergraduate teaching and mentoring. It is a community that embraces nerdy as cool, as evidenced by the campus proudly displaying chess team trophies in their food court, and a pride in the absence of big-time football, which is no small statement for campus with a southern leaning, where big-time football is often a driver of campus culture. Moreover, it is about professional and education outcomes that shatter barriers for traditionally white STEM fields.

The identity of the Honors University began with a marketing consulting firm in the early 1990s. Their work included focus groups with perspective students and interviews with

institutional leadership. As part of this process, a provost at the time came up with the honors university language.¹ Lynn from University Advancement described the idea, “the notion was students in high school understand what honors courses are. It was for people who were focused, who were serious, who wanted to put in the extra effort.” While there already was an officially designated Honors College in the state, the unusual juxtaposition of honors with university was very appealing to senior administrators.

At the initial stage, the honors university was implemented as a tag line. Lynn, who was close to the implementation process, described the tag line as aspirational. When it was first introduced, it was not well-received by many of the faculty as there was limited community consultation and buy-in. Daisy, a faculty member at the time of the roll-out, wrote a letter to President Fabian expressing concern about the institution self-proclaiming such a status. She recalled writing of the worry that campus had “not discussed what it means” and had “not worked toward truly being an Honors University.” A colleague in administration recalled Daisy’s letter as highlighting that the campus did not offer enough to enough students to label itself authentically an Honors University.

At this point, senior administration could have moved away from the tag line, ending the campaign and shifting to something that would have sat better with the faculty. However, senior administration heard this critique, and made it a focus of a taskforce to more fully flesh out GMCU as an Honors University. The taskforce’s report said of the honors university concept that “GMCU lags behind the many institutions providing their new

¹ Note -- a lower-case mention of the honors university will be used to denote the concept of a marketing campaign, while an uppercase Honors University mention will represent the fuller campus identity, which developed later in the campus transformation.

students with the possibility of participating in the intellectual excitement, personal growth, and collaborative learning.” It was that moment that several GMCU interviewees point to as the starting point of the honors university tag becoming more than just words—the formal beginning of an institutional transformation.

Out of that taskforce came a recommendation to create a dean of undergraduate education to build the Honors University experience for all undergraduates, including freshman seminars and a robust undergraduate research program. Daisy was appointed the first dean of undergraduate education and built a Division of Undergraduate Education. Fabian said of this appointment, “I knew here is somebody [Daisy] who needs to be part of us to make us better and who has this masterful command of the language because much of the question about culture or about identity or about brand, will involve the language that people can buy into and say ‘Wow, that captures who we are.’”

The work that transpired to become the Honors University that the campus is today had a dramatic affect in transforming the campus. Now the campus has a national reputation. Of the Honors University, Lynn said, “our position in the competitive landscape has really risen, we are definitely sitting in a different place.” Additionally, outcomes have dramatically improved, such as a 38% increase enrollment of degree and non-degree seeking students that reported as Black or African American between 2002-03 and 2018-19, six-year graduation for Black or African American students has been constant at 66% since 2003, which is six points higher than the national average for all students and twenty-five points higher than the national rate for Black or African American students. The school now consistently ranks as one of the top five campuses in the country for baccalaureate-origin institutions for Black

science and engineering doctorate recipients. It produces more Black or African American MD-PhD graduates than top ivy league institutions. GMCU has also been honored several times with top-10 mentions on *US News and World Reports'* lists of "Most Innovative Universities" and "Best Undergraduate Teaching, National Universities."

In April of 2019, GMCU officially retired the Honors University marketing campaign. While the tagline has been sunset, its spirit of student success lives on and can be seen in a new campaign as well as the actions of faculty and staff, including a session at the summer 2019 orientation for all new first-year students titled "Introduction to an Honors University."

As a campus, GMCU is little more than 50 years old. Karl, who serves in academic affairs at GMCU, reflected on the campus's age as "a young university and the malleability and ability to pivot [that] has brought people together. Compared to other places where you just think they're too steeped in their own histories and culture and long legacies." Perhaps this is the critical takeaway from the campus's history. It is unapologetically a start-up, hardworking campus that is connected to a founding of doing things differently. A campus that is not "caught up in tradition" as Karl mentioned in his interview. This lack of a preoccupation with tradition, likely enabled the campus's institutional transformation, further analyzed in the subsequent discussion.

Elements of GMCU's Transformation

This study will look in depth at the development of the Honors University by GMCU. Structuring that analysis will be the previously established framework from the literature

review of (a) occurring over a period of time, (b) deep and pervasive, (c) affecting institutional culture, (d) intentional, and (e) facilitated by collaboration.

Occurred Over a Period of Time

The transformation at GMCU occurred over two decades, between 1990 and 2019. However, it is difficult to precisely bind such a complicated and long-lasting process, therefore, these dates are noted with a caveat. Several interviews pointed to the Honors University taskforce of the late 1990s that was published in 2000 as the official start of the transformation. And while this could have been defined as the starting place for the transformation, doing so would have missed important enabling steps in the early and mid-nineties that helped shape the culture and thinking that would later lead to the structures, programs, and processes that ultimately bore out the Honors University in earnest. See appendix D for an abridged timeline of key transformational milestones.

Deep and Pervasive

The pervasiveness of change at GMCU has been widespread, it was not isolated within a unit, rather it spanned boundaries and touched many of the organization's units. The transformation began with the academic core through success programs. It then expanded to pedagogical changes in Academic Affairs as well as curricular changes, including the elimination of academic programs that were underperforming or deemed to not be mission critical, freeing up resources to fund institutional strategy changes. It continued to expand into the development of academic support services and enrichment programs such as the addition of "living learning communities", supplemental instruction, undergraduate research opportunities, and a robust Honors College. Along the way, changes came in Enrollment

Management for admissions standards. This raised the bar so that students who were previously admitted but needed remediation, something the campus struggled to effectively provide and therefore led to high failure rates for students, were no longer eligible for admission. It also extended to IT, which developed numerous tools to support student success, as well as a data warehouse and reporting structure that was open to the campus community. This enabled unprecedented analysis and modeling of student success, which were ultimately leveraged for decision support. It even included excellence for the school's more recently developed research enterprise, vis-à-vis the campus's more recent addition of a research park and a graduate student experience. The pervasiveness also included the development of a faculty support office. Student Affairs also participated with the addition of new programming that aimed to tie co-curriculars to the academic experience more closely through service.

A campus construction project for a new academic building, that resulted in small classrooms for active learning, is a strong example of how deep the transformation has penetrated the campus. This project took scores of people and involved countless decisions. Yet throughout design, construction, and likely several layers of decision makers, some of these personnel may not have even worked on the campus, yet made decisions that kept the goal of student success in mind, by designing active classrooms that would mean fewer students who were able to enroll in those classes, but would have a higher quality educational experience and likely therefore a higher chance for student success. This requires a common understanding of the Honors University goal, what it means to the community as a whole, and what it would mean in a particular area and specifically the decision to use space in a

precise manner for a type of pedagogy favorable to the Honors University work. Lynn said of the Honors University concept that “decisions were made through [an Honors University] lens, you know if we’re an Honors University, we should be this or we should be that.” This speaks to the affect the concept had on underlying concepts and practices that would lead to decisions, which ultimately culminated in the Honors University of today.

Affected Institutional Culture

Culture, as previously discussed, is changed through modifying underlying assumptions and overt institutional behaviors, processes, and structures. At GMCU, a cultural change to eschew the “second best, accepting the status quo” culture took place over the entirety of the transformation.

Ethic of Collective Responsibility. A prominent dimension of the culture was an ethic of collective responsibility. In many of the interviews, participants spoke about their commitment to the institution, the mission, the transformation, and the students. A newspaper article quoted a GMCU dean on the subject of responsibility. “When we look in the mirror we don’t, you know, blame the students, we don’t blame external aspects, we look at ourselves first and see what we can change.” They also spoke of their duty to their colleagues. Daisy spoke of this as an ethic of care, both for the students and for the important work that the campus was engaged in. Fabian said, “people take ownership of GMCU.” Others such as Damien, who works in Student Affairs, spoke of it through a vibrant shared governance arrangement. He said of shared governance that it is “a longstanding, deeply embedded tradition.”

Can Do Attitude. Similar to the ethic of collective responsibility is a cultural, can-do attitude. Sadie, a STEM faculty member, said of this attitude “there’s a special GMCU thing where people start with ‘yes,’ ‘how can I,’ or ‘is there some way that I can satisfy your demand and even though I don’t have any more money’ ... there is this feeling of, ‘is there some way we can make this work’.”

According to Karl there is a “sense of urgency and of grittiness to ‘we’ll figure out how to make this happen.’” This attitude often crosses over to institutional support for experimentation. Daisy illustrated this in saying “there was permission to experiment. There was permission to take a risk. There was even permission to fail if you learned from it quickly and nobody was hurt.”

It appeared this can-do attitude presented a challenge for the campus as Karl also mentioned the speed of change as being a liability. “We’re going to get the ball over the touchdown line and then we’ll figure out, did we do it?” He went on to say that after completing the task and reviewing how it was accomplished there may be a discovery of “well, we could have done it differently or someone got injured on the play, but boy, we really scored the touchdown.”

Comfort Level with Truth. A final element of the culture, which has developed during the transformation, was a comfort level with truth. People were candid in speaking about campus weaknesses. People during interviews largely did not complain about weaknesses. Rather they talked of shortcomings as challenges to be overcome with candor and hope. This was underscored by Fabian who said of the campus that its culture includes empowerment to use evidence to critically evaluate its progress. According to the president

people are encouraged to “look in the mirror and to say, ‘You suck, we suck.’ [when actions or outcomes are substandard] to say, ‘Yes, we do this really well’ ... to look at the strengths and weaknesses and to listen to other points of view, all that’s a part of the transformational culture.”

These elements of the campus’s culture are vital elements that mediated the transformation that occurred at GMCU. During Karl’s interview he reflected on the campus’s cultural change and noted that “[w]e just celebrated our 50-year anniversary. There’s elements of an exciting mobile, malleable kind of a culture here where there isn’t a buy-in to a long history of bureaucracy or standards or a legacy of how we do things.” Though it is possible these elements have been part of the campus culture predating the Honors University transformation, the frequency and robustness has increased over time as the data revealed more frequent mention of the concepts the closer to GMCU’s present day the discussion got.

Intentionality

By its nature, a convergent transformation must have a driving intentionality. In the case of GMCU, the strongest example of intentionality was the Honors University Taskforce report, titled *Educating Undergraduates in a Public Honors Research University in the Twenty-First Century*, which was published in 2000. A group of faculty and staff from across the university were charged over the 1999-2000 academic year to more fully develop the Honors University concept. This charge led to several recommendations, which were planful steps to advance the Honors University identity. Those recommendations included establishment of an honor code, establishment of positions in key areas (e.g., a staff leader

for study abroad, a staff leader for undergraduate support and enrichment), the enhancement of first year seminars, the development of first year success courses, and a “writing in the disciplines” program. The intentionality of the taskforce report was carried on to GMCU’s strategic plan, *Strategic Framework for 2016*, which was released in 2003. These were structured plans with timelines, resource allocation guidelines, as well as targets and metrics, all of which are indicative of great institutional intentionality.

Convergence Background Dynamics

For clarity of reporting, this study designates certain concepts for the change approach piece of the conceptual framework as “convergence background dynamics.” Upon reviewing the data, organization of findings clustering under these concepts seemed to be a helpful entry point into the institution’s convergence. Therefore, I will share these concepts prior to looking at specific strategies undertaken by professional employees and senior administrators. Three of these concepts were found in Kezar (2012): interaction pathways, direction of interactions, and interest overlap. One emerged from the interview and observation data (i.e., a critically important goal and professional employee ideas). Each will be described using examples found in the data.

Interaction Pathways

Patterning of collected data indicated a linear, sequential interaction pathway (see figure 4 on next page). This pathway was relevant for the launch of the honors university branding, initially a top-down change effort. It was also relevant to subsequent changes in practice by professional employees, which was a bottom-up change effort meant to help realize the Honors University identity.

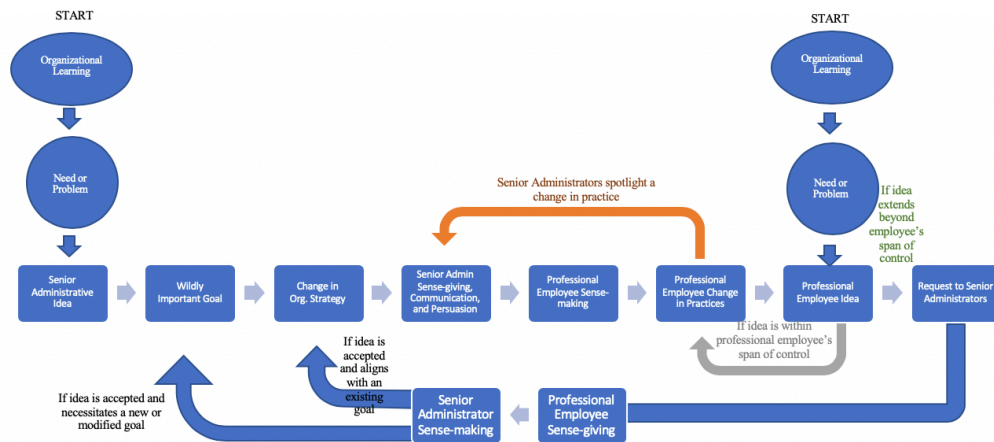


Figure 4. GMCU Interaction Pathway

At GMCU, convergence interaction started with senior administrators doing organizational learning about perception of their institution. This led to the formation of a problem, of the institution not being perceived well. Senior administrators had the idea to re-brand using an honors university tag line. This led to a Critically Important Goal of repositioning the university as an honors university. Organizational strategy changed to support this marketing, sense-giving attempted to persuade professional employees to support this change. Professional employees worked to make sense of this, in some cases changing their practices to better align with the tag line. However, some did not agree with the tag-line; one faculty member wrote a letter to the presidents saying it was out of touch with the current state of GMCU. This became a request to senior administrators to realize the honors university promise, which resulted in a sense-giving and making, and change to the CIG, starting the process over again. Convergence could also be initiated by professional employees through their own organizational learning and identification of a need or problem. The data from GMCU substantiated Kezar's supposition that directionality to convergence exists and clarified it within the transformational agenda context. At GMCU, convergence interaction was bi-directional and iterative.

The idea of an honors university brought into focus a strategy for GMCU. Senior administrators communicated this strategy to professional employees and aimed to give structure to the concept as a marketing campaign to better position the campus. Professional employees engaged in sense-making on the topic, which for many was fraught with inconsistencies in regard to the campus's lack of experiences, resources, and student success to back-up an institutional boast that rang hollow. Some faculty such as Daisy began to adjust their professional practice to be more student-centered, a popular interpretation of the honors university branding. For Daisy, this self-reflection resulted in the notion to make the campaign something more than just a marketing slogan, and to realize the potential of the

campus to honor undergraduate students with the attention given at more prestigious institutions. Other faculty also were doing similar reflections, “brown bag”-style informal meetings were held on the topic, round table discussions were had, and deliberations on syllabi and curriculum occurred. Upon invitation, Daisy brought this idea to the President’s Council, where she made a persuasive request for the campus to seriously discuss what being an Honors University meant. She engaged in sense-giving on the state of the honors university strategy in its marketing-only approach. Senior administrators then engaged in their own sense-making, and were faced with two options, change the critically important goal or change the strategy. Senior administrators ultimately chose to stay the course with the goal but modify the strategy to make the honors university more than a marketing ploy. They did so through a number of initiatives including a strategic planning process and elevating Daisy to a position of senior administration, responsible for building out the mechanism to honor the individual potential she respected and implemented in her own classroom.

Through the next decade and beyond, numerous interactions could be charted on the topic of the Honors University transformation. These interactions consistently share a common beginning with organizational learning, detection of a problem or need, and then an idea from senior administrators or professional employees to address that problem or need. The interactions reliably then moved into a convergence process, with the most intense convergence occurring at the point when one group is providing sense-giving and the other is attempting to make sense of the idea or change in strategy.

Direction of Interaction

Kezar's model for convergence suggested that the interaction associated with convergence can occur in either direction (e.g., professional employees converge with senior administrators or vice versa). The data from GMCU substantiated Kezar's supposition that directionality to convergence exists and clarified it within the transformational agenda context.

At GMCU, convergence interaction was bi-directional cyclical. That is, effort to complete a transformational initiative was neither completely top-down nor bottom-up. What played out at GMCU was a cycle where energy travels from one group to the other and then back, in a complete cycle. In practice, this idea of a complete cycle fits well with the directionality of GMCU's convergence, as it was not just about one group trying to work with the other, but rather both groups working through the cycle, sometimes in multiple iterations, to move the transformational agenda forward. If one group did not do its part in completing the cycle, then the transformational initiative was not advanced. Moreover, the groups did not necessarily work side by side, in lock step during convergence. Such a workflow would more likely be labeled as collaboration. Rather, the convergence that occurred was as CTO John described it a more "organic process" that ebbed and flowed, including points when there was no interaction of the groups (e.g., during the organizational learning phase) and at other times when both groups actively interacting (e.g., during sense-making and giving).

The germination of the honors university is an example of senior administrator-initiated convergence. The idea of a new marketing positionality for the campus was a top-

down idea that senior administrators exercised sense-giving to professional staff as part of the marketing's roll out. This was the energy initiating a cycle. Staff made sense of this change in strategy. They then had their own idea, which resulted in a request to senior administrators to change the institutional strategy in order to make the honors university concept more than marketing. This request completed the cycle, representing a complete bidirectional cycle of convergence.

Damien, from the Campus Life & Community Engagement Office provided another example of directionality of convergence, this one starting with professional employees:

We were imagining, how could you deepen the civic learning and democratic engagement efforts across the institution? We came up with a plan, an idea, and started to float it through what turned into an 18-month organizing process with all kinds of constituencies around the university, through which the core idea was modified significantly. Ultimately, we made a proposal to the provost to get some funding to make this happen. The funding was used to provide grants to applicants who could be students, faculty, or staff, developing innovation from civic engagement. At that point, the provost supported it, partly because it had so much support from across the institution and probably because the provost thought it was a good idea and wanted to support this grassroots initiative.

The initial idea came from Damien, a professional employee. It then moved into a small group of professional employees modifying their own practices, when they existed within their span of control – (i.e., the 18-month organizing process, represented in figure 4 by the gray text and arrow). Once the proposal reached the point of needing additional resources

(i.e., the point at which the employee's idea extended beyond their control, represented by green text in figure 4) Damien approached the provost to request a change in strategy to fund this idea. The provost's support represents a return of energy in the cycle, as the plan required a change in resource allocation. The return part of the cycle, according to Damien "legitimized this informal process" that he and his grassroots colleagues took to bring the proposal forward.

Damien's example begs the question, why did the provost support this initiative? The answer was the overlapping of interests. The idea in question was to develop a new civic learning and democratic engagement program that would provide students opportunities to do service learning. This aligned with the senior administrator goal of an Honors University, which President Fabian referenced during his interview as having a student experience that is rooted in service. This idea of an example of interest overlap driving convergence will be explored further in the next section.

Interest Overlap

Kezar (2012) described interest overlap as, a coming together of the interests of professional employees and senior administrators, happening at key moments during convergence. In the case of GMCU, there were found to be connections between these two groups around the interest of student success, which in interviews was synonymous with the concept of the Honors University. The interest in enhancing student success was broad enough that members of each group recalled examples of their interest overlapping with the other group, even though they maintained other interests distinct from those of their counterpart group.

For professional employees, student success often took the shape of individual students persisting and completing their degrees. Faculty spoke about promising pedagogical techniques to promote more successful student learning. Staff spoke about the impact of programs and services for students, and the struggles that students overcame with the help of appropriate institutional resources. This group was primarily focused on the individual, the one on one relationships with students, the individual pathway to success and how that applied to students. In contrast, senior administrators spoke of systems-level concepts such as retention and graduation rates. They had interest in the alignment of resource models with outcomes in promoting student success (e.g., budget, space, and staff being utilized in effective and efficient ways). Additionally, senior administrators often spoke about values of the institution and their impact on day-to-day operations that promoted student success.

An example of interest overlap came from an idea that emerged from the math department. The department chair approached a senior administrator with a problem—students were struggling with math— an issue largely inhibitory to student success as math courses were gateway requirements for the general education curriculum and many upper-level STEM majors. The chair recognized that students wanted to succeed, but that the tutoring available was inadequate. The lack of services further discouraged students from taking advantage of tutoring. The administration recognized that physically allotted space was holding back the potential of the tutoring program to boost retention and graduation rates. Working with the library staff, an idea emerged to relocate the center and update the tutoring model to include broad learning resources, group tutoring, as well as other subject tutoring. Senior administrators changed institutional strategy to enable the relocation of the

tutoring operation to the first floor of the library and provide new furniture as well as technology to outfit the new space. In this instance student success was advanced through the overlap of professional employee and senior administrator interests.

Another instance of interest overlap was not a specific outcome as with the tutoring center, but rather the overlap that occurred over a period of time. The overlap was between the interests of adjunct faculty and senior IT administrators, described by the IT administrators. Over the years, the IT division grew its capabilities in learning management, instructional design, and educational technology trainings. Senior IT administration desired to get advances adopted by faculty as they were likely to boost student success. CTO John said of the adjuncts that they were “often really the force of pedagogical innovation” on the campus, which was supported by advancement in the technology tools the IT Division launched. The interest that likely brought the adjuncts to interact with IT was their goals and incentives, which unlike their tenured counterparts, were almost entirely focused on teaching and learning. Senior lecturer Sadie said of her position, “I don’t have to worry as I always did in my previous [tenure track] position about the number of papers and grants ... when I came to GMCU ... I actually had the time to essentially devote to improving teaching.” The interests of these two groups overlapped frequently and resulted in formal interactions such as new features in technology tools and informal ways such as individual support for specific faculty innovations. For example, Jake, an IT staff member, recalled working with an economics adjunct faculty member to improve outcomes associated with his course. The relationship began at a Blackboard Adaptive Learning workshop, as Jake describes:

Before he [the faculty member] used it [adaptive learning] his course was not very active in terms of how students were using it [Blackboard]. Afterwards, it became the most active course at GMCU in terms of Blackboard ... His students ended up getting 20% higher on the common final exam and they earned a half letter grade higher in the next course following his course.

The example illustrates the overlap of senior administrator adoption of a student success initiative (e.g., Blackboard Adaptive Learning) and a professional employee's interest in improving student success in future major courses.

Critically Important Goal

A concept absent from the literature but was noted as part of the convergence background dynamics at GMCU was a critically important goal (CIG). During GMCU interviews, the concept of a unifying vision for the transformation came up interview after interview. It was considered a grounding point for the transformational work. It was referenced historically and in terms of the campus's future. Revisiting change literature resulted in coming across the concept of a critically important goal in McChesney, Covey, and Huling (2012). They described it as a strategic tipping point that the organization applies a disproportionate amount of energy to when compared with basic goals or even day to day operations. It is about transforming something major, from X to Y. Travis said of GMCU's CIG that it "actually makes sure everybody's on the same page." At its core the CIG was the development of the Honors University. It was the transforming of the campus from an unclear strategy, with open access, poor student success rates, and a stepchild reputation, to a

disciplined, nationally recognized institution with an inclusive excellence commitment and strong success outcomes for historically underrepresented students.

The birth of the honors university, as previously discussed, transpired after the arrival and subsequent ascension of Fabian to the president's role, yet the Honors University as a CIG did not occur until several years later. When the honors university marketing work, merged with the student success work that Fabian was investing in, the symbiosis of these independent efforts resulted in a campus-wide effort, creating an Honors University committed to student success and excellence in both the real student experience and the marketing message.

Over the years, this CIG was interpreted by individuals with differences in perspective that nonetheless felt genuinely related. For example, Fabian recalled that it provided permission of the campus to "ask the question 'How do we make sure that the average student here gets an Honors experience?'" John said, "it forced us to sort of step up our game across a wide variety of areas to try to honor that." Lynn, spoke of it as a rallying mandate to raise graduation rates. Daisy said:

We moved very quickly to say if this is who we're going to be, if we're going to be known for inclusion and we're going to be for excellence then we have to act, recruit, admit, and support faculty, staff, and students to not only have access to the institution, but to succeed in our institution. That has always been kind of the complex formula I think that we have used, and I think it's worked ... we looked very hard at that tagline as a promise, and if it's a promise then we have to do our part.

The far-reaching efforts to realize the CIG resulted in numerous changes. In its infancy, there were conversations at the faculty ranks about pedagogy, and how to better situate the learning environment for the type of learners the campus was attracting and needing to serve. Over time, according to Travis, “the emphasis on retention and persistence has been even greater over the years.” IT took the CIG and developed adaptive technology that they partnered with faculty to improve students’ outcomes in a curriculum centered way. Another example is the construction of a Faculty Development Center. The center’s current director said of the center’s early years and the CIG that they built it “on the communities of practice around professional and scholarly teaching to support and advance the work of the university in achieving its vision of inclusive excellence in teaching.” Jake from IT summarized the trajectory of the campus’s CIG well, saying,

Especially over the last five to ten years, student success has really been a high priority and I think it trickles down and manifests itself in different ways, whether it’s in my job as the IT administrator, whether it’s an adjunct or a lecturer’s job [...] but this has been a key priority for the president for a long time, and it has a way of getting under your skin.

Jake’s point about the CIG trickling down is found in McChesney, Covey, and Huling (2012) who pointed out that the implementation of CIGs is “not solely a top-down process, but neither is it exclusively bottom-up” (p 36). They further state, “the senior leader’s choice of the overall CIG brings clarity (top down), and allowing the leaders and teams below to choose their CIGs (bottom up brings) engagement” (p. 36). This speaks directly to the convergence of this study, the strategies of which will be further reviewed in the next section.

Convergence Strategies

Assessment of convergence strategies is subdivided into sections corresponding to the groups noted to have engaged these strategies: professional employees and senior administrators, senior administrators alone, and professional employees alone.

Professional Employee and Senior Administrator Convergence Strategies

At GMCU, the convergence strategies that were utilized by both groups were the most frequently observed. In terms of their location on the interaction pathway, they often occurred in median space where the two groups interacted most frequently (i.e., communication, relationships, sense-making and giving, translating, and filtering). The singular exception to this, organizational learning, occurred for both groups when their interaction was low.

Organizational Learning. The first of the convergence strategies that was observed being used by both groups was organizational learning. In the interaction pathway, this concept was a first step, it was used as a scan of the environment to develop a stated need or identify a problem. It was also utilized when both groups were interacting to guide the activities. President Fabian wrote on this topic that “(w)hen institutions realize they need to improve and when they determine the priorities most critical to that improvement, the most important challenge is convincing people to be openminded and to consider the evidence.”

In the early 1990s, senior administrator-led organizational learning was highly active on the campus. Specifically, senior administration was looking to reposition the campus. To aid in this process, senior administrators brought in an outside consultant that worked with schools on identity and publications. The consultant conducted focus groups with prospective

students, members of faculty, and interviewed senior administration. Yuliana, GMCU's chief enrollment manager, recalled the consultant reporting out a theme of a "commitment to excellence, in terms ... inclusive excellence." The consultant's report also included data suggesting GMCU as a "best kept secret" and having a strong academic experience that is not well known.

The introduction of an outside firm helped senior administrators learn about the problem of the campus's positionality or identity not matching its perceived potential. To resolve these misalignments, the idea of an of an honors university tag line was advanced within senior administrative ranks. While behind closed doors there lingered a small amount of skepticism for the idea, according to Yuliana, GMCU's marketing people encouraged administrators to move forward with honors university marketing to as Yuliana put it, "stop making it a secret, tell people that if you want a good quality education, you want an honors type education, GMCU is the place you should go."

As the honors university designation began to take shape into the Honors University identity the campus engaged in a more formal effort to learn about its progress and its deficiencies. According to a GMCU white paper, "to achieve its strategic goals, GMCU realized it needed to become a more data-driven institution by deploying more sophisticated tools and procedure to help staff find and analyze data in a timely way." This was, as John from IT put it, to create "a culture that is prepared to look at data and use data to both make decisions and be willing to change when the data showed you that something's not working." This is often thought of as a culture of evidence. GMCU's culture of evidence, served as a

form of organizational learning, including tools that took the shape of high touch and high-tech organizational learning endeavors.

The high touch organizational learning was described by Daisy as having a grounding in asking tough questions of practices and taking action on what is learned from these questions. “It’s a very different conversation at GMCU” Daisy shared, “we ask not only very deep questions ... but we also listen very, very carefully.” Several interviewees spoke of how senior administrators not only listen to those in the middle (deans and area leaders in academic affairs and other divisions) but also to the campus’s students. President Fabian explained that listening to him often involves focus groups, “A lot of focus groups [involve] listening to people at different levels, meaning I really want to hear what people under 40 think...we do focus groups with students, with faculty, with staff, with administrators...most important is to do more listening than talking.” These focus groups gathered data on the student experience, staff retention, and other topics that helped administrators learn about the organization during the transformation. This listening was particularly helpful to continue the transformation during retrenchment periods. According to Daisy, the campus’s culture of evidence was helpful to identify true needs of the transformational agenda, to understand the scale of the problems, and then to help leaders prioritize to maximize resources during the lean years.

In addition to the high touch approach of listening through focus groups, the campus invested time and money during the 2000s to upgrade its technology to boost organizational learning. An *Educause* article on GMCU articulated the link well between IT and broader organizational learning, “Information technology can help change institutional culture and

achieve campus priorities. One important way this is achieved is through the effective use of technology to help build the campus culture for evidence-based decision-making and management.” CTO John elaborated on this in describing his unit’s approach to data management:

We don’t want to silo data. In some universities getting student data of a Registrar’s Office is next to impossible, so we made a decision back in the very early 2000s that data was an institutional resource and that data was managed by units, but it wasn’t owned by units. It would only be restricted if there were regulatory reasons why it had to be restricted from people being able to look at the data.

This openness toward data was tapped by senior administrators in the mid-2000s when, according to John, President Fabian “began asking a series of questions: show me performance of students in this class by instructor, by placement test score, by high school attended, by grade in this prerequisite course.” These questions spoke to GMCU’s ability to self-examine. The campus worked on developing data modeling and analyses that helped learn about the progress of interventions. Data was sourced from student information, the learning management system, alumni system, as well as systems managing experiences outside the classroom. This is an example of senior administrators providing tools for cross functional area organization learning.

Another example of organizational learning, this time at a professional employee level and more individually focused on a specific employees practices, has to do with faculty member Tanner’s introduction level Economics course. In 2009, Tanner attended an IT workshop on a new Learning Management System (LMS) feature, called adaptative release.

Tanner learned that it offered a feature that could improve the outcomes of his GCMU students through more throughout engagement with the LMS.

After Tanner adopted the feature, the organizational learning continued when Jake from IT analyzed Tanner's courses and found that his students, over several semesters of data, indeed did have consistently higher levels of engagement in the course's LMS section and on average performed a half letter grade higher in the upper-level course than other students. This organizational learning was then presented by Jake and Tanner at an IT brown bag lunch event, highlighting the practice for other faculty to learn about and consider adopting.

Several other organizational learning techniques used by senior administrators and professional employees were also uncovered during data collection. The first was a dedicated assessment person in the Academic Affairs Division. This person was embedded within the Faculty Development Center, to help faculty connect with the student learning outcome movement and assist in shaping research agendas that are connected to the improvement of teaching and learning. The assessment person also supports the campus's regular academic department review process, which in and of itself is an organizational learning activity as the reviews help shape departmental changes. Another organization learning technique was committee reports. According to Travis, the Persistence Committee writes reports which document the state of front-line practices, to be shared with senior administrators. Faculty member Sadie pointed out another popular professional employee strategy, keeping up with professional literature. In her case this was about team-based teaching, which she employs in her STEM courses.

Whether it be to share knowledge or exchange practices, all of this organizational learning is wasted if it remains siloed within particular groups. This highlights the critical importance of the next convergence strategy, communication.

Communication. A concept that came up in several interviews was the importance of communication. Travis punctuated this point with his comment “constant communication is definitely, definitely, definitely important.” Much like organizational learning, communication occurred early on as convergence was ramping up and remained a sustaining force throughout the transformation. It was employed by both groups.

Early on, communication was used to share the top-down news about the new honors university concept and then to share bottom-up concerns. Daisy recalled “there was a lot of discussion about values that underpinned our activities and our thinking. There was a lot of listening to one another.” One-way administrators helped staff move beyond concerns was through the teasing out of stories from professional practice that resonated with the honors university message. Yuliana said the external consultant was helpful in getting people to see what real life experiences students were having with quality faculty, and how rich learning environments were the basis of the marketing. Moreover, she emphasized that the university has always had a strong ability to tell success stories. Yuliana explained, – “helping faculty bring out these, and other stakeholders in the community bring out those success stories and tell those stories as ways of explaining the honors university ... helped translate what that [marketing] meant.” This idea of communicating institutional stories indeed was found to be part of the fabric of the campus, as Damien pointed out, that the campus has a strong Communications Office that worked across groups, up and down the administrative hierarchy

and across the breadth of the campus to “tease out their stories and then to package them in ways that amplified the main narrative.” In this case that narrative was transformation, and examples in the early days supporting the end goal of the transformation helped fuel convergence, and in later years the sharing of transformation success stories helped sustain the transformation.

In senior administrative ranks, communication was an important tool. It was seen as a way to connect senior administrators to professional employees and demonstrate responsiveness, their use of language to support the transformation was seen as consistent, messaging was proactive, and specific staff practices were held up as examples for the campus to learn from.

Connection of professional employees to senior administrators was vital for convergence interaction enabling staff to move their ideas forward beyond their span of control, in the form of requests to senior administrators. Some of these requests on the campus are communicated directly to Fabian as he is seen as very accessible and encouraging of ideas to help realize the transformational CIG. Frequently ideas are sent via email. When asked what happens when a professional employee shares an idea with President Fabian’s office, Yuliana said, “he will acknowledge it and funnel it back through the appropriate channels.” While this may seem like additional bureaucracy, it actually reflects a philosophy of communicating requests to the individuals that have responsibility for those areas of the strategy so that they can make informed decisions and close the loop with the idea’s source.

A technique specifically used by senior administrators to communicate was maintaining consistency in language. Having clearly delineated messages that were repeated

to multiple audiences, as well as the same audience, on multiple occasions, was effectively utilized. A key facilitator to this end was Fabian, who serves as institutional spokesperson.

[Fabian's]...an outstanding ambassador who has been remarkably consistent in his language ... It must be the experience that a politician has where you're saying the same thing over and over again, partly because you know you're speaking to different audiences, but partly because you know the repetition is necessary if you're trying to bring about a shift in thinking, and a shift in culture.

These remarks from Damien highlight the use of repetition of language to reinforce key CIG messages by Fabian, whom he also described as a "central figure in communicating." The consistency in language helped professional employees orient themselves to the agenda and know what direction to move in with clarity. According to Travis, "I feel like this entire message of how we need to act or conduct ourselves, is definitely something that's top-down."

In addition to consistency, the transparency of communication from senior administrators was emphasized. Professional employees described emails and messages from the president and provost that are sent out to the entire community, including the topic of budget, which was frequently an area that professional employees were requesting strategy changes from administration to move their transformational ideas forward. Travis said of these messages, "we're aware what's going on with the news, or aware what's going on with hiring. Everyone is aware of what's going on."

Additionally, administrators used communication to highlight certain professional employee practices. For example, senior administrators in IT decided to make data from key

systems open as previously described. They went a step further and proactively communicated this data to professional employee groups through reports, presentations, and brown bag sessions; highlighting promising professional employee practices that resulted in desirable outcomes (see orange text in figure 4). In one report about faculty and student BlackBoard usage, the report indicated that IT has been hopeful that professional employees will take the data and “teach each other more than we [senior administrators] can ... as our role of system admins we have a bird’s eye view of the system that maybe you don’t.”

Communication was also a relevant concept for professional employees. Professional employees interviewed at GMCU indicated that a lot of their communication energy was around the sharing of ideas, within their own group and with senior administrators. Communication within the professional employee ranks was observed often happening within sub-groups, for example, faculty, staff, and specific divisions.

One area that was particularly active in that way was the Faculty Development Center. The center serves as a communication hub for the faculty sub-group of professional employees. Lizzie observed about the center that “a lot of our conversations, a lot of our workshops or discussion groups or wherever we come together is exactly that: people sharing their ideas.” She added that this idea exchange between faculty occurs frequently at GMCU, that it is “a mode of operation” and that the Center aims to “bring examples of practice from folks on the ground here who are doing it.” Ideas were also communicated within a different subgroupings of professional employees – specifically academic discipline employees, via the department meeting structure. An IT study revealed that faculty idea-sharing of an IT project was especially common in small department meetings.

Another subgroup of professional employees, academic support staff, used “roadshows.” These traveling info-session type meetings were described by professional employee staff as designed to share updates on their practices, get feedback, and develop new partnerships. Travis pointed out about these roadshows that “GMCU does a really great job of really giving these other divisions and other offices, and even other people an opportunity to share their thoughts in open forums that are non-judgmental.”

Shared governance groups also were active in contributing to communication. The staff senate sends out their agendas to all eligible members, informing them of the topics the group is working on. While there are often few non-senators that come to these meetings, the president of the group believed sending out the agendas helps her constituents stay informed, effectively giving someone an open-door invitation to bring forward an idea or issue for the group to hear out. Shared governance groups also serve as a focal point that experts on the campus will utilize to educate the community about key projects. For example, these groups were often briefed on campus construction projects, which in turn enabled them to share information back with their constituents and local departments.

Beyond where communication was taking place and the strategies associated with those subgroups, professional employees were also aware of the intentionality of top-down language and made efforts to connect their initiative to this language to demonstrate the value of their working with the transformational agenda linguistic framework. In Damien’s words, “we were thinking about, how do we describe this initiative in ways that highlight the alignment of what we’re planning with what the university has set out as its official goals?”

What language can we use that will make clear the ways in which commonly expressed university values will be amplified?"

Convergence through attention to language by professional employees with senior administrative espoused goals was seen through work coming out of the Faculty Development Center. Prior to the Faculty Development Center, communication about teaching improvement was limited and often was more about standards or curricular compliance. After the Center formed, it took the Honors University CIG as an opportunity to re-frame the communication about teaching improvement to reside within a student learning paradigm. It did so by sharing the value of scholarship of teaching and learning within the traditional criteria for faculty evaluation. In Jake's view, "Lizzie [head of the Faculty Development Center] brought a real strong focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning which really, I think, brilliantly leveraged faculty who have to do research and are publishing and simply asks them to use their own teaching ... it allows those faculty to take their scholarly research lens and apply it to the actual improvement of teaching as a laboratory experiment." The communication by the Center to faculty about viewing the teaching through a research lens helped professional employees change their thinking about teaching improvement, which helped move the CIG needle.

In short, communication within and across specific subgroups of the professional employee group seemed to have enabled them to effectively determine what is within their span of control in terms of transformational practice changes and what was going to need to be requested of senior administrators. Communication helped connect the campus's groups,

as does the next concept of relationships, which forms through communication and reinforces the communication interactions of convergence.

Relationships. The visibility of relationships between senior administrator and professional employee was notable on the GMCU campus. Travis commented that “relationships are important ... we’re talking about outreach and partnerships.” He went on to add that the strength of these professional relationships at GMCU has reinforced the campus community’s individual efforts in service of the CIG. Additionally, interviewees frequently referenced each other, the work they had done with colleagues in their campus networks, and their dependence on others to achieve their work.

In interviews with professional employees, relationships were often referenced as a necessity to achieving favorable outcomes. The right relationships could facilitate a more streamlined and collaborative way of accomplishing tasks for students that served as a necessary hands-on component of Honors University. Karl brought this up during his interview: “you may not have the financial aid background, but you’re going to call your friend in financial aid ... that person may not be responsible but knows the right person within their own unit and all of a sudden, people are all working together and the message sent to the student is ‘people care.’” Furthermore, relationships are important keystones to achieving organizational outcomes. Karl also described how certain people on the campus have reputations as “heavy lifters,” able to make things happen. Relationships with these individuals makes it more likely to recruit them to serve on a committee or support a project, which in turn can boost the chances of the project’s success.

Relationships also enabled professional employees to gain access to senior administrators. None of the individuals interviewed spoke of their colleague group (professional employees for senior administrators, or senior administrators for professional employees) as distant, disconnected, or unreachable. Rather, professional employees described senior administrators as accessible, reachable by phone, available for meetings, even sometimes dropping into to professional employee offices to work on a problem together. The campus's can-do orientation often meant relationships transcended management lines of the organizational chart, as relationships were spoken of as a means to exchange ideas and knowledge organically.

Relationships also had a role in sustaining key individuals during some of the transformation's difficult times. President Fabian described that during his early tenure, the campus needed to shed some academic programs that had low enrollments. He described these decisions as painful, but necessary. To survive this challenging period he credited relationships, saying, "students gave me the support and some of the faculty, otherwise, I wouldn't have made it past interim." In reflecting on this experience, he articulated that senior administrators need to remember to build strong relationships so that when there is a test, professional employees are more likely to trust them, and it is this trust that help the community weather the storm.

Finally, relationships at GMCU were built or sustained through organizational arrangements. Given that many relationships extended beyond reporting structure, there were several "hubs" for relationships that brought people together from various parts of campus, that perhaps would not have happened without that hub. These hubs brought together the

CIG and everyday practices so that change agents could sensegive and make about the transformational agenda progress and next steps. Once such example was the campus's Faculty Development Center. The director of the center was described as forming key connections across departments and colleges, support units such as IT, as well as executing programming that facilitated integrations and building of community around teaching practices. The center also became a community resource for evidence-based teaching and assessment of student learning, which was used to further the CIG. A hub such as the Center seemed to play an important role in the community as a physical place for relationships to form and be sustained.

It is notable that many individuals have been on the campus with long service records. This likely helped facilitate these relationships, as many key players had extensive social capital that they could leverage for the transformation, and in turn share with others that joined in during the transformation. Travis referenced the importance of relationships and their maturity in terms of years of history behind many of them on the campus in saying "Those relationships that people have been able to develop over these past couple years ... it's really, really, really been strong, in terms of highlighting the significance of everyone working together toward a common goal." These relationships and their trust were critical for the next convergence concept, sense-making and giving, which is where both groups meet with the greatest intensity during convergence.

Sense-Making and Giving. In the previously described interaction pathway, it is at this point, the sense-making and giving, that convergence brought senior administrators and professional employees to their most frequently interaction. While these strategies were not

discussed in the literature review, the data indicated that they were important to convergence and therefore they were added as in vivo concept. In short, sense-giving occurs when one group is attempting to persuade the other about the value of its position, while sense-making is attempting to process and determine a group's next action.

A primary example of sense-giving and -making occurred early on in the GMCU transformation, during the initial roll-out of the honors university. Senior administrators made a limited effort to sense-give to professional employees about the honors university tag line during the roll-out. Some professional employees were unable to make meaning of this new marketing in a way that felt authentic to their lived experience, resulting in sense-giving back to senior administrators that questioned the basic meaning of the designation and expressed reluctance to support what some felt was an empty marketing campaign. In turn, senior administrators made sense of this case by professional employees as a need to help professional employees translate what the designation meant. Senior administrators then engaged in self-reflection about the marketing at a retreat. Discussions were had about the potential meaning of the marketing campaign to various parts of the campus community. This self-reflection was a way to cohesively understand of the other group's sense-giving.

Following the senior administrator retreat, this group aimed to help give new sense to the concept by providing, as Yuliana described, "talking points and stories" as well as teasing out narratives from faculty and other stakeholders that supported and explained what an honors university was. This sense-making and -giving led to discussion between the groups about the strength of faculty teaching, a commitment to undergraduate education, and the supportive campus environment necessary to more fully realize a CIG of an Honors

University. The result of the making and giving was clarity of the marketing campaign, as well as advancement of the message on the need to enhance the undergraduate learning environment so that the honors university marketing would accurately reflect a true “Honors University” experience.

What has helped the campus’s ability to make and give sense is the honesty discussed by several interviewees. Travis admitted that upon arrival to the campus, he did not understand the Honors University concept. He was able to vocalize this to his supervisor and others without fear, which helped him make sense of the concept and then develop ways to adapt his work to contribute to the institution’s CIG. Karl echoed the campus community’s honesty as part of sense-making. He said of it, “what I appreciate is that [we] can be very brutally honest about where we’re at and where [our] concerns are, what [our] experience has been, and not be divisive or to be resistant but just say ‘yes, this is problem.’ I don’t think there’s a fear that you’re going to upset the applecart by really showing your cards.” This lack of fear is helpful as sense-making and giving uses trust, so honestly sharing one’s opinion without fear of retribution is beneficial.

In subsequent years, professional employees have attempted to continually make sense of the CIG and root their practice in an understanding of it. Damien explained this, saying that professional employees “describe [an] initiative in ways that highlighted the alignment of what we’re planning with what the university has set out as its official goals. What language can we use that will make clear the ways in which commonly expressed university values will be amplified through this initiative?” Professional employees did this through a reframing of the Honors University into student success work, student engagement,

service learning, and a general “pride in nerdy”; tailoring the reframing to the individual practice that is their own professional forte. For example, faculty and academic advisor frequently spoke of the Honors University as helping student succeed, whereas student affairs professionals spoke of an engaging out of classroom experience that was anchored in chess and brainy activities.

Events. While this strategy was not discussed in the literature review, the data indicated that it was important to convergence and therefore was added as in vivo concept. At GMCU, events were utilized to reinforce other convergence concepts, providing forums for people to engage in convergence activity. Specifically, they were utilized for professional development and to assemble large groups.

The brown bag lunch, or lunch and learn events, were the most frequently mentioned form of professional development events during interviews. For the transformation, one of the earliest forms of such an event were teaching roundtables that were organized by professional employees after the initial roll out of the honors university marketing. These events helped professional employees make sense of the senior administrative marketing change and how their own teaching practices or deficiencies aligned or did not align with the marketing. These later evolved into teaching brown bags that considered syllabus construction as well as grading across different disciplines. Daisy said of these events, “we just started having informal conversations, and the agenda was created by persons at the table, not in advance. It’s very informative and very helpful.” A final example of a professional development event was very formal, a yearly teaching symposium that the provost asked the Faculty Development Center to manage. This event provided a forum for

practices to be showcased that aligned with the CIG's student success dimension and for professional employees and senior administrators to meet and make sense of how the CIG was actually playing out pedagogically.

A second type of event that was used at GMCU was large group gatherings. This was the most general event providing a space for people to gather to give sense on particular topics. Often, they were associated with top-down strategic planning processes and formatted as an open forum. For the university's most recent strategic plan, released in the mid- 2010s, the provost as co-chair hosted many open forums during the plan's development process. One person estimated that the provost had dozens of meetings with different groups on campus. Yuliana said of these forums, "he really made a concerted effort to engage everyone at all levels." These meetings provided opportunities for sense to be made and given by both groups on the status of the transformational agenda. More regular open forums, not tied to strategic planning process, were found to be held by shared governance groups as part of their regular meetings. These forums give individuals the chance to share their current experiences, which feeds the organizational learning of those shared governance groups, which often served as an important link between senior administrators and professional employees.

Another large group gathering was the town hall meeting. This meeting is held each fall and invites the entire campus community to gather as a welcome to the new academic year, celebrate past achievements, and discuss the state of the university. The meeting has included presentations about persistence rates, graduates rates, budget updates, and strategic planning information. Travis said of these town halls that "I really like that [the meeting] ...

brings everybody from the university community together to have conversations. We're asked to sit at different tables with people. We do breakouts where we're meeting different people across the institution ... It's a great way to ensure people have a seat at the table."

Groups. Closely related to events, were groups at GMCU. Often, groups were convened, forwarded, or even sparked from events. Three types of groups were common, administratively-chartered formal groups, committees, and communities of practice.

Administratively-chartered groups were the most formal group. These groups often had set memberships, with defined purposes, and pre-determined deliverables. They were used as decision making bodies when efficiency was needed to gather input on large or complex issues. An early example of this was the campus's Honors University taskforce. It came about following the professional employee sense-giving to administrators. This group was formed to develop a clear plan on how to address the shortcomings of a campus that aspired to be an Honors University. Another administrative group was a strategic planning group. The more recent strategic planning process that aimed to further the Honors University had a high-level coordinating group, and then breakout groups that were charged with delivering recommendations on specific themes. The groups aimed to be broadly inclusive, having representation of students, faculty, and staff. A final administrative group was the President's Council. This group of top-tier senior administrators was referenced several times as being a place that professional employees are often invited to present and share their grassroots knowledge.

A second type of group was committees. Though committees are often a staple of higher education, for GMCU they were used at specific times to move forward the CIG when

both senior administrative power and professional employee expertise was needed to move a particular issue forward. For example, Sadie shared an example of a building construction committee she served on. The campus was designing a new science building for research and teaching. Senior administrators assembled a committee that included Sadie and two other faculty members to advise on the program for the building. Sadie advocated for spaces with moveable furniture that would be more conducive to smaller, intimate learning environments as opposed to large tiered lecture halls. Her counsel was taken into account as the committee made a recommendation that was ultimately accepted, and the building now includes small classrooms with tables on wheels for small groups. When asked about her inclusion on this committee and its work to shape the program of this major campus construction project, Sadie answered, “I don’t know if that happens in most places or not honestly, but I’m certainly glad that we got asked [to participate].” This example speaks to the value of groups that bring senior administrators and professional employees together to make decisions, which were demonstrably beneficial to the CIG.

A final group utilized was communities of practice. These groups were for the most part decentralized, sometimes ad hoc, and most commonly grassroots-led efforts. Communities of practice were professionals who connected themselves together, sometimes virtually and sometimes physically through events. Their membership varied, but often were based on themes as opposed to organizational chart arrangements. Some of these groups formed within academic affairs around a particular academic discipline, as an offshoot of some of the teaching roundtables. These communities were casual, not having formal coordinators or refined agendas.

Other communities have taken a more structural form, an example being the campus's Advising Community. This group is made up of faculty advisors, professional advisors, advising coordinators for academic departments, and anyone else involved in undergraduate academic advising for students. The community is led and organized by the central advising office. It meets twice a semester, is utilized to send out information on topics of interest, and offers special training and professional development opportunities such as webinars, speakers, and workshops. During my campus visit, I observed their pre-orientation meeting, which happens before each summer orientation session. It was a highly collaborative meeting that exchanged information, shared news about the session's students, and helped the community deliver a high-quality transitional experience, which is critical to starting students on the right track for Honors University success.

These groups provide for the campus the essential network for relationships to make sense, give sense, request changes, highlight practices, and ultimately converge to move the transformational agenda forward.

Middle Translators. GMCU's transformation had several individuals that bridged the groups, serving as a communications link. The linkage took several forms but was well-conveyed by Jack, CTO, self-described as a pollinator who buzzed from person to person, group to group, to spread ideas and statuses.

The first translator was Daisy. Her career path first as a faculty member, then administrator uniquely positioned her as an effective "translator," familiar with both professional and administrative languages. It enabled her to build credibility with the faculty, but also earn the trust of senior administrators to join their ranks to access resources and

wield decision-making power. Fabian described her as the “soul and glue” of GMCU, a reference to her ability to bring people together. It also applies to her genuine and caring personality, which was very apparent during her interview, and likely helped her bring people together. Daisy said of her own work bridging these two groups that her success came in part from knowing the languages of each group and what was “going to matter to the different constituents.” She referenced anchoring her work in a belief that the GMCU community writ large has a deep ethic of care. This anchor likely helped her build bridges between the two groups, highlighting overlapping interests, and the CIG that both groups were working towards. She also had unique insight into an important function for a translator, filtering. As a link, she needed to vet ideas that were to be passed up from the grassroots to administrators, ensuring that they had merit and would help move the needle forward on the CIG. Neglecting this task likely would have jeopardized her the trust she built with senior administrators and may have caused her to lose the credibility she had professional employees had if she was unable to bring to bear resources for professional employee ideas. Daisy said of this “I think people realized that I was a person designated by the administration to help filter these ideas and to help bring them forward.”

Another translator on the campus was Lynn. As a senior administrator, Lynn was involved with the honors university tag line from the inception; she has a strong working knowledge of the marketing and more importantly the transformation that it sparked. Beyond her years of service, her career at GMCU has also positioned her well to serve as a translator. As chief communications officer, followed by serving as a presidential advisor, she was at the table sense-making of what was bubbling up from the grassroots. One such example was

a proposal that was brought to her by Damien. This idea, previously described when reporting the directionality of convergence, was about a new student engagement effort. Lynn met with Damien prior to his meeting with the provost, of whom he was seeking a strategy change to resource his grassroots idea. Damien recalled this meeting with Lynn and his relationship with her saying, “[she] is a thoughtful strategist with good relationships with senior leadership in the institution, so she was an important adviser to us. Helping us think about, for example, how to couch our intention in the big meeting with the provost where we were asking for money.” Lynn’s efforts in this case represent her ability to take professional employee work and help them frame it in a way that a senior administrator could see it as contributing to the CIG, therefore worthy of resourcing. She observed of her translation work:

In the work that we do [communications] we’re out and around the campus, working with people everywhere so it was just a crosspollination because understanding that the strategic planning process was going to put an emphasis on more applied experiences for students and hearing the plans for civic engagement I just simply said, ‘You need to go talk to the provost because what you’re doing and what you want to do programmatically is what he is trying to accomplish. Perhaps he will be an early backer of this program. That’s what happened, it was connecting the dots.

This convergence example of a translator helping to connect the dots was of such significance that Fabian mentioned it as the most memorable grassroots example of a bottom-up idea coming to senior administrators.

A third translator on the campus was Lizzie, head of the Faculty Development Center. Lizzie is a professional employee who serves in a staff role but came from a faculty background previously in her career. As the center was a faculty idea, it had and continues to maintain a strong affiliation with professional employees. Often faculty will come to the center with problems of practice. Lizzie is then positioned to pattern these problems and translate them to senior administration, when their intervention is needed. One such example came from faculty member Sadie, who works with the center on her team-based learning pedagogy that Lizzie often keeps in the provost's ear— the idea of small class sizes, because even though they are more expensive to offer, they improve learning as evidenced by the outcomes from Sadie and other team-based teaching faculty. Doing so helps reinforce to the provost, as the strategy setter of academic resources, the pedagogical detriment to faculty when class sizes are too unwieldy, ensuring space is made in the resource strategy for smaller class sizes. Sadie said of this translation that it is likely that it does not happen "...on a day-to-day basis, but maybe it affects decision-making in the long-term."

The previous examples show translators bridging in a bottom-up way, but it also works for top down efforts. Lizzie described the arch of the assessment movement, and how traditionally it was perceived as a top-down, almost "big brother" type effort. She described her work in this area as "translating both to faculty and administrators the ongoing idea; why this is important and how you can actually do it, how you can embed it into practice without it being this onerous additional thing." This work has required her to re-frame for professional employees that assessment, even when mandated from senior administrators, is really more about bringing one's scholarly process to "bear on your teaching and asking, is it

working, is it not working in a specific way.” She has helped facilitate this by providing resources that help share new insights in human cognition and what that means for teaching practices. Such work typifies top-down translation, taking what is a mandate for assessing performance and re-framing for those being assessed in an assets-based manner, with resources on how to be successful. Without this translation, it could have easily failed as an effort, hurting the larger student success, Honors University CIG.

Translation often was observed connected to a particular person’s position in the organizational chart, having some type of access to both groups. One group that was referenced en masse as doing this was the departmental chairs, who link central academic administration with the professional employee faculty. Translation was also observed both ways between supervisor and supervisee. This more regular translation, though likely not often leading to transformation in and of itself, was an enabler to keep convergence moving. For example, Karl spoke during his interview of an idea from one of his staff members that extended beyond his scope and required a higher boss’s permission to allocate resources. Karl engaged his “Yvette [his supervisor] lens” saying he shared with his supervisee what he thought her take was likely to be on the idea, so that he could adjust his idea to present it in the best way possible. That conversation included, according to Karl, discussion about “what Yvette would like about this” and “what Yvette might have concerns about.”

Translation, like the other concepts of this section, were observed as having been used by both groups. However, convergence at GMCU did utilize some concepts specific to one group or the other. The next section will detail concepts that only came up during observations or interviews with senior administrators.

Senior Administrator Convergence Strategies

The strategies unique to senior administrator use at GMCU were earning trust, engaging and respecting senior administration, power, incentives, offering grants and incentives, as well as strategic planning. All senior administrator strategies, excluding power, were not discussed in the literature review; however, the data indicated that they were important to convergence and therefore they were added as in vivo concept.

Earning Trust. As previously examined, senior administrators and professional employees have relationships across the organization. These relationships were marked at GMCU by trust of senior administrators by professional employees. Daisy spoke of earning trust as crucial during her move to senior administration, saying that “garnering trust was key ... reciprocity in terms of trust and care, coupled with shared values seems to me to be what makes GMCU work.” Her reference to trust being one of the focal drivers of GMCU’s functionality indicates the concept’s important role in serving as fuel for the campus’s transformational convergence. Faculty member Sadie echoed this sentiment, saying that “yes, we absolutely feel like there is that relationship of trust.”

Trust was mentioned specifically by senior administration as a byproduct of relationships. Fabian emphasized that relationships leading to trust affected early decisions he made during his interim presidency and first years on the job. At that time, the campus was facing financial pressure, which senior administration decided to address in part through the cutting of under-performing academic programs. Fabian recalled this as a painful period, but when asked how he got through it he said “I think a lot of leaders forget that they really

need to build strong relationships so people can trust them ... if you have the trust, people will give you a pass.”

Senior administration worked to build trust through transparency. “It’s very transparent here,” according to Dorothy, “there’s nothing that’s hidden.” One such example is the institution’s disclosure of its budgeting. A more recent strategic planning effort declared that the annual budget will be “accessible in a comprehensible and comprehensive form to the GMCU community to broaden the understanding of the University’s priorities and resource allocations.” The university has delivered on this pledge, posting to its website annual budget reports that include visual and detailed accounting for all major expense drivers including personnel and operating costs as well as funding sources for anyone to publicly access. Doing so allows anyone in the community to fact check administrator pledges and see progress toward financial plans that are designed to move the CIG forward.

The trust of senior administrators was observed during interviews, as not a single professional employee framed senior administrators in conflict-charged terms. Nonetheless, this should not be read as an overly naïve type of blind trust, rather a healthy professional trust. Fabian emphasized this point during his interview recalling a public disagreement with a faculty member: “That person called me. She said, ‘You know I believe in you even when I’m angry at you.’ It was great. Even while we can have this wonderful camaraderie, we’re able to even agree to disagree and not take it personally.”

Professional employee trust in senior administrators was recently tested when campus climate and safety concerns surfaced. While not related to the transformation of the campus, the way the community responded with trust that Fabian mentioned in his interview is

significant. “I was so moved by so many groups that came and said, ‘Fabian how can we help?’” the president recalled, remembering students saying that “Doc we want to work with you on this.” While a trying time for the campus, with work still being done to address concerns, the strength of these trusting relationships enabled senior administrators to work with concerned parties including students, faculty, and staff to address the issues as a community. Perhaps what is notable is what did not occur, which was a lack of national attention to the issues and no removal or stepping down of any senior administrators, which speaks to the trust in these senior administrators by professional employees. Without this trust it is hard to imagine professional employees approaching senior administrators with their ideas, for fear of them being usurped or altered to fit the will of senior administration.

Engaged and Respected Senior Administrators. An institutional self-reflection on the transformation published in *Educause* captured the importance of senior administration being engaged with the transformation and the campus, claiming that “strong leadership can help create the vision, set the tone of the climate, emphasize the values that are most critical, and build trust among people. Strong management ensures that the appropriate execution of functions and follow-through are enabled through assessment.” And while senior administration at GMCU includes a core group of people, resoundingly the campus’s president was nominated as exemplary of an engaged leader. People spoke of their trust in him, their confidence in his ability, and his charismatic style. They also spoke of his vision and ability to invite people to buy into the vision. The “Fabian Factor” is difficult to separate from the transformational process itself as he has been involved in the leadership of the campus for the same period as the transformation, so it is therefore remarkable to note the

role Fabian has played in the transformation as driver of the campus community's perception of leadership engagement and capability.

Fabian has been in office at GMCU for a tenure spanning three decades, a significant exception in presidential terms that are more commonly measured in years. Because of this length of service, he has been able to accumulate an impressive resume that the campus deeply respects. His awards, his national service to the Obama administration, and his media appearances have elevated him to celebrity status on the campus. Yet even with his fame, he is known for being engaged, with a reputation for walking the campus, talking to students he meets, and even making personal referrals to staff for students who are struggling.

Some of the respect Fabian has earned has come from a reputation of him being a person of his word. His respect also comes from his willing to share credit and encourage others in senior administration to do so. He said "it's always helpful to the president, provost, and deans when you got the breath of people saying we want to do this. It makes it really easy to elevate it, but to let them do the elevating and to get the credit for it."

When asked in his interview about the Fabian Factor, he was surprised, touched, and a bit uncomfortable. He brought up that "this is not about me" he went onto say "the national media tends to put the emphasis on the one at the top at every level of our society... but [you have to have] people at different layers working on different projects in different ways. That's the power of empowering people up and down the ladder." Such a statement speaks to Fabian's engagement with his campus colleagues, which has helped him earn their respect.

Power. Senior administrators, by the nature of their positions, have power to produce change and coordinate activities. Like any tool, the use of power can result in positive or negative outcomes.

A negative outcome for the use of power was related to the initial roll-out of the honors university tag line in the early 1990s. This was a positional power move where senior administrators' positions held the ability to change the institution's marketing. However, this positional power play did not effectively persuade professional employees of the validity of the marketing. This example highlights the risk of a top-down positional power play. When administration makes changes based solely on authority granted to those positions, the change can lack the valuable input of professional employees, who are often experts on the state of affairs for a campus. When asked about power play initiatives from presidents, even Fabian himself said, "if things start with the top, with the president and vice presidents, typically on any campus, they have got to be DOA."

A more effective use of power for convergence at GMCU was senior administrators channeling their power into shared governance arrangements. While shared governance is a tradition across higher education, it can be short circuited by administrative power overriding or circumventing shared governance decisions. At GMCU, there seemed to be a healthy respect by senior administrators for shared governance arrangements and in general putting some of their positional power into these bodies to help them achieve their goals. The governance structure used on the campus includes a presidential coordinating committee of all the leaders of shared governance bodies, including undergraduate and graduate student governments. Additionally, all major non-student groups have a shared governance body

including bargaining and non-bargaining faculty and staff. Dorothy, who leads one of the shared governance groups, described her thoughts on administrative power and shared governance:

President Fabian is very much a proponent of the shared governance system. It's always been something that he values, and he promotes. Having the coordinating committee and having a representative from his office on that committee really helps the people involved know that the information that we're discussing, the decisions that we're making, are going back to the president. He knows about them, he's informed ... I think if the president was viewed as being detached from shared governance it would not be as strong as it is.

The involvement of the president's office demonstrates the president's commitment to use the power of his position to help shared governance groups succeed. Pushing power out from senior administrative offices seemed to be an effective use of power as a convergence strategy for supporting bottom-up transformation as compared to the top-down positional power play.

Offering Internal Grants and Incentives. Both groups referenced a number of incentives or grant opportunities that senior administrators offered directly or were important champions of that helped advance the coming together of these two groups. Many opportunities involved money. Money was often tight for GMCU, which, as Daisy pointed out, often necessitated the coming together of multiple parties to fund an idea because no one person had the money to achieve a large initiative on their own. Some areas took advantage of this to promote their agenda and the larger transformation, for example IT leadership

provides “seed funding” for ideas that have merit for more than one department. John noted that because the institution is not resource rich, cobbling together funding that includes IT seed money often leads to better convergence and helps initiatives be coordinated across multiple areas due to multiple funding sources. Another incentive for convergence was paying stipends to good will ambassadors. IT leveraged these good will ambassadors to promote top-down initiated change initiatives, speeding up the process of sense-giving and making as the messengers were faculty themselves. Senior administrators have also supported the seeking of external grant money for CIG related projects with their personal support. For example, the provost for the campus has championed a number of grants to work on student success work.

The most frequently cited incentive was the Presidential Change Fund (PCF). The fund began with a Carnegie Foundation award for higher education leadership that President Fabian won in the late 2000s. The campus used this award to fundraise, creating an endowed fund to support campus innovation. The fund was launched on Fabian’s 20th anniversary as GMCU’s president. The fund seeks out proposals that are directly supportive of the CIG, and therefore this incentive is a convergence accelerant, bringing suggestions from the grassroots to senior administrators faster as it mitigates the difficulty of securing new resources. The first grant was awarded in spring 2013 to faculty who proposed new ways to approach teaching and learning, with a particular focus on students of disadvantaged backgrounds. The application itself incentivizes convergence, asking if the project has or will involve IT, giving IT a built-in mechanism for grassroots organizational learning. The fund is also now available to staff with full-time appointments. Recently funded projects have included

redesign of courses, curriculum development, student learning outcome design and assessment, as well as co-curricular learning improvement. Funds have been used for facilities renovation, operational supplies, course release buyouts, and to fund support personnel.

An example of the fund's power to accelerate the bringing professional employee ideas that contribute to the transformational agenda is the campus's Math Gym. In the 2000s, even after the student success work of the campus had been operating for 10 years at new heights, students continued to struggle with math. As a key gateway from many of the STEM disciplines and even a general education requirement for non-STEM majors, math skill gaps were a serious issue for retention and student success. As previously described, the chair of the math department recognized that tutoring was inadequate to meet student needs. One piece of the solution was working with a senior administrator to move the tutoring program out of a dated facility. The other solution was an idea by the chair to reframe the tutoring paradigm. He believed that the campus was using the wrong language, and that the deficit-based approach to tutoring further discouraged students. He applied for and won a PCF grant to re-develop the campus's tutoring program within an assets-based framework. The result was a "Math Gym", which put learning support within the coaching motif. The Gym helps students promote healthy math habits via conditioning coaches and personal trainers that support foundational math skill development and preservation.

Advancements such as the Math Gym are examples of professional employee ideas that require new resources via a senior administrator shift in strategy, which is part and parcel to convergence. A grant program such as the PFC provides a smooth pathway that is well

advertised for professional employees to use and enables senior administrators to support changes that have potential to move the needle on the CIG.

Strategic Planning. One of the most formal tools in GMCU's senior administrators tool kits was a strategic planning process. The process involved both senior administrators and professional employees; however, it is convened by senior administrators.

Over the period of the transformation, GMCU has gone through three strategic plans. One in the late 1980s, which was the first strategic planning process the institution underwent. That lasted through the early 2000s, and was influenced by the Honors University Taskforce, which created recommendations in the late-1990s. The institution's second plan was released in 2003 and lasted through 2016. The current plan began its drafting in 2012 and was published in 2015. As no interviewees participated in the drafting of the 1980s plan and some participated in the 2000 plan; most only had firsthand knowledge of the latest plan that was created in the 2010s. Therefore, this section will focus on that plan. That plan was specifically charged to develop institutional strategy that advanced the "next level of inclusive excellence." The processes' guiding principles were rooted in reflection on institutional vision and values: broadly inclusive engaging of stakeholders, inclusive of shared governance groups, communicative with the campus, analytical of the campus's performance, as well as open to dialogue about systemic strengths and weaknesses. The guiding principles resulted in a process with many interviewees and was described as inclusive, open, and far reaching.

Such a planning process provided many opportunities for senior administrators to engage in organizational learning from professional employees, and for professional

employees to sense- give about the state of the university and present new ideas. Membership of the steering committee included faculty, staff, undergraduate students, graduate students, representatives of shared governance groups, and alumni. GMCU reported that there were more than 70 opportunities for the community to provide feedback via surveys, face-to-face gatherings, and online, resulting in 5,000 documented community engagement interactions. All of this interaction took several years. In some cases, this process led to new framing of the CIG.

Professional Employee Convergence Strategies

Though professional employee convergence strategies were not a primary goal of this study, because of their review in Kezar (2012), this section will touch on those strategies that were visible and bring new understanding of what Kezar (2012) argued, including the presentation of strategies that were not found in the literature and have been added as in vivo concepts.

The first such strategy was the leveraging of outside grant money to gain attention of senior administrators and persuade them to shift institutional strategy to support an idea that had gained outside financial support. One such instance was an effort by faculty in the STEM college who were seeking to improve student success outcomes for transfer students. They applied for and won Gates Foundation money, which enabled them to work with community college partners to improve transfer student pathways. This program gained the attention of the college's dean who lent his support to the program, giving the faculty coordinators senior administrative power and credibility, which was a boost to their work.

Additionally, committee appointments and coalitions (a type of group) were often sought by professional employees that positioned them with a seat at the right table to share their idea when a senior administrator or middle translator was present. These strategies were found to be used by both senior administrators and professional employees and accordingly have already been discussed.

Not found in any meaningful way was the use of timing, in the aspect of being open to opportunities. The disregard to employ these strategies could have been because of the general urgency felt on the campus to make transformational advances. While the transformation overall occurred over two decades, the urgency imparted by interviewees for individual efforts pointed to an entrepreneurial energy where ideas were generated and implemented at a fast pace. Karl, a professional employee, described this culture metaphorically as a constant driving for touchdowns, scoring, and then reviewing the tape afterwards to understand what was done to successfully complete the drive. Therefore, it is likely that these concepts were present, but not so prevalent to be utilized by participants due to the constant nature of the transformation. Managing up was also not mentioned during interviews.

Several strategies were found in addition to those proposed in the literature review. The first was a genuine and established ethic of care for the work, the campus's mission, and the students. Senior administrators often described professional employees and convergence interactions with them with admiration for the faculty or staff member's passion for realizing transformational change. Such dedication likely helped senior administrators trust that

professional employees' sense-giving contributions are accurate and worthy of their attention.

A second strategy that helped professional employees was enlisting an ally. While some professional employees expressed skepticism for their ability to reach the most senior administrators (e.g., the president and provost), escalating their ideas with the support of someone who has a higher position in the organizational chart seemed doable. For example, faculty member Sadie said when she has an idea that needs support outside of her own resources that she “would start with my chair if I had a big issue.” These allies did not necessarily rise to the level of translators, rather their enlistment provided a second voice or advisory role of how to navigate a potential convergence pathway to direct the idea to a senior administrator who would hear the idea.

Another useful strategy was shared governance. As previously mentioned, senior administrators often distributed elements of their power to shared governance groups. The campus presented a culture of healthy respect and genuine understanding of the value of these bodies. Additionally, they were described to be functioning decision making bodies, who are able to make decisions. Professional employees stated that they used these bodies to gain information from senior administrators and to present ideas. As Travis described of one of these bodies, “[there] we all have an opportunity to say, what’s going on, on our end, and here’s the problems that we’re facing and here’s what we need help doing. Or, here’s what we’ve noticed happening and here’s how we plan on approaching it, moving forward.”

Faculty also had a particular strategy, leveraging their research agenda for teaching and learning. As a research university, GMCU has a drive to create new knowledge. Often

this research agenda at other research universities puts a tension on faculty to publish in their academic discipline during the tenure review and promotional periods. This scholarship dimension of faculty review demands considerable amounts of time that can minimize campus services for students such as teaching quality, advising, and mentorship, all components critical to the campus CIG. Some faculty at GMCU, with the support of the Faculty Development Center, have structured their research agendas to produce scholarship in the teaching and learning spaces, which, as Jake from IT described, “allows those faculty to take their scholarly research lens and apply it to the actual improvement of teaching as a laboratory experiment.” Such a strategy is helpful to convergence as it gives faculty a chance to test ideas, stay current on advances in their field, and spark improvement conversations with colleagues and senior administrators based on research and practice in an area that is critical to the campus’s CIG.

Professional employees also had a powerful strategy at their disposal, the changing of practices. Due to the dual control nature of higher education, professional employees retained jurisdiction over many primary functions of the institution and so they ultimately were the ones making the changes that aligned with the institutional strategy, CIG, and contributed to the institutional transformation.

A final strategy that professional employees utilized was demonstrating the connection of their idea to the institutional CIG. This strategy helped senior administrators see how ideas could move the CIG forward, which motivated them to make changes in institutional strategy. Professional employees often did this through data, express linkages to the strategic plan, or Honors University Taskforce report. The best example of this at GMCU

was the creation of the Faculty Development Center. In the 1990s, faculty were experiencing growing enrollments, the creation of new academic programs, and the hiring of new colleagues. A publication describing the center's founding examined the period when faculty "were faced with the tensions of balancing research and creative agendas while offering courses and programs that effectively supported all students as learners." To address this disparity, faculty put forth the idea of a center to help the institution forward the quality of the undergraduate experience—student success work--through the ongoing development of faculty. This bottom-up idea was then presented to the shared governance system for further consideration and was then presented to and endorsed by the provost who granted resources for its creation. Such a pathway described a grassroots idea that sought convergence with the senior administrators through shared governance as a middle translator, ultimately resulting in the successful change proposed by faculty (e.g., advancing the quality of the undergraduate experience) attributable to the connection through transformational CIG.

Case Summary

Overall, GMCU imparts a feeling of colloquial scrappiness and amicable grittiness. This is an institution whose mission is to serve students who have often been at a disadvantage but have succeeded through hard work. Perhaps, then, it is no irony that the institution has in its history been discounted but has overcome limitations through transformation. Several takeaways stand out for GMCU.

GMCU's transformation almost reads as a rags to riches story. While GMCU was not on the brink of closure, nor is it now heralded as a public ivy, it did overcome a lack of coherent institutional strategy, a second-class status to a sister flagship campus, and

dismissing a judging nature of the campus by faculty pedigree to embrace supporting student success outcomes. Overcoming these things has resulted in a dramatic shift in public perception about the campus, appearance on several national rankings lists, and student outcomes that many on the campus are rightfully proud to boast about.

Of great interest is that GMCU's transformation was triggered by the campus's top-down marketing play. Often such a move can end up being a repackaging of the same product. That is, an institution will develop a tag line and aesthetic, push that out through a campaign, and then claim a "new" identity because of its new look. However, that was not the case. Professional employees pushed back on this surface deep initial attempt, in a constructive convergent manner, effectively saying that what the campus was trying to sell, it could not deliver and that the campus should do better to live up to its new tagline.

There was some personal risk involved for some professional employees in doing this, and yet they felt strongly enough about their campus, its mission, and their students to speak truth to power about the marketing and its misalignment with the lived campus experience. Professional employees, most notably Daisy, who vocalized their concerns, in a way can be thought of as tempered radicals. This group were critics as well as champions for the status quo and change. Their tactics of reviewing their own practices, writing letters to the president, and constructively discussing their concerns with senior administration fit the incremental, small-scale, experimental, collaborative, organic approach of tempered radicals that Mayerson and Scully (1995) described.

Perhaps of equal importance, was senior administration's response to these professional employees' pushback. It could have been the case that senior administrators

refused to reconsider their efforts to reposition the university through the tagline, hypothetically making the argument that their effort was a planned change and the campus needed to stay the course. However, senior administrators unfroze their CIG, and considered the professional employee idea of improvement for the campus undergraduate student success efforts so that the campus could authentically call itself an Honors University.

Another key takeaway is that this transformation occurred at a public campus that weathered the early 2000s recession and the Great Recession of the late 2000s. It has also transformed during a period when public opinion is moving higher education from a public to a private good, which arguably is driving state legislators to cut back in public funding and adding more accountability demands on institutions like GMCU. And GMCU continues to grow and change as the outlook on traditionally aged college students looks to be souring. All of these external complications and pressures add up to a campus that has limited resources with sizeable external forces. GMCU is not the kind of campus that has the ability to invest large sums of money to create flashy new programs. As a result, professional employees as well as senior administrators looked to convergence in order to cobble together the necessary resources. Sometimes this meant professional employees bringing ideas to senior administrators for funding, other times it meant senior administrators sunsetting a program to free up resources to fund new ideas, and other times it involved a hybrid of the two as well as collaboration across functional area boundaries to gather the needed resources. This type of funding model is one of the driving forces of the campus's scrappy mentality and the hallmarks of GMCU's transformational convergence.

CHAPTER 5

HILL UNIVERSITY FINDINGS

This chapter will discuss findings of the study on Hill University, including institutional profile, a review the elements of its institutional transformation, report on the convergence background dynamics present, and share the convergence strategies found.

Institutional Profile

Hill has been on an upward trajectory since the mid-1990s when a local newspaper described it as a regional commuter school that openly “accepted nearly all locals who applied.” Much of the publicly perceived rise to prominence can be attributed to a focus during this period on reputation improvement through ascension in the *US News & World Report Rankings*. Its stature improvement has been built upon the inclusion of real-world experiences into its undergraduate curriculum, grounded in its signature Extended Internship Program (EIP). Recently, Hill transformed its local and regional experiential learning through curriculum revisions, adjustments to programs, new programs, and even new campuses to reflect an increasing globalism and its institutional belief in a need to prepare students to be successful in a global environment.

Transformation of Conventional Educational Places

The arrival of President Joel in 2006 brought a new energy to Hill through his focus on globalism (see Appendix D, an abridged timeline of the institution’s transformation). According to Joel, “we believe that the best way to educate students to understand the world—and ultimately, to change the world—is to immerse them in it.” In the last 10 years, the campus, which had a history of connecting itself with industry, has pushed beyond traditional thinking about higher education being confined to the brick and mortar of the classroom. The transformation of traditional educational places was rooted in the campus’s long history of experiential education. According to Simon, who recently retired from his post as provost, “more important to me than global is experiential, and experiential extends towards global.” This linkage between global and experiential enabled the campus to build upon its traditions and see itself extending that tradition to new places in new ways.

The first piece of Hill’s notion of conventional educational place transformation was developing global opportunities beyond its New England campus. Much of transforming the campus to be more global was done through EIP, which was the primary experiential education vehicle for the campus. One administrator said of the program that it is not a requirement for graduation, but most students elect to engage in the program. She estimated as much as 97% of students choose to participate in an EIP. Hill has a long tradition of providing EIP; the program is over 100 years old. Most EIP experiences are six-month periods of full-time, paid employment. According to James, a founder of one of Hill’s regional campuses, “one of the big struggles with experiential education program over the years has been to become much more national and international in reach.” He and others at

Hill spoke of the EIP program of the mid-2000s, that had the vast majority of students do their experiences in the city where Hill is located or in the greater New England area.

The transformation of the EIP came in the form of moving it to the global stage at scale, which started around 2007. In EIP marketing material, Hill emphasized that the enhanced global element of these experiences aimed to provide students opportunities to work within diverse cultures, encounter challenges of a modern culturally interconnected world, and prepare for leadership and life in a global society. Joel said of EIP that “by immersing themselves in different cultures, proving themselves in different professional settings, and experiencing different problems, challenges and understandings of societal issues, our students gain a deeper understanding of the world, the subject they are studying, and themselves. When they return to the university ... they’ll apply all of this in their subsequent academic learning.” To match students with EIPs, the university maintains a network of coordinators who work with both students and employers. Since 2006, Hill reports that there has been a 133% increase in countries where they offer experiential learning programs. In 2019, Hill reported that students are currently engaged in work, study, and/or research in 131 countries world-wide. In addition, the campus also offered new ways to complete EIP that were less time-intensive, enabling more participants.

The second change was the development of satellite locations for the campus, including a network of four campuses across the US and one in Canada. One of the chief goals for this network was to provide footprints in those communities, which allowed Hill to familiarize the corporate community with what it offers, thereby providing a home base to EIP students in that geographic area. Beyond serving as bases for Hill’s EIP experiences, the

campuses were seen as an opportunity to serve underserved learners (e.g., adult learners and working professionals) in regions with a dearth of educational opportunity. This effort developed unique models for each city. For example, in one case the campus is an educational hub embedded directly in a high-tech company's headquarters.

This network continues to grow as the campus recently announced a new partnership with a school in London that will enable Hill to become the first university in the United States with a college that can confer undergraduate and graduate degrees in the United Kingdom. Plans for additional network campuses are also in the works, including a completely mobile degree that will enable students to rotate between the network campuses.

The third piece of the place transformation is the development of a robust online platform. Hill was an early adopter of online learning and developed a significant online curriculum. During the transformation, the campus took its online offerings that were marketed as conventional continuing education and transformed them into an online network for life-long learning. The results of these efforts are the over 200 online degree programs Hill now offers, which is up from 12 in 2006. Hill aims to be best in class for its online offerings and to do that it is changing its online strategy, incorporating needs for credentials, networking, as well as life long-learning that may require online, on-ground, or a hybrid approach that is not geographically bound.

To support all this transformation, the campus has scaled up its staff support and infrastructure. Across the university, new positions were created to support transforming the places the university operated in, including new staff advising positions and new faculty positions that specialized in global, web, or industry linkages that could be leveraged to

expand places for student learning. Most notably, the university created an International Education Office (IEO). The office provides a central hub to coordinate the global EIPs and other international experiences. Additionally, the campus formed a new division specifically aimed at supporting global programs abroad and online, which now has an annual revenue of approximately \$15 million and close to 100 staff. The result of this transformational work is a campus that now thinks of itself and its educational mission not only in terms of its New England home base, but with global and virtual experiences woven throughout the curriculum.

Elements of Hill's Transformation

The Hill case will specifically look at the transformation of conventional educational places. Structuring that presentation will be the previously established framework of (a) occurring over a period of time, (b) deep and pervasive, (c) affecting institutional culture, and (d) intentional.

Occurred Over a Period of Time

The mid-2000s were described by senior administrator James as a period in which “the vast majority of our students still did their EIPs in the city and local region.” Therefore, the transformation at Hill can be bound to starting in 2007, one year after the current president’s arrival. The transformation is ongoing, as referenced numerous times in the university’s 2006 academic plan, which was released in 2016 and contained two themes relevant to the place transformation of this study, namely the global university and lifelong experiential learning.

Deep and Pervasive

The changes necessary to bring about this transformation at HU have been wide-spread and pervasive. The transformation has created a variety of new programs and services to move education out of its urban campus and into global and virtual settings in new ways. Areas involved in the transformation have included the academic colleges, continuing and online education, student affairs and student services, enrollment management, marketing, and the President's Office. One example of the pervasiveness of the change, was changes in financial aid strategy that were made to help students defray the costs of international experiences. While a logical move, connecting financial aid to the institutional transformation is a demonstrable testament to the institution aligning its resources and goals in a proactive way.

In terms of the depth of the transformation, in many ways this transformation originated with a new presidential vision for the campus. He has spoken about it publicly since his arrival in speeches on and off campus, and has written about it in a book on the topic. Mari, a senior leader in Hill's Alcott School, personally credited Joel as "the one, really, who became much more globally focused." And while the goal may have started with the President's Office, it has traveled through the campus. Each interview spoke of the campus's desire to be educating students in new ways that deemphasizes a local brick and mortar model of education. For example, Adam, who works in student support services, described how the goal of transforming educational practices shaped the creation of a mobile application out of the Center for Teaching and Learning. This app is a digital experiential learning platform that enables students to engage in self-reflection and translation of any

experiential learning opportunity; be it an EIP, study abroad, or even student organization affiliation, students can contextualize, document and preserve it for use in a future employment setting. This app that has changed front line advising practice for students who have returned from global experiences and was not part of the senior administration's vision for transforming educational places, but emerged as a result of that vision reaching deep within the organization to inspire grassroots innovation.

Affected Institutional Culture

Hill's transformation affected its institutional culture, while also respecting cultural traditions the campus had. It effectually shifted public perception of the campus, in the 1990s as a local school with limited ambitions to that of a campus of prominence with global reach. The transformation used standard cultural experimentation and connection to the real world to move the transformational agenda forward.

The recent cultural development of Hill started in a place of limited institutional ambitions and grew over time to be global in its reach. Adam, a professional employee, mentioned that his brother attended Hill in the late 1990s. He recalled his brother describing "a very different kind of school" that did not look beyond the local. During the late 1990s and into the early 2000s the institution elevated its standards and increased the importance of national ranking appearances. This culture was then expanded in 2007 to reflect a more expansive vision of educational places.

Miriam, the director of the campus's International Education Office, spoke about the post-2007 culture in her interview:

It [the ambition to have students experience a variety of educational places] is a drive towards a cultural shift where we say that if you come to Hill, we expect that you will do that. We create opportunities and we make it easy, as easy as possible to do that. We'll help along the way. We have the infrastructure and the advising support and the financial commitment to help you do that.

Her comments point to an institutional attitude that staff communicate to current and future students: the value of education outside the classroom in new settings via non-traditional modalities. In addition, it is a message that goes beyond aspirational, due to a culture that seeks to make these opportunities possible through support such as advising and additional financial aid. This cultural attitude, the belief in education outside the classroom in settings not traditionally utilized, was described by several interviewees. It was mentioned as a world view of how staff approach their work, and a belief in how students should go about their educational experiences. This culture is now fundamental to student success and the fabric of the institution, which is a departure from the previous culture of limited reach and local focus.

The cultural change the campus experienced during the transformation was traced back by several individuals to a tradition on the campus of experimentation. Connor, who is an area head for Hill's graduate and continuing studies area, said on the cultural changes that "we started in an area where experimentation was probably more readily accepted than potentially a traditional environment." He was referencing Hill's decades long history for the EIP of which he went onto say "experiential is our cornerstone, it's our DNA."

Changes to EIP might have arrived at a cultural impasse if the campus community saw EIP as a set tradition that was not malleable, but rather in need of preservation, which can happen to long-standing higher education programs. Paul, a professional employee, in the university's College of Continuing Education, referenced this pitfall, and having worked at Hill in the early 2000s, he recalled that people did not see EIP as a fixed tradition, rather as a valued uniqueness in the higher education landscape. According to Paul:

We were already an outlier in that rather than a four-year bachelor's degree, we had a five-year bachelor's degree because of EIP. I think that notion opened some doors we didn't have to break down... there was more openness within the faculty than maybe in other institutions would see themselves as keepers of a very traditional model that people look to as "this is the only way we can do this." I think there was that sense of openness.

Senior administrator Patricia expanded on this:

Hill as an institution has gone through many changes, tough changes. It hit a wall on their enrollments in the early '90s. The changes that they pressed through, the strategic plan that was put on the table, actually resulted in progress. The place became changeable. The change wasn't scary. They didn't try this big change and things got worse and that wasn't the history. The second piece I would say is as an EIP institution, it's very connected with the real world. Therefore, you can have a conversation about markets, changing dynamics, speed to market agility. That lingo is accepted, it's embraced. It's not like, "Well, we don't have to worry about that. We're behind the Ivy Tower."

To Patricia's point, HU's familiarity with change, due to difficult times in the 1990s and its understanding of EIP not as a set program, but rather something that was malleable due to the campus's connection with the "real world," was a strong cultural foundation to change the campus's view of educational places

Intentionality

Intentionality speaks to a degree of deliberate action. Two examples of deliberate action illustrate the intentionality that was used at Hill. The first was purposeful messages from the president about the campus's reframing of conventional educational places. The second was the development of an academic plan.

In the early years of President Joel's tenure, interviewees recalled messaging from the president about global aspiration, which fits with the transforming conventional educational places goal. Miriam described the messages as being communicated through "speeches and conversations [in which] he strives for 100% of students graduating from Hill having some form of direct global experience." This presidential goal resulted in "strategizing about how to grow towards that goal" Miriam added. These presidential messages continued and were amplified during the 2010s when the campus engaged in an academic planning process.

The campus's academic plan represents the second major plank of the transformational intentionality. This process was convened by senior administrators and was a highly structured process that resulted in a clear plan for a period of ten years. According to Simon, the campus's provost who arrived in 2008, "the strategic plan was important because it ... set out a certain set of goals, certain objectives, it laid out values and systems in terms of experiential, in terms of globalization." The academic plan was referenced by individual

interviewees directly as well as indirectly as guiding their work in terms of alignment of day to day actions with larger institutional strategy.

Convergence Background Dynamics

Like GMCU, convergence at Hill had four important background dynamics that must be discussed prior to looking at specific strategies undertaken by professional employees and senior administrators. Three of these dynamics were found in Kezar (2012; i.e., interaction pathways, direction of interactions, and interest overlap). One emerged from the interview and observation data (i.e., a critically important goal). Each will be described using examples found in the data.

Interaction Pathways

Hill offered a similar interaction pathway to that of GMCU, therefore the pathway discussed in chapter four will be used in this chapter as well (Figure 5). This pathway was relevant for the transformation of traditional educational places at Hill, which was initiated by senior administrators. It was also relevant to subsequent changes in practices by professional employees, which were professional employee efforts meant to advance Hill's educational places transformation.

Hill's transformation began with organizational learning. At this point, Hill offered a traditional model with respect to location. It had gained national reputation and so was attracting students from across the US; however, engagement outside of the campus's region was limited. Patricia, a senior administrator, recalled that in 2008 the institution's external scanning was detecting forces in the world that were labeled as needs for an institutional response. These forces included increasing globalism and shifts in financial models (e.g., the

great recession of 2007-09). This scanning identified the need to change the way Hill thought about its locationality in order to position itself for future success.

This led to a senior administrator idea called domestic market expansion. This idea then was formed into a charge for a committee to “deepen our [institutional] impact and utilize a period of stressors, as a period of momentum” according to Patricia who co-chaired this committee. It was this charge that ultimately led to a critically important goal (CIG) of transforming Hill’s conventional educational places. This would take shape into a new organizational strategy that included expanding the EIP’s reach into global destinations and providing space in the experiential learning model for other versions of EIP that were shorter in length. Additionally, the strategy aimed to develop satellite campuses and elevate the campus’s online platform into something that could enable life-long learning, in addition to career re-training. This strategy was developed by a senior team -- the president, senior vice president for enrollment management, and the provost.

At this point in the convergence pathway is where senior administrators provided sense-giving about the CIG and changes in organizational strategy. Senior administrators made structural changes to grease the wheels for professional employees to change their practices. Two examples included the development of a new group charged with life-long learning. The group started out as a stand-alone organization charged with global networking, then morphed to include adult education, eventually deepening and broadening when the Continuing Education College moved under the umbrella of this group, forming a new organization known as the Learners Syndicate, which was led by Patricia. According to her, the Syndicate was aimed at serving as a “platform for service to colleges to get into those

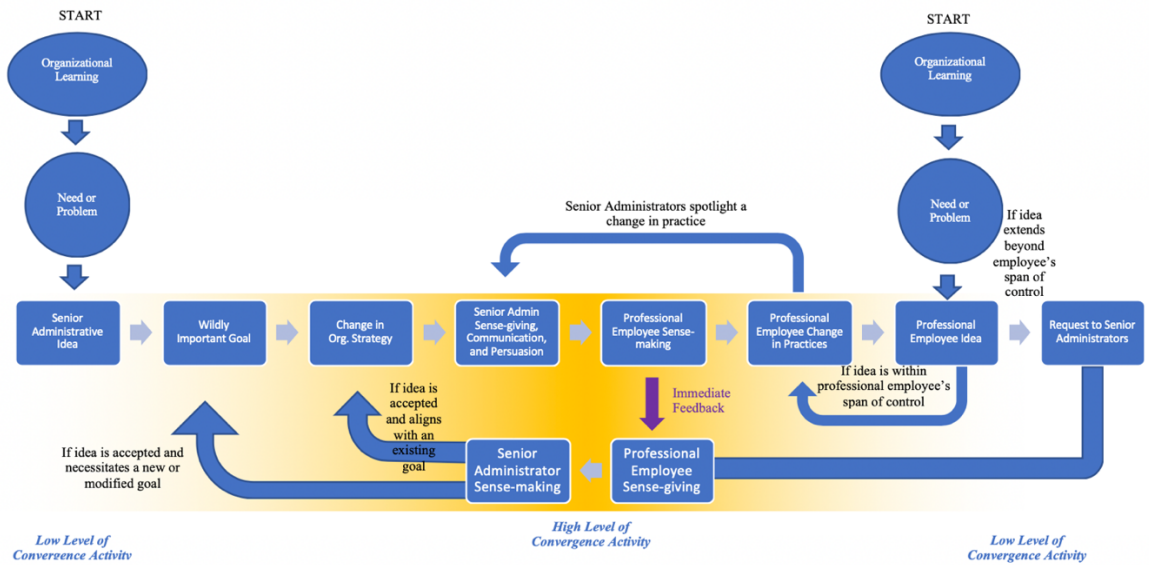


Figure 5. Hill Interaction Pathway

Patterning of the interaction pathway mimics that of GMCU, starting again with senior administrator organizational learning about growing globalism, a need to reposition the university to better meet this need and a CIG to transform where education takes place. What was clearer at Hill during analysis was that the strength of convergence interaction was strongest in the middle around sense giving and making by both groups and weakest at either end. Showing that at points there is a blending of their convergence and at other times each group was working more directly by itself. The data from Hill also substantiated Kezar’s supposition that directionality to convergence exists and clarified it within the transformational agenda context, showing that convergence interaction was bi-directional and iterative. Additions to this pathway were the purple “immediate feedback” and the yellow gradient representing the level of convergence activity.

modalities or regions for adult learners.” Additionally, administrators created the

International Education Office as a parallel platform to support undergraduate learning in global educational settings.

In addition to these structural changes, Hill communicated the new strategy and critically important goal through the campus’s supervision chain via cascading goals.

Numerous interviewees spoke about receiving goals from their supervisor about transforming educational places, which in turn, if they had direct reports, were broken down into goals for those individuals related to their work. For example, Adam who is a professional employee

in the Alcott School's academic advising area, described cascade goals setting that often occurred for global related initiatives:

When we're setting goals, the way we normally do it is the dean will get her goals in working with the Provost's Office and whatnot and then everything cascades down from the dean, the associate dean will make her goals, and that goes to the assistant dean in charge of this area, who will then make her goals ... my goals are based on the assistant dean's goals, which are supporting the associate dean's goals, which are assisting the dean's goals, which really are the priorities for the college.

Mari, also spoke about cascading goals related to transforming places, saying that "the message dribbles down to the frontline. If we're doing our jobs well, everyone's on the same page, and everyone is conveying the same message."

This supervision chain goal setting, which is a highly formalized sense-giving process, wasn't always received positively as one individual pointed out, "I don't always agree with the goals, but still, they are the goals. I just convey the goals; I tell the people who work for me." Additionally, the structured nature of this process seemed to work better with staff than faculty because as Mari pointed out, "faculty are very autonomous ... so it's really the administrative structure, the chairs, who align their departments with the dean's goals." This leaves out faculty from this example of the sense-giving process, which could explain why Jenna, a faculty EIP coordinator, said, "I don't think there is really a cohesive well-articulated structure" for the transformation of educational places.

This aforementioned interaction was started in a top top-down manner, however, bottom-up started interaction also did also occur at Hill. Simon, the campus's provost,

mentioned that faculty did have ideas that contributed to the transformation of place. Often, they involved requests to senior administrators for a change in strategy that would bring about a different deployment of resources. Simon said that as a senior administrator he saw it as part of his work to “make sure that what the faculty [were] feeling or thought and ideas they had were getting fed back up to the deans and to me.” Many of these ideas came from professional employees, perhaps due to the institution’s highly formalized cascading supervision goal setting process, were, according to Miriam, “about tactics and processes, and how we can do things smoother and better and not spin the wheels and improve this and improve that.”

One bottom-up professional employee idea that went beyond operational improvement had to do with the main campus’s limited residence hall bed capacity. Miriam recounted that the staff in enrollment management and housing brought the situation to her and her team’s attention, which is an example of organizational learning. Her office, the IEO office, seeing the situation as a problem took it to faculty, together they engaged in a rigorous bottom-up ideating process, which resulted in a new model for students in transition – a six-month study abroad that would span a regular semester and a summer semester. According to Miriam “we came up with a model that I would not have come up with alone.” This model was pitched back through sense-giving to senior administrators, as it required an adjustment in strategy to be realized, and ultimately adopted, advancing the transformation of place strategy of getting students to engage in global experiences and addressing the main campus’s housing shortage.

The Hill case also pointed out another piece of the interaction pathway. After a senior administrative idea or strategy change is presented to professional employees, they may be invited or choose to immediately provide sense-giving feedback, which in turn may trigger senior administrative sense-making, and result in refinement of the strategy (figure 5). Adam gave an example of this, detailing when senior administration came up with a new strategy to make experiential learning more marketable to employers. He said, “the advising office got an early copy, some really basic information about what this [new strategy] would look like ... I don’t know how common that is [elsewhere] but we are usually pulled in pretty early.” As a result of this early preview, professional employees engaged in sense-making and then provided immediate sense-giving about the draft strategy in the form of actionable feedback that improved the strategy and it made for a more successful official rollout of the strategy. This piece of the pathway did not involve employees changing their practice, but it engaged their sense-making abilities of their professional experience to inform a top-down change, which then incorporated their feedback through a convergence interaction.

As can be seen from the above examples, the interaction pathway can be initiated by either group, therefore its directionality was bidirectional, a label that will be explored further in the next section on the directionality of the convergence interaction.

Direction of Interaction

The convergence that occurred at Hill University was bidirectional: transformational energy sometimes was top-down, initiated by senior administrators who then sought interaction with professional employees; while at other times it was bottom-up, initiated by professional employees who sought interaction with senior administrators.

An example of senior administrator-initiated convergence comes from James who said, “the president and the senior staff were very clear about the direction of the institution.” This clarity of direction is an example of senior administrator-initiated convergence. It was a top-down idea to re-imagine where a Hill education could take place. Another example of a top-down instance of convergence was the 2016 academic plan. This plan’s groundwork was laid by the campus’s president and provost, but then involved stakeholders from across the university to bring ideas forward and help shape the revised institutional strategy that advanced the campus’s goals. Additionally, senior administrators were careful to remain open to and supportive of bottom-up initiated convergence overtures. According to James there was a “loop and an iterative process around bringing a concept to the table with a group of peers, beating it up, coming back, typically having it refined, rolling it out.”

When asked about bottom-up ideas, Patricia said, “there was a million because the seeding of innovation breeds more innovation.” She recalled one example where faculty who were teaching in the online platform brought their pedagogical needs to the platform’s developers who then needed to ask senior administrators for institutional resources. This occurred, and these features were developed. These features were then used by these faculty to make their online courses more interactive. Another interviewee, Adam, said, “there’s a sense that you can take an idea and you can run with it ... if it’s a good idea and you’re committed to it, they’re [senior administrators] going to put the resources behind you.” Such a sentiment aptly describes a bottom-up convergence-initiated interaction of a professional employee having an idea that extends beyond their span of control, sharing that idea with

senior administrators through sense-giving and making, followed by an adjustment in institutional strategy.

These types of examples highlight an iterative, cyclical interaction process. It was characterized by frequent communication between the two groups as pointed out by Adam, who said, “it was easy to start this kind of dialogue, and I think this might have really helped, we got the sense and we always have the sense here that if we have questions, and we have concerns, that we can bring this higher up, not just within this college either.” Additionally, several interviewees pointed out the speed at which these interactions occurred. Mari said that “it’s literally like we are running over the bridge as we’re building it.” While Patricia added “it was fast paced.” However, this circuit did not start off with fast interactions.

Interest Overlap

In the case of Hill, these two groups had interests that overlapped that centered on the enhancement of the institutional ability to develop a global mindset for students and advancing accessibility for diverse learners. These interests were captured well in the institution’s 2025 academic plan released in 2016. The plan described a future state of an institution that will have “global networks for lifelong learning and discovery.” Such a statement captures the interests for global readiness and availability of a learning environment that goes beyond the traditional student population, which was shared by senior administrators and professional employees in their interviews.

President Joel was outspoken on the topic of transforming Hill’s conventional educational places, making the case for it in campus speeches, graduation remarks, online videos, and professional writing. A recent book authored by the president explored the topic

of education in the information age and beyond. A central argument in the book is that humans learn from experience and that experience is far richer and more necessary than the rote-learning and recitation of the current educational system. Joel makes the case in today's ever-increasing interconnected world that not only must education be experiential, it must have global dimensions so that the experience students are having is reflective of the world in which they will work and live within. These arguments have become a central priority for his presidency and is described on the President's Office website under the heading of globalization of higher education.

This interest is echoed in senior administrative writings, including the university's academic plan and the institution's integrative learning framework, which includes institutional learning domains and outcomes, one of which is global mindset. In short, senior administrators have interests in offering programs, services, and experiences that advance global learning opportunities and help prepare learners for a more interconnected world.

Professional employee interviews indicated two main interests. The first was student success. Michelle indicated that "everything we do really is about student success and understanding not only what students want, but what students need." This idea of student success was a major consideration for professional employees during the transformation, as they often were generating ideas to support student success as new educational places came on-line. The other main interest of professional employees was global citizenship. Many referenced their deeply held belief for educating students to take their place in a larger global village in a positive manner, and that the institution had an obligation to provide learning opportunities to help facilitate such development.

An example of these professional employee interests can be seen in the bottom-up idea previously discussed of an admissions program for new students that resolved limited residence hall capacity on the main Hill campus. The proposed solution for this problem was to have students starting with an extended six-month study abroad. When the problem was broached with professional employees, including faculty, their interest in student success and globalism combined resulting in a study abroad experience that would put students ahead of the on-campus curricular requirement curve by accomplishing certain requirements earlier than “traditional on-campus” students.

In addition to these general professional employee interests, faculty had interests relevant to their specific work. The first was disciplinary or geographic interests. For example, management faculty were mentioned as highly active in the transformation of educational places, likely due to that discipline’s frequent contact with globalization. Additionally, a faculty member in management’s personal interest and relationships with South Asian businesses resulted in that faculty member have an interest in opening up opportunities for students in South Asian businesses. According to faculty member Rahan:

When I started the Center for Emerging Markets 11 years ago, I was fortunate that the president and various deans over the last 11 years also saw the value of focusing on these countries ... [this work] has helped build relationships with universities in these countries.

This shared interest in these countries, more broadly defined as a shared global interest by this professional employee and senior administrator, resulted in joint research conferences with faculty from Hill and schools in those countries, as well as exchange programs.

To advance their interests, senior administrators recognized that their interests alone could not sustain a transformation of the campus's notion of conventional educational places. Rather, they recognized that they would need to understand, support, and work with the interests of professional employees, especially the faculty. This was necessary as according to the campus's former provost, Simon, "the faculty can kill things." Simon provided an example of this blunt reality related to senior administration's early efforts to increase participation in study abroad. While well intentioned, senior administrators did not take into account a primary faculty interest: getting students to graduate as quickly as possible. This faculty interest resulted in a perception that study abroad would delay graduation, and therefore the effort was viewed by the faculty as in competition with their primary interest. As a result, many faculty refused to recommend study abroad opportunities, causing a convergence short circuit for the senior administrative idea of study abroad expansion, due to interests not overlapping. While this is an example of unshared interests, it highlights the importance of the sharing and understanding of interests by both groups.

In addition to senior administrators understanding the interests of professional employees, they also worked to recruit employees that had interests in the agenda of transforming educational places. Patricia mentioned the recruitment of talent that had this interest as a key activity for administration. This has resulted in faculty hires who have research agendas in the area of globalization with international implications. It has also resulted in staff hires who are particularly passionate about travel and globalism. Jenna, a professional employee who is a coordinator in an international affairs office, said, "I've always been interested in this site [Hill University]. I've traveled a lot, I've taught a lot

abroad and studied abroad myself as well, it's always been part of my educational orientation. It came quite naturally to me and the goal of the university was setting that they wanted to go just aligned nicely with my own education and personal learning goals.”

Critically Important Goal (CIG)

As previously discussed, Hill University has had a focus on transforming conventional educational places. This section will detail that focus as the campus's critically important goal that has served as an anchor for institutional transformation since the late 2000s. It was referenced by people as a historical guiding point for a previous strategic period that concluded in 2015 with the release of a new academic plan as well as an aspirational beacon for current and future work yet to be started. It was nebulously defined in its early stages and has come into much sharper focus with the publishing of the recent academic plan. Regardless of when one looks at Hill's CIG, it rests upon a core institutional belief that “the most powerful education is experiential.” These words from President Joel reflect a conviction upon which the campus has been transforming, broadening the places in which traditional classroom and complimentary experiential learning can occur. Accordingly, the CIG has three dimensions to it: (a) globalism for campus based students, (b) online opportunities that move beyond traditional coursework and degree programs to serve learners at a multitude of life stage needs, and (c) satellite locations to serve students in those locations and support main campus students travel based learning opportunities.

The first dimension to the CIG is getting students from the Hill campus out of the city the school is in, particularly out of the region to gain global experience. According to Hill President Joel, this is an important aspiration as “the existing model of higher education has

yet to adapt to the seismic shifts rattling the foundations of the global economy,” referencing the interconnectivity of the global economics and also the growing shift to a hyper information-based workforce. In a recent commencement address he said that Hill students must feel as at home in global locations as in their homes in order for Hill’s home state and the US to thrive. This presidential economic argument for globalization of a Hill’s students education also includes information from employers who Joel say want Hill graduates to have “real-world experience, especially on a global level.” Professional employees are also clear on this piece of the CIG as evidenced by Jayden who said that “Hill has been forward-thinking in placing more emphasis on globalization and the desire to give undergraduates especially, global perspective over the course of their undergraduate experience.” The idea of getting students off the campus to be global learners was commonly referenced by professional employees within the context of increasing study abroad, growing travel-based courses, developing an admissions program that starts a student’s Hill experience with a semester abroad, and expanding the number of locations of EIP opportunities.

The next dimension of the CIG is online opportunities. Hill has been a strong player in the online space, priding itself on a large number of online courses and programs. Nonetheless, the campus has been striving to improve the model of online education, to grow it so that the fullness of a Hill educational experience can be brought to students, instead of students having to come to Hill. Once again, President Joel has been instrumental in talking about piece of the CIG. He has said that the campus will “differentiate the value and uniqueness of our online portfolio ... [to] achieve ‘best in class’ status.” Joel has also said of this effort that it will define the next generation of online programs.

Moving online offerings in this direction was detailed in the school's latest academic plan and was described as delivering a personalized model that will deliver content as well as resources that match individual learner goals. Additionally, it focuses on a lifelong relationship of learners with the institution, seeking to move beyond the traditional college years and occasional retraining focus of a continuing education online program. It is focused on offering professional programs, degrees, certificates, credentials, skill-based learning opportunities, and experiential learning opportunities wherever in the world the student lives. Included in the online growth is the fuller incorporation of blogs, videos, and discussion forums into the learning platform, opportunities for online learners to do EIP, and a "multigenerational ecosystem of lifelong learning and career support." The EIP element of this was described by Connor from the Continuing Education College as an EIP 2.0 that involves all the traditional hallmarks of EIP in terms of real-world experience, but in a very quick "gig-style" schedule that is responsive to individuals already in the workforce. Such a model is aimed at people who are working full-time, or individuals who can only attend school part-time, thus professional employees have said of their online work that it is based on flexibility, adaptability, and accessibility that a traditional classroom based 4-year degree program cannot offer.

The final piece of the Hill CIG is the development of satellite locations. The locations were set-up to serve students in those locations and support campus-based students travel based learning opportunities. According to President Joel, these Hill locations were designed to be in places where there is a market of individuals who are looking to retool and/or advance their knowledge. Patricia also commented on the locations of these satellites as

being in places where individuals may not have access to educational experiences that can adequately meet their workforce development needs. In the last few years Hill has opened four campus locations across the US and one in Canada. It is currently working on additional locations including one in the United Kingdom. These locations have also served as springboards for EIPs, building relationships with local businesses and organization leaders and serving as hubs for students traveling to these locations. Additionally, the campus has developed a number of staff positions in countries across the globe to recruit students and serve as facilitators of EIP relationship building and student advising, in a scaled down version of what the satellite locations do. Finally, the campus is now using its network of locations to have what they are calling the “first fully mobile degree”.

Together, these three dimensions make up a CIG that is well known at Hill. It is spoken about by senior administrators as well as professional employees. It guides the institution as shaped by senior administrators and the practices of professional employees. It is also what both groups are working towards for Hill’s transformation through convergence, the strategies of which will be explored in the next section.

Convergence Strategies

Thus far this chapter has reported on findings that demonstrate the transformation that occurred at Hill as well as the background dynamics. This section will detail the convergence strategies in sub-sections that will correspond to the groups that were noted to have engaged these strategies, professional employees and senior administrators, senior administrators alone, and professional employees alone.

Professional Employee and Senior Administrator Strategies

The convergence strategies that were utilized by both groups in terms of their location on the interaction pathway often occurred at the middle where the two groups interacted most frequently (e.g., communication, relationships, sense-making and giving, and translating Figure 5). Interestingly, one strategy occurred for both groups when their interaction was low. This strategy, organizational learning, occurred early on in the convergence process and was often the foundation for follow-on steps to occur.

Organizational Learning. At Hill the organizational learning that the campus community engaged in was not only about what ways the organization itself functioned, but also how the organization served its constituencies, which was done through external scanning.

The convergence processes began at Hill with organizational learning by senior administrators engaging in external scanning, which resulted in the detection of rapid globalization forces. Simon, the campus's provost, said, "we were in a view to the fact that globalization was happening all over." Because of this view, senior administrators evaluated the EIP to learn if EIP was structured in a manner to serve students adequately for entry into a global world. The result was organizational learning that improvements needed to be made to EIP to better serve students in a global society. This evaluative process was done for other areas in the 2000s, including online and expansion to other sites and the organizational learning revealed organizational needs.

Interviews found two techniques that were used by senior administrators in regard to organizational learning. The first was actively listening to professional employee insights.

According to Mari, senior administration relies heavily on academic advisors and EIP staff to inform them on how the CIG is progressing. She said that these individuals “meet with hundreds of students in a semester” and as a result have an acute perception of the quality and type of educational experience students are having that may be in non-conventional educational places. Adam, who is a professional employee that manages academic advising for one of Hill’s schools, verified that senior administrators value knowledge that professional employees send up the chain: “they see us as an active partner. They think that there is information that we can provide to them and they can provide to us and we can best serve the students ... there is a give and take back and forth conversation that goes on here.” Such a back and forth conversation occurs through events and groups that will be detailed later, but recently also took to social media.

During the development of the recent institutional academic plan, senior administration launched an organizational learning social media campaign: “#TrueHill”. It was released by President Joel at a State of the University speech and ran for several months. Five guiding questions were posed during the campaign to help individuals from across the community share what they think makes Hill special to them, what makes a “true” Hill experience. Hundreds of responses came into Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Tumblr, as photos, videos, and text posts. At points during the effort, the institution even set up a special video booth to help people record and share their #TrueHill messages. EIP was a popular response, as was the passion of students, and the pride faculty and staff feel serving at a university that “never stops evolving, rewards creativity, and continues to challenge and surprise.” One week featured the question, “how has Hill made you more global?”

Individuals responded saying they wanted expansion of online experiences, with stories of the learning that happened outside of the boundaries of Hill's campus, and why global engagement is important. One faculty member even responded saying that "by 2025, I expect Hill students will routinely do at least one EIP abroad," he went onto say "Globalizing EIP will be our defining contribution to Hill's second century." These responses and others were aggregated to news stories that were featured on Hill's website and in turn were used as data for the academic planning process. While not a scientific method of organizational learning, it provided a low cost way to engage a wide audience. The campaign was cost-effective in terms of the institutional monetary investment and also from a contributor's perspective as submissions could be completed in merely a few minutes, as opposed to the time commitment of other methods like surveys and focus groups which additionally require staff time.

Another organized learning technique professional employees reported using was gathering student reflections from their international experiences. These are often completed post-EIP, so reviewing them helped professional employees understand what was going well with global EIPs and what needed to be improved as EIPs expanded to other out-of-region destinations. According to Jenna:

We conduct reflection sessions with our students. We have first-year students reply to four different reflection prompts while they're on EIP. All students, whether they're doing domestic EIP or global, participate in a group reflection session at the end of their EIP where they really basically deconstruct their learning. What happened, what

did they learn, how does it align with their EIP goals and objectives? How does it not? It was to really help students to take a meaning from the experience.

These reflections are used locally by individuals close to EIP to adjust practices that are within their span of control. They are also reviewed more centrally by the Center for Learning, which reports to the provost.

In addition to direct feedback from students, professional employees regularly review curriculum to see how what is offered is connecting to the CIG. Miriam shared that she and her team have assessed five years of data from each college and each major to know how many students are graduating from each class with an international experience. This information is then used to target specific areas that could use more support in getting students to have global experiences.

Finally, professional employees themselves, by nature of their practice, are organizational learners. Miriam, senior administrator who runs the International Education Office (IEO), spoke of a group of curriculum integration managers that her office hired. Their task was to link up with academic departments and colleges to uncover what curriculum could be delivered abroad, and then bring that learning back to the IEO where other employees would refine the discovered ideas for development in partnership with those units. Other offices shared how they assemble small groups of professional employees or even external stakeholders in the work of an operation to gain knowledge on how the CIG is being experienced by a target population. Professional employees such as Michelle also mentioned that they took advantage of forums made available by senior administration during the strategic planning process that most recently occurred to share their thoughts and

the state of their professional practice, which was helpful to senior administration who used that learning to then inform the strategic plan itself.

While the methods above provided helpful information to Hill University senior administrators and professional employees, it is important to note that no central coordination or strategy for organizational learning was found. Nonetheless, through daily operations both groups have developed ways to tap into the state of the world and their university to help guide understanding of the work that needs to be done to jointly move the needle on the CIG.

Communication. Hill convergence communication often occurred through the organization's chain of command. Mari indicated that often there are decisions made about strategy within the provost's office that are communicated to the dean's level, "then the deans come back and talk with their associate deans, then with me [as an assistant dean] and the chairs, it just flows down." Professional employees said that communication also flows upward. For example, Adam said that "it's very easy for your average academic advisor to bring up concerns with myself, an associate director, or our assistant dean, we're very accessible." This communicating up and down is dependent on a sense of openness and respect. Adam specifically mentioned that professional employees have a sense of comfort with senior administrators and that they are willing to bring up issues with them knowing they will listen and take the issues seriously. "You never really get the sense that they're like 'why are you talking to me? I'm a very busy person.' They entertain these questions and they really look into it to see- if you have the questions, there might be something legitimate there maybe it's worth everybody taking a look at."

The openness of Senior administrators to receiving questions was echoed in several interviews and seemed to be a methodology for these two campus groups to communicate with each other, asking and answering questions of each other.

Beyond chain of command communication and openness, senior administrators used several communication tactics. The first was transparency with key groups (e.g., deans, faculty, and shared governance groups). This transparency was related to why senior administrators choose the CIG, progress on the CIG, challenges complicating CIG progress, and also reinforcing CIG priorities. Communication of this type was done through several methods, including email that was often sent by President Joseph to the community. Senior administrators also communicated promising proactive practices that emerged from professional employee ideas and highlighted ideas in institutional news publications. Communication also happened at town hall meetings. These events were intended to be opportunities for two-way communication; however, they were not mentioned by professional employees as effective venues to communicate their ideas, therefore it seems they were better suited for top-down communication.

For professional employees, there were also specific techniques used to communicate their perspective on the CIG. The first was use of a website that was established during the development of the 2025 Academic Master plan. According to Michelle, this is where people could go to “share thoughts and ideas.” Data would seem to back up Michelle’s comments as more than 360 comments were posted to the site’s blog, nearly 32,000-page views were recorded, and nearly 7,000 new and returning users visited the site. Another way to communicate was through groups. This convergence strategy will be

explored later in detail, but staff meetings were described as helpful places for professional employees to share up the chain of command. Adam said of his team's staff meetings "we have weekly staff meetings where we ... constantly keep goals for the college in mind." Keeping the goals at the contextual forefront enables professional employees to frame their ideas within the language senior administrators are using to describe the CIG, and then formulate ways to communicate their needs to senior administrators to advance those needs. Staff meetings were also useful places to present to higher-ups in administration, such as deans, several of which were reported to visit staff meetings and could be thought of as having a middle-translator role to bridge the needs of the professional employees with the strategy decision making power of senior administrators. The last tactic used by professional employees was specific to faculty, and that was the use of shared governance. By the nature of this arrangement, a subset of faculty are given the opportunity to communicate their perspective on the CIG more directly to senior administrators than through the layers of the typical chain of command communication approach. "Faculty always have a voice," said Michelle, "by virtue of the fact that they're faculty and they have governing bodies that actually allows them to always have a voice." The perception about the degree to which that voice is effective and/or is a coordinated message varied from interview to interview. Some saw the faculty shared governance as somewhat productive in communicating CIG related needs, while others said it was not productive.

Relationships. As convergence is the coming together of two different groups of people, relationships are necessary in order for other convergence strategies such as sense-making or giving to occur. Hill relationships were most often built and sustained through

organizational structures (e.g., the relationships that occur from formal organizational chart connections and through committees as well as similar groups).

The first example of the role of Hill relationships in convergence was the top-down relationship senior administrators had with the academic professional employees. A specific position that was mentioned by several interviewees as being a helpful broker of relationships was the academic dean. According to James, an academic dean himself, the deans were used by senior administration to bridge the upper echelon of senior administration with middle management and front line employees, given their exposure to both groups. When talking about deans, James said, “[They] had to work hard to communicate the strategy and do a lot of fixing of systems to make sure that the strategy could actually be implemented.” This communication, he said, was with staff and faculty about the CIG, the strategy, and sometimes the justification behind both to keep individuals motivated to make changes in their practices in order to meet the strategy change objectives from senior administration. Deans were used in this manner at the direction of the provost who considered faculty as key to have onboard for CIG change making, therefore deans were charged with engaging their group of professional employees. To build and sustain relationships, Adam mentioned that his college’s dean made herself readily available for staff, communicated frequently with them, attended staff meetings across the college, and knew staff on sight. These efforts made him feel a professional relationship with his dean even though there were several other managers between himself and the dean.

Relationships were also used as a professional employee strategy. Hill is a large organization with many departments, colleges, and divisions. Therefore, on occasion,

professional employees attempting to make changes in practices would have to use relationships with other professional employees to make change. For example, Paul, a professional employee working in Hill's Continuing Education College, was charged with development of a division of the college that would be an international serving division and internationalize the continuing education offerings and experiences. Over the course of more than a decade this charge yielded a division now called Hill Worldwide that has a revenue of approximately \$45 million a year and close to 40 full-time employees. To bring about this change, Paul mentioned that relationships were important, in particular for him to have association with "academic standing committees of all the colleges" as well as college associate deans. These relationships enabled him to share, process, and amend policy and curricular changes necessary to develop the new continuing education division, which needed to align staff and programs of the non-continuing education colleges with the vision for the new continuing education division. These relationships were primarily focused on involving the key gatekeepers that would have to buy into the changes in order for them to work.

Sense-Making and Giving. During Hill's transformation, sense-making and giving occurred between professional employees and senior administrators. It was at this point that professional employee ideas were presented to senior administrators for them to make changes in the strategy or CIG itself through sense-giving and sense-making. It was also at this point that senior administrators communicated and attempted to persuade professional employees about the CIG and related strategy and professional employees contextualized these efforts within their own roles and professional practices, again sense-giving and making. This part of the two groups interaction pathway was often the most intense level of

convergence activity as one group would attempt to persuade, and the other understand that persuasion, within the confines of their roles. According to Michelle, who was asked about the sense-making and giving part of the interaction, said it was the place in which “one [group] is informing the other.”

In the earliest days of the transformation, sense-making and giving was not necessarily happening with great frequency. At that point senior administrators were sense-giving to professional employees on the CIG and the new institutional strategy. Professional employees in turn attempted to make sense of that for their own work. Simon, the institution’s provost, mentioned that there was sense-giving to sell faculty on the idea of transforming educational places. According to him “they had to be brought along and understand the benefits of it and buy into the benefits of international experiences.” To increase the convergence interaction, senior administrators offered new resources and support for innovative ideas in their sense-giving. This moved the convergence interaction forward, according to Patricia, “People started to fight to get in the game because the energy was there, resources were there, institutional attention was there, and it was actually improving the educational experience.” Connor, a professional employee, pointed out that getting the exchange to happen between senior administrators and professional employees took time for professional employees to “understand that it [the CIG] was going to compliment it [their work], not impact it in a negative way ... ‘How is the new thing going to impact the old?’” Senior administrators did sense-giving on the CIG and strategy with great clarity to the point that James, who opened a satellite campus for Hill, commented that when he and his team needed to make adjustments to a New England based campus program to fit

with the needs of their campus and the local community, that his campus leadership was able to make those changes with confidence as they felt their sense-making of the CIG and strategy was accurate and could be used to sense-give about their practice changes in ways that senior administrators would positively receive through their sense-making. In James's view, "When we took that program and did the changes that we needed to do to implement that, we didn't get pushback from the senior administration because it was clear to them why we were doing what we were doing."

Connor, who was a key player in the transformation within the Continuing Education College, also argued that in order for the two groups to come together and hear each other out, it required mutual understanding of a low risk level for professional employees. A major change in institutional strategy can be a high stakes endeavor, one where senior administrators apply pressure and can seek to hold individuals accountable when experiments do not yield desired results. For Hill's lifelong learning dimension of the transformation, this was not the case. Individuals were given freedom to bring ideas forward, to experiment. According to Connor, professional employees working in his area were able to "start small, like prove your idea in a not too small but in a reasonable manner, something that's legitimately [able to be] scaled." The smaller ideas were building blocks for professional employees that were eventually escalated, requiring senior administrators to change resourcing to support the envisioned new practices and programs. Had administrators sought to rush Connor and his professional employee colleagues, the sense-making and giving exchange likely would have not been as productive, as it would have been more of a top-down directive than convergence.

Key to the sense-making and giving process is the ability for one group to ask questions of the other. This was heard from professional employees to senior administrators. The need to clarify and understand where their work fits within the larger plan was important to the success of professionals making sense of the CIG and associated strategy. When asked about these two groups merging, Adam, a professional employee in one of Hill's advising units, recalled a top-down initiative to change a program in his area. Instead of a mandate to make the change, he recalled that senior administrators presented the change and then it was "easy to start this kind of dialogue" about the change with those seeking to make it. He went on to say, "We got the sense and we always have the sense here that if we have questions, and we have concerns, that we can bring them higher up, not just within this college either." This exchange resulted in a better program in the end, according to Adam, as the professionals' sense-giving was practice-informed and received with greater clarity due to senior administrators engaging in a sense-making with professional employees about the change.

Events. Events at Hill were primarily found to be large group gatherings used to provide forums for people to engage in convergence activity. One event that came up was the president's annual state of the university address. This yearly meeting has been used to present updates on the CIG, share the latest strategy decisions from senior administration, as well as sense-give about upcoming strategic moves. According to James "the president was always very good about providing a state of the university address where he would articulate the overall strategy for the institution." President Joel often uses these meetings to share the event stage with key individuals to publicly reinforce relationships (e.g., the student government president, faculty leaders, and the provost). Hill also has made efforts through

these meetings to provide organization learning opportunities for staff. As the institution has transformed conventional educational places, it has needed to change its town hall strategy to be inclusive of staff across the globe. Early attempts included live streaming, social media, and a hashtag. More recently, this address has taken on a truly global nature having celebrations on each of the satellite campus and virtual locations: broadcasts on Facebook Live, the school's dedicated cable channel, and a behind the scenes look at one-satellite location's coverage on Snapchat. Multiple in-person celebration locations were held on the main campus with special giveaways, free food, and thematic tie-ins for CIG priorities; for example, to highlight the transformation of conventional educational places, the IEO office hosted a celebration station in the student center to highlight the array of global opportunities.

In addition to these annual meetings, there also were other events that assembled large groups of professional employees and senior administrators. Patricia said that there were many "think-together sessions, things where people could engage with one another and with the strategy directly." Simon added, "I used to have every quarter or two, three times a year, we would have university-wide department head meetings, department chair meetings to talk about issues." These meetings included a diverse audience, including campus partners such as employers who shared ideas on experiential learning and the campus's EIP program. While these meetings were positively referenced by many, some interviewees did comment that there are mixed reviews for them, often criticized as overly top-down. Mari said, "They're open meetings, but they're not actually really soliciting feedback."

One type of event that was noticeably absent from interviews was focus groups. Only one interviewee referenced focus groups. Of these, Mari said, “With all the EIP changes, they ran lots of focus groups ... got everybody in the whole area involved ... Was it effective? I don’t know. Probably not.” Perhaps Mari’s comment on the groups not being effective for the CIG is why other interviewees did not mention focus group events.

Groups. Two types of groups were common at Hill related to the transformational process: administratively chartered formal groups, and committees.

The first group type was the administratively chartered formal group. This type of group was critical to the initiation of convergence, as it was used during the initial creation of the CIG. According to Patricia in 2008, senior administration formed a taskforce to respond to the needs the external scans identified. Their charge was to re-examine what the campus was doing and deepen its impact. The membership of this group included faculty, staff, deans, and vice-presidents. This group shaped what would become the CIG; specifically, they recommended to create what at the time was called the domestic market expansion. A committee was then formed of various stakeholders that could shape the strategy, sensegive, and change professional practices. This committee then became, according to Patricia, a team with more frequent and intense interactions. Following the formation of the team, Hill rearranged staff reporting lines to formalize new relationships that had formed on the team. With new reporting lines, traction and momentum was growing, and a name was given to the organization. This process had several iterations, eventually resulting in pieces spinning off from the team to be developed separately as well as formation of the Learners Syndicate, which is an important dimension to the transformation of

conventional educational places. The process of a taskforce to new organization also resulted in great focus on the CIG, elevating the energy and attention to the CIG as people were tapped to serve in a variety of roles, some formal and some informal, in administratively chartered groups related to this work.

After the convergence pathway was initiated, it was often fed by the work of groups. Michelle recalled that senior administrators created working teams for “large initiatives that pulled from across the institutions and people at various levels.” These groups were formed through a presidential delegation of power as Joel’s office tapped senior vice presidents to work “collaboratively to assign, to create these workings teams, and then work with their reports to identify people to serve on these teams” according to Michelle. The value of these groups was that they provided convergence spaces for people up and down the hierarchy to gather and sense-make as well as sense-give in a face to face manner. This was done through relationships that in some cases were formed and in other cases continued through these groups.

An Advising Council is an example of a Hill committee that contributed to the CIG. The Council has a broad membership roster including academic advisors, Registrar’s Office, study abroad programs, the International Education Office, the Provost’s Office, and others. As academic advising on the campus is decentralized, the Council enables coordination and information sharing, which at times has included practices related to the CIG. This Council also is an active group that provides a sense-making space for professional employees.

According to Adam:

We'll hear about Provost office level priorities and initiatives, if a new program is coming out for instance, a good example of that would be, there's a big push for the Hill University 2025 plan and there is varying different pieces of that and so, when they want to talk more in depth about some of the specific programming that's built in support of that larger 2025 goal to us at the advising council so that we can really start to wrap our mind around that and what does this really mean for advising and for students and how are we going to communicate these things.

Adam contends that having such a space is a mechanism to enable a “back and forth conversation” that is at the heart of convergence.

In addition to the Advising Council, committees were referenced by several interviewees. Jenna, a professional employee in one of the colleges, reported that her college formed a committee of herself and others involved in the college's EIP efforts, and faculty from the International Affairs program, with the aim of building out their contributions to the CIG in the form of diversifying EIP locations. A committee such as this seems to present the ability to focus professional efforts upon the CIG, providing a dedicated time to work on the transformational work as this committee reported building capacity within the college for additional CIG transformation efforts such as lunch and learns, professional development about job development, creation of new advising materials for students, and mentoring staff in “creating jobs and advising students in these global positions.” Jenna reported that this is one of many committees she has served on related to the CIG saying that there are “a lot of different committees that do global work.”

While committees were utilized as a group to affect change in professional practices, there may have been a lack of a group to coordinate the systematic changes in institutional strategy once the initial taskforce disbanded. Jenna reported that:

I don't think that there is the kind of cohesive, bringing all the stakeholders together, to really think about how we each are working towards this goal and how we could be reinforcing each other's efforts and how we don't reinforce each other's efforts. I'd like it to be much more of an ongoing conversation and a university-wide collaboration.

While Hill did start this transformation with a university-wide taskforce and there was a recent university-wide strategic planning effort guided by a group of university leaders, the intervening years may have overly relied on the chain of command structures to coordinate the work once the CIG was set in motion. This seems plausible when the comments of Mari who works in the same school as Jenna and is more senior than her. When asked about group work, Mari pointed to a challenge with some professional employee faculty in her college.

In the EIP faculty group, I go around and around and around, and they [the EIP faculty] honestly feel, some of them, like they really can change something where the train already left the station. What I do is I keep trying to give them the rationale, we talk about it, but then at a certain point in time, I just say "Stop talking. It's not doing any good. It isn't worth going on doing this. We have a huge change that's happening in EIP this year and they need to be done by fall. Now, do any of us, even myself included, think that the process has been smooth or good? No, it hasn't been, but it doesn't matter. We're still going ahead."

This pointed statement reveals, at least in the Alcott School, that convergence was not consistent, rather top-down mandates were used to carry out parts of the CIG agenda, though those top-down mandates may have been convergent at times, given the size and complexity of Hill's bureaucracy, which could have resulted in the EIP faculty being the last to make sense of some of the changes, at which point there was no convergence energy left to include their sense-giving. A group with wider representation could have provided the interdisciplinary sense-giving prior to the change being "cast in stone," as Mari presented it, for more professional employees to give their input. That said, administratively chartered formal groups and committees were commonplace, the former to start the transformation and move it into its next phase through the recent strategic planning process, and the later to mobilize professional employee efforts to change professional practices.

Middle Translators. Hill's transformation had several individuals that bridged the groups, serving as a communications link. Some individuals translated senior administrator's strategy changes in a top-down manner and others, professional employees' ideas in a bottom-up way. While a select few, individuals working on the online dimension of the CIG, did provide translation to both groups.

A group of lower senior administrators was identified as providing the bulk of the strategy translation to professional employees. Their work was to be the sense-givers that took the senior administrative decisions and communicated and attempted to persuade professional employees to make the necessary professional practice changes. This group was the academic deans. Deans by their nature have access to high-level senior administrators and a high degree of autonomy for some decisions within their own colleges. They also are linked

to day-to-day operations and have intimate knowledge of the capabilities of many of their professional employees, especially the faculty.

James, founding dean for one of Hill's satellite campuses, spoke specifically to his charge to translate the institutional strategy, in this case opening an international campus of Hill, into actionable steps for his professional employee reports. James said:

Energy [was needed] to get people to move to a place where business operations of all these various strategies worked smoothly, there was a lot of work to be done at the dean's level, the department head level— not the senior tier of the university but the next tier down really had to work hard to communicate the strategy and do a lot of fixing of systems to make sure that the strategy could actually be implemented.

This work was critical for a start-up in the case of James's work, but he also said that in general it was an expectation by leadership for deans to do this translator work for faculty and staff who were impacted by the CIG. He referenced a great amount of time by his dean peers in communicating to professional employees what was being done, and especially the "why" related to the CIG.

Translation work was found to be done by other deans as well, including Adam's dean. To translate, which can be thought of as part of the sense-giving and making process, this dean took the tactic of being accessible and, according to Adam, attending staff meetings often enough that he and his colleagues recognize that she knows who these professional employees are and what they are working on. Knowledge of these front-line activities and accessibility as an individual can be useful to a translator in order to calibrate their bridging

efforts that recognizes the work being done and maps it, as well as areas for improvement, up to the strategy in a meaningful way for those performing the work.

One individual that came up outside the deans rank that provided top-down translation was a vice provost for undergraduate education. Provost Simon spoke of her as an important individual for his operation in terms of translating CIG strategy shifts. This vice provost was a faculty member prior to her appointment, so she brought with her credibility from her faculty experience that helped her gain trust with faculty when she was translating. Her translation often involved taking the CIG and framing it in actionable ways for faculty so they could adjust curriculum for programs and their personal teaching practices to be more effective with consideration for the new educational spaces HU was opening up. According to Simon, she was “world class in that area.”

Translation also occurred in a bottom-up manner, by individuals who engaged in organizational learning about professional employees ideas and then sense-gave to senior administrators these ideas and what would be necessary in terms of institutional strategy shifts to realize or more fully realize them at scale. For example, the IEO office’s curriculum integration staff. These individuals were on the frontlines with professional employee faculty in the academic departments. According to Mari they were “thinking about the academic space of what kind of a place for the curriculum is best delivered abroad [and] for what reasons.” Mariam added, their work is to surface bottom-up ideas and then work with the IEO framework to make the needed changes to accommodate those ideas and if necessary, use the hierarchy to request strategy changes.

Another bottom-up translator was a unit head, such as a director. Mari shared that she charges the managers of her areas to stay on top of ideas that professional employees bring forward, with the expectation that those managers in turn bring the ideas to her. This layered approach provides a filtering check on the idea for someone with a larger scope to evaluate where the idea fits in the CIG and the need as well as potential for a strategy change to occur to bring about the idea. Mari spoke to this filtering work of translators in saying “everything we do really has to align with the overarching goals of the college. We're very collaborative people. It's great when people come up with ideas of things to do, but if it's totally out in left field because they are not as conscious of goals, then it doesn't go anywhere.”

It is important to note for effective translation there needs to be a clear understanding of the CIG and strategy by the translators, at the risk of mis-translating, which could send professional employees off to change practices unrelated to the CIG in turn causing frustration when that work is not recognized by senior administrators as contributing to the CIG. For James, this did not seem to be an issue, as according to him “there was that clarity, that emphasis and that consistency on the strategy side, whenever we pursued activities that would answer that strategy, you felt there were other people that understood why you were doing what you were doing. There was no second guessing.”

Finally, the work of professional employees on the online and continuing education dimension of the CIG is another example of translation. Paul said of being in the middle between senior administrators and professional employees trying to sense-make and give between the two groups, that it was about “being able to strategically use leadership when needed as well as creating buy-in from academic units and develop a collaborative rapport.”

Connor, in a similar position to Paul, went further about the idea of building buy-in as a role for the translator, saying that his work was as a familiar champion, building excitement for it and obtaining support resources to get more people involved in the work; “It helps to have a familiar champion and what I mean by that is somebody who’s familiar with the environment, but also there are people in the environment, and the staff, and the program that they are very familiar with that person. There’s been past success with them and so they feel it’s legitimate and have a reasonable chance of success.”

In short, translation, like the other concepts of this section, was observed as having been used by both groups. However, some convergence concepts were utilized specifically by one group or the other at HU. The next section will detail concepts that only came up during observations or interviews that senior administrator used.

Senior Administrator Convergence Strategies

These strategies include trust, power, spotlighting promising practices, events, and groups, as well as incentives, grants, and professional development.

Earning Trust. As previously discussed, senior administrators and professional employees have relationships across the organization. These relationships required trust of senior administrators by professional employees. Senior administrators worked to build trust in the early period of the transformation.

The most notable was Patricia, who co-chaired the initial taskforce. During her interview she identified several tools for building trust with professional employees, the first of which was transparency. Transparency is a key enabler for trust, and on the topic, Patricia was vocal about why Hill was undertaking this CIG. She said:

Hill wasn't in crisis which a lot of the institutions you will see that made big change, and I'm sure you're aware of that, are in crisis when they're changing and it's a necessity. We really had to go out and talk to people about why being forward-looking [is important] if today is wonderful-- To give you an example, if you have 62,000 applications for 2,800 seats, then you're not trying to go to these regions and do these different things. Simply, they'll incrementally grow. It's because fundamentally, we believe that the model is changing, and we have to be on the cutting-edge, and we have to be experimenting. We would have those conversations. Those conversations were important to building trust with professional employees. Senior administrators could have attempted to leverage the financial crisis for quick wins. The financial downturn caused many an institution to adjust institutional strategy and likely would have been widely understood. However, when the crisis passed it likely would have been difficult to sustain momentum because the rationale, responding to the financial crisis, would no longer be relevant. Therefore, senior administrators like Patricia choose to do the heavy lift upfront of being transparent in sense-giving about the why of the transformation, which in turn has had staying power as what would become the CIG. Transparency about the why and the resulting staying power of the why has built trust for senior administrators with professional employees, as they have not had to come up with new why's to justify the CIG.

It is also important to note that Patricia has served as a familiar champion within the campus community. This concept previously discussed related to middle translators is relevant for senior administrators earning trust as well. At the time of her interview she had been with Hill for two decades, leading several different units and teams, and earned a

respected reputation for her work and nature as a trustworthy administrator. She described her own leadership style of providing insight into her efforts to earn trust; “When I started [this work], all of the offerings were coming out of the colleges which had no reporting relationship [to me]. I had to lead through influence, credibility that I gained through the years at Hill, and it was seldom positional power that I utilized.” She provided opportunities to discuss CIG issues and debate them. Her focus of relationship and influence instead of positional power likely was received well within Hill’s dual control framework, garnering trust for her enabling her to have convergence with professional employees to move the CIG forward.

Engaged and Respected Senior Administrators. Professor Rahan pointed out an important reality to the convergence pathway at Hill: “Change of this kind has to be led from the top.” While convergence is not necessarily about any one group leading, this idea can be re-framed in terms of having senior administrators who are engaged in the process of convergence itself. Rahan pointed to his own personal experience converging with senior administrative efforts to transform conventional educational places by fostering new EIP relationships in international destinations. According to Rahan, the engagement of President Joel was valuable to his transformational idea. Rahan said that Joel is “absolutely crucial to creating a more global mindset and inspiring a lot of new people.” Rahan pointed out that Joel is engaged with campus activities as he is actively involved in shifting resources to help realize the CIG, inspiring those on his team and others in the organization to follow suit.

Moreover, as the most visible senior administrator, Joel is recognized as a respected leader on the topic of global education. He has written a book on the topic of education in

non-conventional places that connects Hill's current efforts and the larger need in higher education to advance educational models. Within the last year he has been quoted or authored articles on the topic of non-conventional educational spaces appearing in *Inside Higher Ed*, *The College Fix*, *Forbes*, *Business in Vancouver*, *BBC*, *Times Higher Education*, and *The New York Times*. He has also been honored with several awards for his work including International Educator of the Year by the Academy of International Business and was appointed as Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the President of the French Republic for his leadership on and the University's contributions to French culture, international outreach, and collaboration. This leadership is also prominently displayed on his office website as a dedicated page that includes the various writings and videos that enable users to understand Joel's views on the topic of global education and specifically Hill's transformational agenda. Additionally, Joel's over 13 years of service to the institution have provided a consistency in terms of senior administrative engagement which is rare in higher education.

Power. Senior administrators have power to mobilize resources to produce change and coordinate activities. This study found that to mobilize resources and coordinate, Hill senior administrators used their power through several different avenues.

The first example of senior administrative power was to reconsider current practices and shed those that could limit the effectiveness of the new direction. For example, Provost Simon commented that the EIP had existed on the campus for over 100 years, therefore there were many deeply rooted practices and assumptions that guided that program. Hill could have treated the EIP as dogma, preferring to only tweak it, but instead Simon said there was

value to him in “being able to measure it [EIP], be able to determine what’s working and what’s not working. What needs to be improved? How do you measure the effectiveness of the EIP? ... We also had to redefined what we meant by EIP.” These questions which critically scrutinized EIP sent a powerful message to professional employees to examine the program in order to move it forward with respect to the new CIG.

The authority of senior administrators was also seen in the establishment of key metrics related to the change. In Hill’s case, the president’s office used its authority to establish key metrics that were referenced by several interviewees as influencing their practice. For example, Miriam, head of the international education office, said that the “president dreams very big ... in a lot of his speeches and conversations, he continues to strive for 100% of students graduating from Hill having had some form of direct global experience.” She added that this is a lofty metric to achieve, but because of its top-down nature it is driving their unit’s strategy.

Additionally, senior administrators can mandate actions through the use of the reporting structure. However, there are limits to the effectiveness of such mandates depending on their nature. At Hill there was a senior administrator mandate for the deans to work with the campus community to sensemake and give about the transformation. This was an effective use of power as deans can be directed due to their hierarchical reporting to their most senior administration. Despite that, Provost Simon noted that power could not be used to direct faculty to make changes, as “presidential edicts don’t work ... I could point to a number of universities where the president had said, ‘We’re going to do experiential’ or ‘We’re going to do this,’ and then there were reports you can pull out at *The Chronicle of*

Higher Education about some major universities where they just never took off.” Therefore, it seems likely that Joel and Simon, the two most executive senior administrators, used the mandate power within limitations of the dual controls of a higher education institution.

That said, there was some data that was collected indicating that mandates may have led to friction with professional employees, which derailed convergence related to those employees. For example, Mari indicated that at times when working with some EIP faculty, that she arrives at the point of saying to the group, “Now, do any of us, even myself included, think that they process has been smooth or good? No, it hasn’t been, but it doesn’t matter. We’re still going ahead.” Such remarks may reflect Mari’s feeling of having to meet a top-down mandate that is a senior administrative directive. This leads to a feeling of professional employee idea creation and sense-giving to senior administration not being valued, as the agenda will progress with or without their full cooperation; this demonstrates a breakdown of the convergence process.

Another instance of senior administrative power that can help convergence was the use of senior administrator authority to repurpose resources. At Hill, senior administrators shaped, and in some cases, reshaped, hierarchical reporting lines as a way of unlocking new organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Senior administrators used their power as the ranking members of the university community to reorganize in ways that helped facilitate convergence pathways and relationships necessary for transformational convergence. The most notable example of this was the moving of the Continuing Education College into the developing organization for the Learners Syndicate. Though the college could have developed collegial relationships with the new Learners Syndicate organization, the

closeness, according to Patricia, granted the college to give “their full and total focus” to the work of expanding into new modalities, regions, and learning needs of individuals beyond the traditional college years. This required the coming together of the two separate organizations, so that it could operate as a whole platform instead of independent offerings through two divided parts of Hill. This example brought senior administrators and professional employees together in new ways and provided fuel for the convergence pathway that would lead to sense-making and giving that helped move the CIG forward in the online and life-long dimension of the transformational work.

Offering Internal Grants and Incentives. Efforts were made by Hill senior administrators to facilitate convergence by offering incentives and grants to professional employees willing to converge with senior administrators to bring about desired transformation. This was done by senior administrators in two ways; through resource allocation that was often targeted at staff and non-teaching professional employees, and through promotional and tenure support for CIG related activities, which was targeted at faculty.

To the first incentive, senior administrators are the gatekeepers of the budget. Hill’s senior administrators used their budget power to incentivize professional employee sense-making of the CIG and strategy in ways that enabled ideas and practice changes. According to Patricia:

We put some resources aside, and we made them available to colleges and faculty and departments that wanted to move their program [get involved in the CIG transformation] but there were conditions. We utilized some conditions to the

resources. If you wanted to avail yourself of design support and dollars for faculty ... you had to agree that what you were bringing you were willing to scale. Which means as it grew, if it grew in one location, there would be an agreement to grow it in another location.

A second example of resource incentivizing, which took the form of budget control, was the institution's move to responsibility center management (RCM) budgeting. This budgetary model put the ownership for the financial success of the larger units of the school upon those larger units. Each had to justify programs and services by balancing its own financial ledger. Doing so, according to Simon, put "the incentive in the hands of the deans to help ensure that their curriculum is such that they're attracting students." Area heads, for example, could move resources without central authority to new ideas that emerged in the convergence pathway. A final resource example was the use of internal grants. After publishing, President Joel's book won a Mellon award, which he used to establish a grant fund to support students engaging with the global dimension of a Hill education. This grant program was assigned to the International office for administration. It motivated a professional employee in that office to bring forth the idea of the scholarship program serving students that typically are not engaging in global study. In Miriam's words, "We needed to come up with an idea of who would be qualified for that.... A pretty interesting idea came out of that, to reach out to populations that we usually don't see." This in turn further advanced the CIG of participation in global experiences.

Faculty effort related to the CIG at Hill were incentivized in various ways. The first was through the recognition of work that transformed traditional educational spaces during

the tenure and promotional processes. Professor Rahan said of a colleague who was going up for tenure that she asked of him to write a letter of recommendation documenting their work to develop new EIP relationships in previously untapped countries. Faculty member Jayden also mentioned tenure as a valuable incentive for this work. “It is seen as a big thing to have done educationally, pedagogically, so I think it does help tenure and promotion cases.”

Jayden also shared there is a salary benefit that is important to teaching faculty; some of the faculty opportunities come in the form of travel-based courses which are offered during the summer months. Teaching faculty such as Jayden are on an eight-month salary, so the additional summer travel courses provides additional income during the traditionally incomeless summer months. By providing the salary incentive to develop summer courses, faculty are engaged in convergence with senior administrators by creating new curricula that advanced the CIG.

These incentives, provided by senior administrators as the gatekeeper of resources, can motivate professional employees to participate in the convergence process. But to guide their work, the next topic of strategic planning was found to be a helpful resource to align senior administrator and professional employee efforts during convergence.

Strategic Planning. Another strategy Hill senior administrators used was strategic planning. The process was used to give new shape to the CIG and its strategies. The process was convened with senior administrative power but was inclusive of professional employees and therefore provided an important mechanism for convergence to occur.

The process for the plan began in 2015. To begin, President Joel and Provost Simon developed a framework to guide what would become a yearlong endeavor. The first step in

the plan's development was a discussion in August 2015 with the Faculty Senate Agenda Committee about the process. This led to an initial retreat with members of the university's senior administration, including academic deans, members of the Provost's Office, and other university members. Over the course of the fall, an influential discussion was held between senior administration and the Board of Trustees about the future of higher education. Additionally, a steering committee was formed for the process that consisted of senior administration, deans, and faculty. Working groups were also formed around themes that would eventually drive the final report, including lifelong experiential learning and the global university. These groups included representation from students, faculty, senior administration, as well as staff in the relevant content areas including the International Education Office, the online area, and the Continuing Education College. Seven town halls were held from December to March of that academic year to discuss each of the strategic themes. Working groups also hosted open meetings with specific audiences. In addition, a blog was created for university community members to post comments about the process and the content that was being developed for the plan. A website was also created to keep the community informed about the progress of the work. The plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in fall 2016.

The plan reframed and formally cast a new CIG for the institution that will guide the next phase of the institution's development, citing that this will be "an age that integrates and elevates our human and technological capacities to meet the global challenge of our time: building sustainable human communities. By marshaling our strengths in globally networked learning and experiences, we will create innovations that only human minds are capable of,

lighting the way for others to follow.” This CIG continues the work of transforming conventional educational places and frames it within the institution’s hallmark strength of experiential learning. It adds a new dimension of networks, and defines success as providing outcomes that will create pathways for others to follow. In terms of the process, the CIG appeared to be inclusive providing formal participation for professional employees through membership, and also through other less formal channels such as the townhalls and a blog. Providing broad-based participation opportunities enabled senior administrators to build trust with professional employees by providing mechanisms for organizational learning on their sense-making of the current state of the transformation, as well as to receive sense-giving on ideas for the next iteration of the transformation.

The plan; and perhaps even more importantly, the process to create the plan; came up in several interviews as an important milestone in taking the work that had been done during the transformation and elevating it to the next level. According to Provost Simon, “it set out a certain set of goals, certain objectives, it laid out values and systems in terms of experiential and in terms of globalization.” The public process to set goals is a testament to the process of strategic planning as unfreezing and refreezing key parts of the institution. That is, it provides convergence spaces for professional employees and senior administrators to come together to collectively chart next steps, and then committing to that path, which refreezes it so that it can be pursued with discipline and iterative convergence. The value of the inclusivity of the process was emphasized by Michelle, who said, “Students had a seat at the table, employers had a seat at the table, all faculty, staff, and administrators, everybody had the ability to contribute information, ideas, thoughts that informed the strategic plan.”

While Hill's convergence on the transformation of conventional educational places involved several active strategies from senior administrators, there also were specific strategies used by professional employees. These strategies will be detailed in the next section.

Professional Employee Convergence Strategies

As a specific group, professional employees were observed engaging in several strategies to facilitate convergence with senior administrators. Those strategies were: connecting to the CIG to their work, generating ideas, and changing practices.

The first strategy was connecting to the CIG. Adam provided an example of this related to his work in the academic advising area. He spoke about the institution's historic commitment to experiential learning and how that is being brought forward to think about how to provide students with experiences in new places outside of traditional classrooms. According to him, "Students are interested in experiences here and just getting out into the 'real-world' and that doesn't just mean the workplaces ... it's also about being outside the bounds of a traditional classroom. We're starting to think about what are those experiences ... and that's where we're landing on some of these global experiences." Adam's position as a professional employee provided him with direct student contact to do organizational learning that can lead to new ideas, which he can connect to the CIG.

Mari offered another example of connecting her work as a professional employee to the CIG. As a professional employee in academic administration, she supervises a team that is concerned with EIP placements. She often engages in organizational learning to review where those placements are located, driving the team to seek out more out of region

experiences as those are “slam dunks” as they forward senior administration’s goal and are also popular with the students. Doing this careful management of staff ideas about where to base opportunities is an emphasis to Mari on the need to be strategic with her work in order to thoughtfully advance opportunities that will move the institution forward.

Another strategy used by professional employees is the changing of practices. The work of professional employees at Hill are small scale tasks with large scale impacts. It is their day to day actions that keep the university operating, and when these actions are converge with the goals of senior administration it fosters transformation. For example, Miriam spoke about the actions of her professional employees to bring about more summer-based travel courses, a plank of the CIG related to globalizing undergraduate education. “This year we had over 90 faculty proposals for summer 2019.” Miriam explained, “This is just proposal, you need to review them, then you need to make sure that they actually become programs, and then recruit the students, the whole pipeline, it’s like running several mini colleges that require support.” Her comments reference numerous actions that need to be completed by her team of professional employees, outside of professional employees teaching the courses themselves. Each of these actions likely had multiple steps, dependencies on other organizations within the institution, and sometimes external requirements to manage (e.g., travel requirements for students, housing consideration, financial aid implications). When the program of summer travel courses was first launched, these details required professional employees to change their practices in order to meet the demands of the new workflow. As the program has grown and matured, it has required them to continue to change their practices to meet the needs of a growing program. In Miriam’s

words about programs that are running, “I would say that the large majority of ideas probably coming from the trenches are about tactics and processes, and how we can do things smoother and better and not spin the wheels.” Such comments reflect the ongoing work of professional employees to keep the CIG moving forward through practice changes, that may not go beyond their span of control, but are necessary to keep the change that has been made functioning and even make it more efficient. Thus, professional employees in many ways are at the cutting edge of the transformational blade, it is their inaction or action that results in change. Some of these changes were highlighted by senior administrators. Patricia also said on the topic that professional employee work was showcased especially early. In this way, one area’s professional employee practice changes were then used by other professional employees to guide their practice changes.

Case Summary

In many ways, Hill’s transformational period can best be described as an institution with roots and wings. It is rooted in the idea of the value of experiential, that students experimenting in the laboratory of the real world. And while not a colonial college, it is fair to say that for the amount of time Hill has been in operation, experiential has been an important tradition for the campus. Nonetheless, the campus has wings in the form of a willingness to experiment and recast their conceptualization of experiential, most recently by transforming where it takes place. The tension between roots and wings can be difficult for institutions to navigate, yet Hill has figured out how to thrive in that space rising in the ranks and growing in stature during this transformation, in part through convergence.

One main conclusion of the analysis is the outcome of Hill's transformation. In today's higher education marketplace, internationalization is a popular buzzword. It can often be thought of as marketing jargon to attract globally minded Generation Z students or non-US students to augment an institution's revenue stream. Hill had a much different approach, starting transformation from a place of wanting to expand its experiential educational model by moving beyond how the campus had thought of conventional educational places for multiple constituencies. This transformation was well served by convergence, though it waxed and waned in its level of activity.

A second conclusion is that shared governance was not a big player in the transformational convergence at Hill. This was a bit surprising given the dual control nature of higher education, as I expected to find high levels of activity from shared governance groups. One professional employee said they found shared governance on the campus to have limited effectiveness for the transformation, being more focused on the day to day operations of the academic experience such as curriculum and faculty standards. As a result, it is possible that shared governance does not have a large role in the transformational work of the campus, as the convergence interaction occurred through other means that were more productive for transformation. This is an interesting finding, as it shows that convergence can occur independently of shared governance, which may be notable when a campus's shared governance arrangements are not highly functioning or are not well-positioned to support transformation.

The final conclusion of the analysis of Hill was the prevalence of the large resource pool available to them. Resources were available at Hill during the transformation, as

evidence by few discussions of resource sharing or the need for outside source of resources to make necessary practices changes. This resource pool provided a level of ease that may have mitigated the need for convergence in some instances. That is, because resources were readily available, professional employees may have had fewer needs to engage in convergence with senior administrators to make their ideas come to life, and senior administrators may have had a stronger rationale to use top-down mandates, out of a sense of fiscal responsibility to ensure these resources aligned with the WIG.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

This study has found that convergence is indeed occurring to bring about transformational change. This chapter aims to discuss connections of findings to literature, review what concepts were unexpected or did not fit with this study's framework, articulate the advancements that are possible from Kezar's (2012) convergence study and formally acknowledge known limitations of this study, and suggest implications from findings. To accomplish this, this chapter will be divided into five sections. Those sections will be cross case comparisons, research question discussion, conceptual framework revisited, implications for convergence, and limitations.

Cross Case Comparisons

This section will first explore the similarities between the two cases, followed by a discussion of how convergence proceeded differently for each case. This discussion of similarities and differences will also review what additions this study can make to the known understanding of the concepts based on their presentation in the literature review chapter.

Similarities

Convergence at GMCU and Hill had several major similarities. In both cases the convergence interaction pathway started with senior administrators. Therefore, transformational convergence can be thought of as being initiated by senior administrators. While Kezar (2012) found that convergence interaction may begin with professional employee ideas, most examples she found to support this this were in regard to incremental change. Meaning, these ideas were not formally linked to a goal of institutional transformation. It seems logical that for a transformational agenda to be initiated, it must originate with senior administrators– the group that has ultimate positional authority to develop large institutional goals and strategy that are the backbone of a transformational effort. This group also has access to the breadth of the organization, which is necessary for deep and pervasive change, and also for efforts to change culture that is institutionally entrenched.

A second point of similarity was a context, specifically the cultural element of that context that was open to change. Both institutions had a culture that was malleable, a willingness to experiment, and embraced striving for a better university instead of preserving the status quo. Both institutions are relatively new as compared to colonial colleges and land grant institutions; accordingly, they do not have the history and hence did not have an anchoring of senior administrators or professional employees to institutional traditions.

Another similarity across both institutions was the interaction pathway itself. Originally, this concept was seen in the conceptual framework as having multiple pathways (Kezar, 2012). The findings of these cases indicated that this was too broad of an assumption

about the interaction for a desired change of transformation. While there was variation in strategies used, the interaction between groups across cases was largely found to be linear and sequential. When patterning occurred related to transformational change, clear interaction steps were accomplished in order. Additionally, convergence was found to occur related to the needs of each group; for senior administrators it was changes in employee practices and for professional employees it was securing resources to implement ideas. Such defined needs likely narrowed the variation in the interaction pathway.

The interaction pathway was closely related to the direction of interaction. Originally, Kezar (2012) focused her study on professional employees convergence with senior administrators. She speculated that convergence could happen in the opposite direction as well. This study found that at both case sites, convergence did happen in the opposite direction with senior administrators converging with professional employees. In fact, convergence actually began in these transformational cases with senior administrator activity. Additionally, and similar to an argument made by Orlikowski (1996), Hybrid change or convergence was found to be iterative. That is similar to what Cunha and Cunha (2003) argued about Hybrid change being recursive. This is also a similar finding in Kondacki and Van den Broeck (2009) who found that when planned change was announced, Emergent change met the Planned change, including requests for resources from senior administrators to make the Emergent changes fully possible.

Both institutions also shared the concept of a CIG. A review of the change literature did not expressly state the role of goals for convergence. Rather, the literature had a general assumption that change has a desired end state, which can be read akin to a goal (Bright and

Godwin, 2010; Orlikowski, 1996; Bartunek, 2003). This study refined this assumption into the CIG, which provided a focusing point for the transformational energy. McChesney, Covey, and Huling (2012) described a CIG as a strategic tipping point that the organization applies a disproportionate amount of energy to when compared with day to day operations. This was an apt definition, as CIG work went above and beyond day to day operations of the institutions. It was fundamental to maintaining momentum during convergence.

The concept of a CIG aligns with Lewin's planned change scholarship as described by Burnes (2005) and Weick (2006). While the "ice cube model" has generally been questioned for large scale change, in this case it fits with CIGs, as the need for a CIG creates an organizational perception that a change is needed (i.e., unfreezing), its creation represents moving toward the new desired state (i.e., changing), and it creates a new status quo, which can be thought of as solidifying new desired organizational behaviors (i.e., refreezing). Where Lewin's concept is expanded upon in these cases was the iterative nature of convergence resulting in ideas arising in an Emergent change manner. This caused senior administrators to reconsider the CIG when necessary, leading to an unfreezing, changing, and refreezing of it, perhaps with greater frequency than Lewin might have conceived for a solely planful change approach.

The reconsideration of the CIG was often observed being done through an institutional strategic planning process. The development of the plan unfroze the CIG enabling convergence to change it more freely. When the plan was finalized and moved to a monitoring mode, the CIG re-froze. At the re-freezing point, senior administrators moved to change institutional strategy to better align with the CIG. As strategy changed, administrators

then communicated these changes through sense-giving to professional employees.

Strategical planning was thought to have a role in convergence from the original literature considered, and this study has shown that its role in facilitating convergence is setting and/or resetting the large goals and institutional strategy that guides the transformation.

A further similarity was the appearance of organizational learning for both cases. Organizational learning was described in the literature as creating and recreating a shared knowledge base and involving external scanning (Bess & Dee, 2012; Dill, 1999; Huber, 1991). However, what was not known from the literature was when and why the learning occurred in a convergence change approach. These cases revealed that organizational learning was used as a starting place for convergence and that it informed the iteration of convergence. Additionally, external scanning, a subprocess of organizational learning (Dill, 1999), was used by senior administrators at both case sites to formulate their needs that led to the development of the CIG. Moreover, Dill argued there must be structures for transfer of learning to core process improvement. It was found that convergence can be such a structure and therefore organizational learning is well served by convergence as a change approach. Consequently, it was apparent for both cases that convergence was helpful for both institutions that were seeking to address environmental forces, which were detected through external scanning and the addressing of which was calibrated through organizational learning.

Another similarity was the use of events and groups, such as town halls or state of the institution addresses, focus groups, professional development (e.g., lunch and learns), and meetings. In the literature, the role of events and groups was not discussed in relation to

convergence. Rather, this study made a supposition that group dynamics would be important. However, what was found was that groups and events were important in convening people to build relationships that sustained convergence, and the dynamics of these groups and events were not as relevant to convergence as originally hypothesized. Events specifically provided groups of change agents with a time and place to nurture key elements of the convergence process (e.g., organizational learning, communication, sense-giving and making, and relationship building) which were often face to face interactions. Events provided spaces for a diversity a people to assemble for, talk about, and work on the transformational agenda. Groups provided a similar space for people to assemble. The value of groups was demonstrated in the literature for the success of organizational change and the change approach of convergence (Kezar, 2012; Mohrman, Tenkasi, & Mohrman, 2003). Groups also helped to form and sustain relationships, providing sense-making and giving opportunities, and as forums for communication. Additionally, groups that came up during interviews provided professional employees and senior administrators opportunities for creativity (e.g., Hill's Advising Council professional employee idea of a meaning making application), adoption buy-in (e.g., a Hill college committee to create more EIP experiences), and a crucible of cross-functional perspectives (e.g., GMCU's Honors University, university wide taskforce) (Bess & Dee, 2008).

The spirit of events and groups as a vehicle for relationship building provides a key building block for meaningful change (Kezar, 2001). They do so by bringing people together in a way that overcomes the limitations of organizational chart of an institution. While the formal organizational chart is helpful to convergence in the sense that it provides structure

and chain of command for certain actions to pass through, it limits by isolating decision making power within the ranks of senior administrators and inhibiting coordination across the organization (Bess and Dee, 2008), which convergence seeks to address. Therefore, events and groups can be seen as tactics to developing work teams that span organizational hierarchy and have relationships via the convergence pathway. Work teams have been well documented in the literature as increasingly in use in the workplace, notable for their positive effect on workplace outcomes via their faster response times, flattening of organizational hierarchy, and communication capabilities (Northouse, 2016; Porter & Beyerlein, 2000). Moreover, work teams are defined in a way that is similar to the convergence interaction: “A work team is a group of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common mission, performance goals, and approach” (Nelson & Quick, 2005, p. 178). Consequently, work team building or development through events and group work furthered the convergence interaction as these methods united individuals from across the organization and enabled their interaction through assemblages that overcame organizational hierarchy limitations.

A final similarity revealed by this study was the importance of relationships, and trust in those relationships. In the literature review, there was no expressed role for these concepts. However, the data from both cases showed that these processes involved a great deal of person to person interaction. These interactions were made easier when preexisting relationships were in place and particularly if those relationships were of a trusting nature, which often had to be continuously earned by senior administrators. These relationships were especially productive when change agents leveraged relationships with known productive

change agents. Relationships were bolstered by the longevity of senior administrators and professional employees at both case sites. Having staff from both groups engaged in the convergence process for multiple years avoided the need to establish or re-build relationships, which would have slowed the iterative convergence processes. Long-serving staff also helped with trust building and key change agents being known as middle translators and familiar champions of change.

Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) argued that “working together often involves interdependence, and people must therefore depend on others in various ways to accomplish their personal and organizational goals” (p. 710). Their research reinforces the idea that as convergence is a change approach of people working together, there is need for relationships between those working together, and that those relationships are aided by trust. They specifically argued that the level of trust and the level of perceived risk in the situation will lead to risk taking in the relationship. This important when one considers that senior administrators have great power compared to professional employees. This power includes organizational rewards and punitive measures; therefore, senior administrators must earn the trust of professional employees in the sense that actions or risks by those lacking power will lead to favorable outcomes. If action leads to unfavorable outcomes, professional employees will be less likely to take risks, causing friction and limitation in the convergence pathway. In these cases, it is significant to note that professional employee took risks to put forward new ideas and in some cases highlighted the shortcomings of senior administrative strategy, which was received favorably by senior administrators bringing the groups closer together, aiding convergence. Had senior administrators dismissed or punitively acted against

professional employee risk taking, the two groups relationship may have been adversely affected, likely inhibiting their convergence.

Differences

The most notable differences that came out of the analysis, specifically a matrix coding query of key convergence concepts, was that each case had different levels of convergence activity occurring. Specifically, the query showed higher frequencies of convergence codes appearing at GMCU than Hill. Of 14 key convergence codes, 11 were found at higher levels at GMCU (table 2).

Table 2.
Cross Case Matrix Coding for Key Convergence Concepts

<u>Concept</u>	<u>Hill University</u>	<u>GMCU</u>
Bottom-up Strategies	16	<i>36</i>
Communication	17	<i>20</i>
Direction of Interaction	<i>17</i>	12
Events	8	<i>10</i>
Filter	<i>3</i>	1
Groups	11	<i>21</i>
Incentives	8	<i>15</i>
Interaction Pathways	5	<i>7</i>
Interest Overlap	23	<i>26</i>
Organizational Learning	12	<i>26</i>
Power	<i>13</i>	4
Relationships	6	<i>13</i>
Top-Down Strategies	20	<i>43</i>
Translator	9	<i>15</i>

Note: Highest row values presented in ***bold italics***.

This difference in convergence activity between the two cases can be accounted for by variance in the change context and the desired change itself. Hill University has almost

triple the number of instructional employees as GMCU, and almost 7,000 more students. As a result, Hill has a much more complicated and sophisticated bureaucracy, which, due to Hill being almost fifty years older than GMCU can also be described as more mature. Higher levels of bureaucracy, according to the literature, brings increased divisions of labor to specific tasks, more standardization of procedures, higher formalization of rules, and more defined hierarchy (Bess & Dee, 2012; Kezar, 2006).

A quick review of how each case presented its senior administration demonstrates a higher level of bureaucracy at Hill. GMCU's senior administration team (president, provost, deans, and other high-level administrative positions) numbered eighteen staff, while the comparative group at Hill totaled fifty-one staff. This was further visible when academic deans alone were compared, as Hill had twice as many academic deans, ten, to GMCU's five. This in and of itself can explain why there was less convergence activity at Hill, as it had to go through more bureaucratic layers horizontally across the organization as well as vertically up and down the organizational hierarchy.

Thus, navigating a more robust bureaucracy at Hill, due to its larger size, division of labor amongst more people, more procedures to coordinate more areas, and more loosely coupled units, would require more convergence activity from senior administrators or professional employees. Therefore, a senior administrator may have elected to use the power of their position to push a change agenda downward through the power of their office as it could have been viewed as more efficient. Indeed, this was seen in the data as several interviewees mentioned goals cascading from high levels of the organization, change through the supervision chain, as well as situations that could be described as non-negotiable change

mandates that professional employees were expected to carry out. This can explain why more references to power and filtering were coded at Hill, as these change agents were used to negotiate the bureaucracy due to the larger number of idea generators at Hill.

Another difference was the activity of shared governance. Shared governance is an important tool to effectively manage the nature of higher education, splitting control between senior administrators and professional employees. Conceptually, shared governance has the potential to be a helpful mechanism for a convergence interaction pathway as it brings senior administrators and professional employees together. However, shared governance in practice may not be efficient, functional, or set up to serve a campus's transformational process, which can lead to, as Kezar and Lester (2011) pointed out, a more corporate, hierarchical model of decision making. Such a description fits well with the Hill case, which was more heavily weighted to top-down change than GMCU, and was also seen to have less convergence activity via strategies such as events and groups, which were critiqued by Hill professional employees as not living up to the convergence potential. This aligns with a matrix coding query on shared governance which showed GMCU interviews described shared governance forty-one times compared to two mentions during Hill University interviews. Therefore, it can be concluded that the more robust existing shared governance arrangements are, the more likely convergence activity is to be associated with it at higher levels during a transformation.

Further analysis of shared governance at the two case sites also suggests that faculty, a key group in the dual controls arrangement that shared governance often presides over, were involved at differing levels in the desired change at each site. Recall that the literature

review detailed that senior administrators and professional employees have control over different activities (Birnbaum, 1988; Altbach, Gumport, & Berdahl, 2011; Tierney, 2006). If transformational work is considered an activity, then one can measure the engagement of the groups in that activity. At GMCU, faculty had a higher level of engagement with the transformation as it sought changes in areas more directly related to the primary duties of faculty (e.g., student success, teaching, learning, and pedagogy) than Hill. GMCU faculty were engaged throughout the transformation process through their own bottom-up efforts, such as the brown bag teaching practice roundtables; and top-down efforts, such as a new campus identity; as it was their practices which, when combined with senior administrator strategy, would more fully realize an Honors University with a higher level of commitment to student success. Hill represented a different type of engagement of faculty. In this case, faculty were not as deeply involved in transformation; opening new a campus, reorganizing online education, and developing new partnerships for EIP were more suited to the involvement of staff or senior administrators as those activities were not primary activities for faculty. This further clarifies why shared governance had different roles in each case transformation, as the transformations themselves were different enough to require different levels of faculty engagement, and faculty traditionally hold the onus of shared governance arrangements, resulting in less of a need for engagement of the mechanism itself.

Another difference in the change context was the level of capital resources. While not in the literature review, resource level had an association with convergence activity in this study. Though it is difficult to compare case resource levels because one is public and the other private, a comparison of institutional endowments shows a large gap. Hill reported an

endowment of \$831 million, while GMCU reported an endowment of \$106 million. Hence, the campus with more money (Hill University) also had less convergence activity than the campus with less resources (GMCU). This might seem counter intuitive at first, as more money is rarely a hinderance to change. However, if one considers the nature of this specific change approach and the availability of money, money can make convergence less necessary as a change approach. One of the key components of the convergence interaction pathway was professional employees requesting resources for ideas and senior administrators shifting institutional strategies to allocate the needed resources. If institutional resources are more freely available, there is less of a need for convergence because professional employees can reallocate resources within their own spans of control to implement ideas. Whereas, on a more modestly resourced campus, professional employees and senior administrators need to converge more frequently to allocate and reallocate resources to realize bottom-up ideas. This was seen in the data at GMCU when interviewees described the critical necessity of working together because no one area had enough financial liquidity to implement a large idea without the help of other areas.

Resource dependency theory from the literature helps underscore the relationship of resources to convergence activity. According to resource dependency theory, a focal organizational is dependent on external organizations for resources (Bess & Dee 2008; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The level of the focal organization acting to attract resources external to itself is based on the strength of the level of internal resources. If one looks at a particular division within either of these institutions a focal unit, its ability to repurpose its own resources to accomplish ideas had a direct consequence on that division's need to go

outside the unit, via convergence, to attract additional resources. Therefore, the greater the financial strength of the institution, the more likely the institution was in these cases to have lower levels of convergence during transformation.

Engagement of senior administrators also was a difference for the two sites. This concept was not identified in the literature review but was found at both sites in different ways. At GMUC the engagement was done in an extroverted, campus celebrity type approach of the campus's president, which was previously described as the Fabian factor. This factor was akin to a politician on a barnstorming tour championing the WIG, often in person in small and large settings. Hill's president took a slightly different approach, engaging in a scholarly way to champion the WIG. These difference likely reflect the leadership styles of the individuals themselves, but underscores that there is a role for engagement by the campus's most senior administration to ensure that power and authority of their positions are seen as engaged with the transformation.

While the engagement was different at each site, the concept of senior administrator engagement did connect with the concept of transformational leadership from leadership literature. This type of leadership that is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals, specifically is about supporting followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them (Northouse, 2016; Bass & Avolio, 1994). It contains four factors, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Each was observed in the data most notably through the actions of each campus's president, who role modeled convergence for senior administrative peers and professional employees alike, inspired followers to act through speeches and town halls,

facilitated intellectual dialogue about the transformation through writings and presentations, and aided a culture that was open to individual ideas and deep listening to professional employees. Therefore, while the approach to engagement may have been different at each case, this use of transformational leadership is a similarity.

Senior administration's engagement also related to another strategy— power. As discussed in the literature, power was predicted to have a role in the convergence process. That role could be damaging if not properly managed by senior administrators. This study found that there were differences in how power was used at both institutions. At GMCU, power was initially used in a top-down positional manner; this resulted in a negative outcome. Senior administrations later shifted their use of power into shared governance arrangements and to reposition resources as professional employees needed. At Hill, power was more top-down in nature with mandates being issued, permission being given to reconsider practices, and establishment of key metrics. Hill senior administrators also used power to repurpose resources. These differences in how power was used fundamentally demonstrate variance in how senior administrators exercised their authority. Bess and Dee (2008) argued that improper power use is a prime reason for organizational conflict. Therefore, senior administrator attention to power and the use of their authority in a way that reflects the campus's context, culture, is important to avoid conflict, which can add friction to the convergence pathway.

The final key difference this study found was that the transformations were different for the two sites. While seemingly obvious; as no two campuses are alike, therefore no two transformations are alike; these differences are important to note. Both involved, as Green

and Hayward (1997) put it, a “reexamination of the ways of conducting the business” (p. 6), an argument can be made that GMCU’s transformation was deeper than Hill’s; the former transformed the purpose of the institution’s work, while the later the transformed merely the “how” of the institution’s work. GMCU’s transformation was related to identity and mission, which formed the service model for underserved students. For Hill University, the transformation was a change in modality, that was where education was taking place. Therefore, the deeper the transformation, the more active the convergence may need to be, as deeper transformation has to get at assumptions, which as described by Schein (1984) are often “less debatable and confrontable” than other organization considerations.

This discussion has analyzed the similarities and differences between these two convergence experiences, which has added to the understanding of convergence. Specifically, this comparative analysis has provided insight into the variance that can occur between two sites in terms of the core of this study’s conceptual framework adapted from Kezar (2013b). Generally, both cases presented change agents that were successful in their changes to the institution, fitting together the three puzzle pieces of change approach, desired change, and change content, yet each site’s puzzle pieces were unique to that site. Therefore the functional assemblage of these pieces was specialized to the respective institutions.

Research Question Discussion

This section will specifically discuss the research questions outlined in chapter one. This discussion is prefaced by an explicit statement that this study concludes that both groups did engage in convergence to affect institutional transformation.

Why Attempt Convergence?

With numerous change approaches available to change agents, it is helpful to analyze the reasons why change agents in these two cases attempted to utilize this change approach.

One of the first reasons why it was helpful for these groups to engage in convergence was because of the emphasis it placed upon a CIG during the transformation. As transformation goes beyond localized modulation, it requires many change agents to be working in concert so that the change efforts, in particular practice changes— often decentralized and out of the hands of senior administrators, are coordinated and advance the institution in a desired way. Such needs described the observed benefit of convergence, which is that it merges the Planned change of senior administrators in the area of strategy with Emergent change of professional employee practice change to advance a commonly desired end state, the CIG. Convergence as a process involves continuous measurement and evaluation of actions against the CIG, which is the coordinating focus. Those actions that have the potential to advance the CIG are supported, while those that do not have potential are not acted upon. This goal discipline was seen in both cases, and an argument can be made that it kept each case on track to accomplish big change, instead of being diverted to changes of the moment that could yield small benefits at the expense of large scale results that institutional transformation seeks to make.

The merging of Planned and Emergent change is another reason to use convergence for transformational change. Table 3 revisits the limits and assets of the two major change approach camps that was discussed in the literature review, and adds findings from this study related to convergence as a form of a third developing camp, Hybrid change, that combines

both Planned and Emergent change, which can therefore be seen as the parent camp for convergence. As indicated in the table, a Hybrid change approach enables each group of change agents to utilize their group’s common change approach strengths (e.g., Planned for senior administrators and Emergent for professional employees) and leverage the strengths of the other group. This merging of strengths can offset the limits of the approaches. For example, professional employee Emergent change often lacks the engagement of resource gatekeepers, who are senior administrators. But convergence engages Emergent and Planned change, bringing professional employees into a process that can result in additional resources. Doing so offsets other Emergent change limitations such as difficulty to institutionalize change; additional resources can help preserve longevity of the Emergent change effort, and senior administrator engagement can help coordinate the change across units. This in turn prevents sub-optimization from occurring, as the convergence process can

Table 3.
Limits and Assets of the Major Change Camps

<u>Change Approach</u>	<u>Limits</u>	<u>Assets</u>
Planned	Lacks solution complexity, lack of buy-in, and leader dependency	Breadth of perspective, strategy formulation tendency, high-level power, and a perspective that spans organizational boundaries
Emergent	Lacks engagement of resource gatekeepers, lacks central coordination across units leading to sub-optimization, and is difficult to institutionalize	Sensitivity to the context of individual units, real-time experimentation, swift implementation, and professional employee knowledge
Hybrid (Convergence)	Involves both groups, which can slow progress and require additional resources	Leverages the assets of planned and emergent change, which mitigates limits of those approaches.

filter out addendum Emergent ideas that may be well intended locally, but may damage the implementation of the initial idea at scale. Convergence also benefits senior administrator Planned change by adding professional employee knowledge that can help come up with appropriately complex solutions that are based in the realities of front-line practice. Convergence also helps senior administrators through a collaborative approach, as more people across the organization feel included, yielding buy-in and also distributing leadership across the organization, mitigating leader dependency concerns.

Why senior administrators or professional employees use or do not use convergence may change over time. Early on in a transformation convergence, it may be utilized by senior administrators to gain buy-in, as was the case at Hill University. Later in the transformation, it may be a way to institutionalize and diffuse progress across the organization, as could be seen at GMCU where in the later years the CIG saw pervasive change in teaching practices, campus master plan design, and employee interaction patterns. This fluctuating motivation could also explain why convergence activity at the case sites was more active at certain points in time. The needs of each group will likely change as the transformation unfolds; therefore, convergence may not be appropriate in a particular moment, leading to dormancy in convergence only for it to be revived at a later stage in the transformation.

This analysis indicates that there are clear reasons for using convergence. Why professional employees and senior administrators engage in convergence can be further informed by understanding how both change agent groups used convergence.

How are Professional Employees and Senior Administrators Using Convergence Strategies?

Several strategies were used to achieve important change outcomes. The first strategy is an in-vivo addition to strategies identified in the literature, sense-making and giving. According to Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld (2005), sense-making helps the individual answer two fundamental questions: “the first question of sense-making is ‘what’s going on here?’ the second, equally important question is ‘what do I do next?’” (p 412). In the context of convergence, it is about one group making meaning out of the other group’s request, leading to action, which in the case of professional employees would be a change in practice, and for senior administrators would be a change in strategy or the CIG. Sense-giving is about “attempts to influence the sense-making and meaning construction of others towards a preferred redefinition of reality” (Humphreys, Ucbasaran, & Lockett, 2011, p. 42). It is the presentation of a request that can be made sense of by the receiving group in a way that attempts to be persuasive to that group. So, for senior administrators that entails giving sense that describes connections to the practice of professional employees, while for professional employees it means giving sense that connects to institutional goals or strategy.

Sense-making and giving is the point in the interaction pathway of the most intense activity for both change agent groups. It was at this point that persuasion and communication were at highest levels for one group, while simultaneously processing and analysis were at peak for the other. For senior administrators, sense-giving took the shape of communicating the CIG and organizational strategy, while seeking professional employee practice changes. And for professional employees they provided sense-giving on their practice informed ideas,

which were in need of senior administrator support. Conversely with consideration to sense-making, senior administrators made sense of resource requests from professional employees and professional employees made sense of changes in the CIG and institutional strategy for their practices. These two strategies were also the location in the interaction pathway that is most closely linked to change. In the case of professional employees, when sense-making is complete they can adjust professional practices; whereas for senior administrators they can adjust the CIG or institutional strategy.

Strategies that were used to support sense-making and giving were communication and translation. Bess and Dee (2008) argued that communication “is the basic unit of an organization; it is the process through which the organization and its environment are created and reproduced over time” (p. 61). For senior administrators, communication of top-down efforts in some cases was handled through the supervision chain of command. Bright and Godwin (2010) described planned change as aligning with the organizational hierarchy, therefore communicating through the hierarchy is a reasonable approach for top-down initiated change efforts. This typically played out as messages being passed from the most senior administrators to lower level senior administrators, to middle tier leaders in charge of areas and units, finally to front line professional employees. This type of communication was observed more frequently at Hill, which may have been caused by the size and complexity of Hill requiring the use of more formal channels. A leaner organization like GMCU seemed to have been able to develop more organic communication patterns, as it was easier for people to build relationships outside of the organizational hierarchy.

Bright and Godwin (2010) also described planned changes as premeditated, which implies a level of intentionality. Therefore, senior administrator communication was conscientious to use consistent language to describe the CIG and institutional strategies. Doing so ensured the planned nature of the transformation was able to remain coherent as it merged with Emergent change ideas. This group communicated the value of specific professional employee practices through spotlighting changed practices that were helpful in advancing change, which provided tangible success stories for professional employees to further sense-make about the CIG, and exemplified strategies related to practice as opposed to solely senior administrative abstract goals and plans.

Professional employee communication of bottom-up efforts sometimes used senior administrative-created mechanisms for communication such as town-halls, websites or social media to collect community feedback. This group also used chain of command communication. As bottom-up change was described as a change approach that involves adaptation and ongoing accommodations in response to front-line conditions (Bright & Godwin, 2010; Burnes, 2004a; Burnes, 2005; Esain, Williams, & Massey, 2008; Kezar & Lester, 2011; Kezar, 2012; Weick, 2006), professional employees often communicated with each other through practice dialogues and roadshows to support their organizational learning, which in turn could inform their sense-giving to senior administrators about needed resources to support their ideas. Language was also important for this group, as some professional employee change agents found success in communicating their sense-giving through maintaining language that senior administrators were using.

Finally, communication for both groups, while varied in technique, was dependent on trust. Trust between senior administrators and professional employees enabled the groups to communicate more directly to engage in sense-making and giving without the worry of misinterpretation leading to negative outcomes. Kezar (2013b) argued that for senior administrators and professional employees to come together effectively, there must be a culture of trust between these two groups. Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) argued that “trust provides a solution to the problems caused by social uncertainty” (p. 131). Senior administrators faced uncertainty of not knowing how professional employees would react to top-down leadership, while professional employees faced an equal uncertainty about senior administrator reactions to their requests, in addition to a potentially limited view of the organization and less robust understating of the CIG. Therefore, at certain times in the interaction pathway, one group or the other must take a risk by accepting that what the other group is communicating through sense-giving will advance the transformation. Consequently, each group must work to earn the confidence of the other so that these risks seem reasonable. If they are deemed unreasonable, then trust is not earned, which in turn makes it more difficult for the two groups to converge as they will be less likely to seek out or respond to interaction from the other group, which is the backbone of convergence. Earning mutual trust, according to Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994), involves honesty on the part of the trust seeking party, as well as the trust giving party finding the trust seeking party delivering on assurances so that the trust giving party can have confidence in assurances given.

The next strategy of power had notable differences in terms of how it was used in top-down versus bottom-up leadership. According to Baldrige (1971), Birnbaum, (1988), and Bolman and Deal (2011), power is the ability to mobilize to get what a group or individual wants. Several sources for power in the literature were described including reward, coercion, positional authority, referent, expert, and information power. The case study sites presented examples of senior administrators using mainly positional authority. Positional authority was used to establish key metrics related to the change, mandate actions through the use of the reporting structure, communicate messages across the organization, and repurpose resources. The most favorably received use of such power was repurposing resources, as this enabled bottom-up ideas to receive and apply needed resources. Of these positional authority-based uses of power, the one that was least effective with mandated actions. At both case sites, mandated actions caused change resistance from professional employees. At GMCU this resistance led to a reevaluation of GMCU's CIG, although at Hill, less consideration was given to the resistance. Such mandates could also be considered a mild form of coercive power, examples of which at Hill were detected and were viewed negatively by professional employees, leading to higher levels of skepticism and some distrust. Professional employees, on the other hand, in a bottom-up leadership typology, used expert power. By the nature of their role, professional employees have access to the most current front-line conditions. Therefore, they have the expert power of how the organization is functioning. This power was used by professional employees to give credence to bottom-up sense-giving.

Another strategy that was used was organizational learning. Kezar (2012) wrote on the topic that senior administrators and professional employees often converge "through

learning from each other” (p. 730). The literature described the importance of organized programs of self-learning as a driver of organizational learning (Bess & Dee, 2012; Dill, 1999; Huber, 1991). Top-down leadership used organized programs of self-learning in the form of focus groups and external consultants to accomplish external scanning. While bottom-up leaders used their direct experiences in interacting with students, structures, programs, and practices. Organizational learning by both groups linked loosely coupled units together, which was helpful to complex transformations spanning multiple units, as questions were asked that required multiple units to answer. Additionally, it provided a culture of evidence that was helpful to advance evidence-based decision making. By both top-down and bottom-up organizational learning occurring and then merging through convergence interaction, there was a clear pathway for learning to turn into action.

In short, approaches varied by one group compared to the other, within the confines of that group’s organizational nature and end goals.

How do Change Context Features Influence Convergence?

The change context was found to influence convergence in several ways. The first with the dual control nature of higher education. Alpert (1985) pointed out “no one group in the university has all the factors necessary for institutional change” (p. 244). Convergence can aid to overcome this complication by engaging both groups that are the stakeholders in a dual control schema. It does so by providing a pathway for the sharing of power, authority, and knowledge. Moreover, it provides a way for professional employees to remain engaged in an era of growing new managerialism, which is pushing for power to be consolidated within senior administrative ranks. This pathway can reinforce existing shared governance

arrangements, if they are well-suited to serve the transformational change, or it may work independently of shared governance arrangements if those agreements are not functioning well or do not have a role in transformational change.

Convergence also interacted with the context's complexity, which often is observed as anarchical decision making and goal ambiguity. The literature described complexity of higher education institutions as operating in dynamic and unpredictable ways (Burnes, 2005). Therefore, convergence can be thought of as a change approach that provides some structure for the dynamism and unpredictability, thereby helping to overcome detrimental institutional complexity, in the following ways. Convergence's use of relationships and joining of people across the organization, due to transformation's nature as deep and pervasive, provided opportunities for professional employees and senior administrators to bridge siloed units that often present complications for institutions due to their disparate actions. These relationships provided opportunities for professional employees and senior administrators to better coordinate decision making. Moreover, convergence's focus on a CIG provided another mitigation to institutional complexity, a propensity for goal ambiguity due to the diversity of offices, and secondary or tertiary missions within an institution. Use of consistent language by senior administrators about the CIG and professional employees use of CIG language to sense-give about needs to realize transformational ideas provided a focus on a goal that served as a guiding beacon to coordinate actions and avoid ambiguity.

Another context feature, professional bureaucracy, when found in greater quantity resulted in greater difficulty for convergence to occur. In particular, the larger the organization, the more bureaucratic layers there were between professional employees and

senior administrators, and the more difficult it was for professional employees to get the attention of senior administrators to put their ideas in front of them during convergence. Bureaucratic layers at the larger of the two sites, Hill University, also presented a challenge for communication as one interviewee at Hill pointed out that the size of Hill made it difficult for senior administrators to communicate as quickly and as frequently as she would have liked, to keep up with the pace of transformation.

Convergence also had interaction with the contextual concept of unit coupling. Coupling as described by numerous scholars (Bess & Dee, 2012; Birnbaum, 1988; Kezar, 2001; Weick, 1976) refers to relationships between institutional units. The interaction was different for each case. At GMCU, loosely coupled units were more frequently observed engaging in convergence, whereas units at Hill often were more tightly coupled, engaging in less convergent activity. Evidence of this comes in the form of Hill having more frequent examples of top-down mandated change, which is most responsive to tightly coupled units. GMCU's loose coupling convergence may be due to its size. As a smaller institution compared to Hill, it is possible that GMCU's simpler bureaucracy was more conducive to loose fitting connections that provide responsiveness, but also autonomy to make localized decisions due to a thinner senior administrative layer, meaning fewer senior administrators were involved so the likelihood of top-down mandates was fewer as well. Therefore, coupling does correlate with convergence. Tightly coupled provides less room for localized, professional employee ideas, and decoupled does not permit professional employee ideas to be fed back up the chain to senior administrators, making loosely couple the most conducive to convergence. Furthermore, convergence has the ability to overcome shortcomings of

institutions with loosely coupled units, as convergence can introduce more predictable interactions through planned change efforts and more coordination through the engagement of senior administrators who have wide organizational learning lenses; both concepts were cited in the literature as deficits of loose coupling (Alpert, 1985; Birnbaum, 1988; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2001) but these are mitigated by convergence.

Several other contextual concepts were noted that were not included in the original framework. The first was longevity of service by key individuals for both case study sites. Having senior administrators and professional employees in their roles for long periods of time enabled strong relationships between the two groups that could be leveraged for convergence. Accordingly, long standing relationships led to trust within the two groups, which also served convergence well. Additionally, long-serving staff provided stability in key positions at both sites including the presidents and senior administrators who were involved in the initial drafting of the CIG. Had key staff turnover been more common, it is possible it would have slowed or hindered convergence, as the common understanding of the CIG and strategy that both groups co-constructed through sense-making and giving likely would have had to have been repeated or incorporated new agendas.

Another important factor was a culture open to change. As previously discussed, neither site had a status quo type culture. The cases were open to experimentation, having can-do attitudes, and a willingness to do better. Additionally, the cultures were open to the idea of professional employees speaking truth to power and a general honesty about the current state of operations for the institutions. Such a sub-culture of truth was helpful as it

enabled the cases to conduct organizational learning that could highlight deficits without worrying about how such deficits could be perceived.

Analysis of the research questions has expanded the knowledge base of the convergence phenomenon, particularly with respect to its ability to support transformational change. Accordingly, it is appropriate to revisit the framework structured by the previously limited understanding of convergence in light of this analysis, and revise it with what new knowledge has been established through the course of this study.

Conceptual Framework Revisited

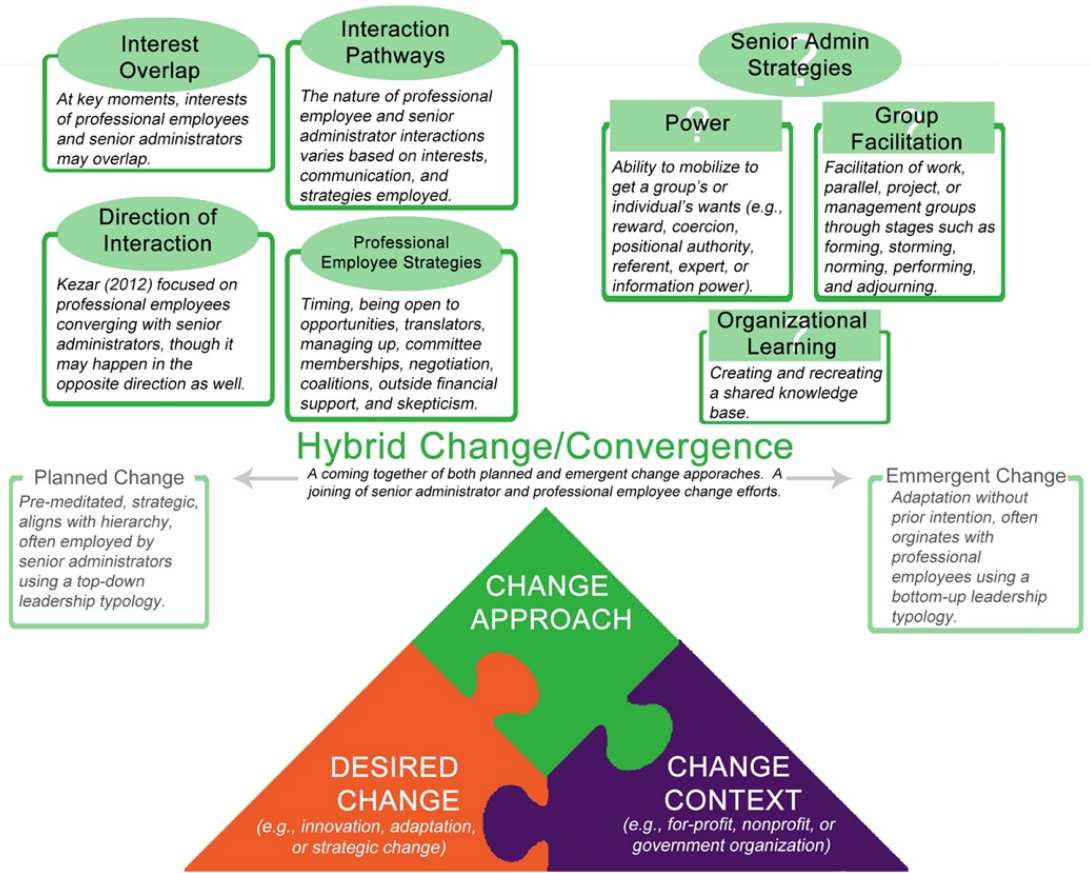
This section will revisit the framework of this study, specifically the change approach section of the framework, as this portion was based on speculations that can now be confirmed, added to, or removed. Parts of the framework do not require any revisiting; therefore, they will not be discussed here as they functioned as the literature review indicated and/or no additional insight can be added after analysis. The revised framework, along with the original framework for comparison are presented on in figures 6a and 6b. In Appendix C, figure 8 reviews the codes that fit within each of the framework's major parts.

The first change to the framework is the highlighting of convergence background dynamics (e.g., interaction pathway, direction, and the CIG). These concepts, along with interest overlap, were highlighted in the framework as background dynamics to denote their difference from what became labeled as strategies. It is important to note that the CIG and professional employee ideas was not originally included in the framework, but during data analysis it quickly became apparent that both groups were working towards a future state, and that state was being sense-given and made by the groups. As reviewed earlier in this

chapter, the idea of a CIG was selected as it evoked the grandness and criticality of a big idea by senior administrators. As the concept of a CIG came into focus during analysis, a similar concept for professional employees also was noted in the data. This concept was labeled ideas, as it was a concept parallel to a CIG, but within the jurisdiction of professional employees who often do not have the authority to make institutional goals or CIGs on their own; but can ideate changes and in some cases implement those changes.

The concepts that were drivers of convergence action, convergence strategies, were reorganized to fall within one of three sub- categories (e.g., senior administrator strategies, professional employee strategies, or senior administrator and professional employee strategies). Strategies that were added to the senior administrator category included professional employee practices, development of organizational strategies, engagement, recognition, and strategic planning. Strategies that were added to the professional employee category were ethic of care, enlisting an ally, shared governance, research agendas, and connecting to the CIG. Strategies that were added to senior administrator and professional employee category, an additional category as the original framework did not account for strategies that could be used by both groups, were sense-making and giving, events, middle translators, communication, and relationships. Joining this strategy category in the revised framework were originally separate organizational learning and groups strategies (which incorporated committee memberships from the original bottom-up category of the framework), as they were found to be used by both groups.

Additionally, several professional employee strategies were eliminated from the framework (e.g., timing, being open to opportunities, managing up, and negotiation) that may



Adapted from Kezar, 2013b

Institutional Transformation A Higher Education Institution

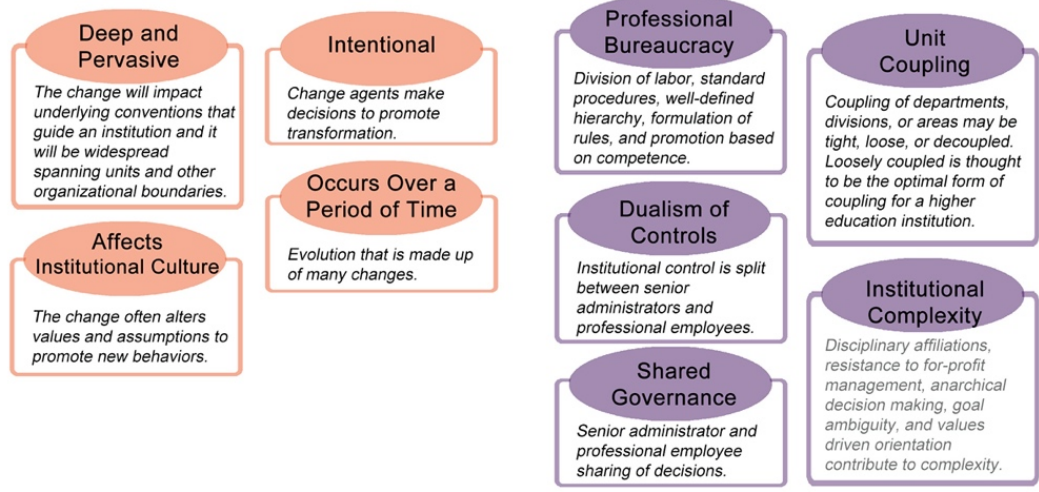
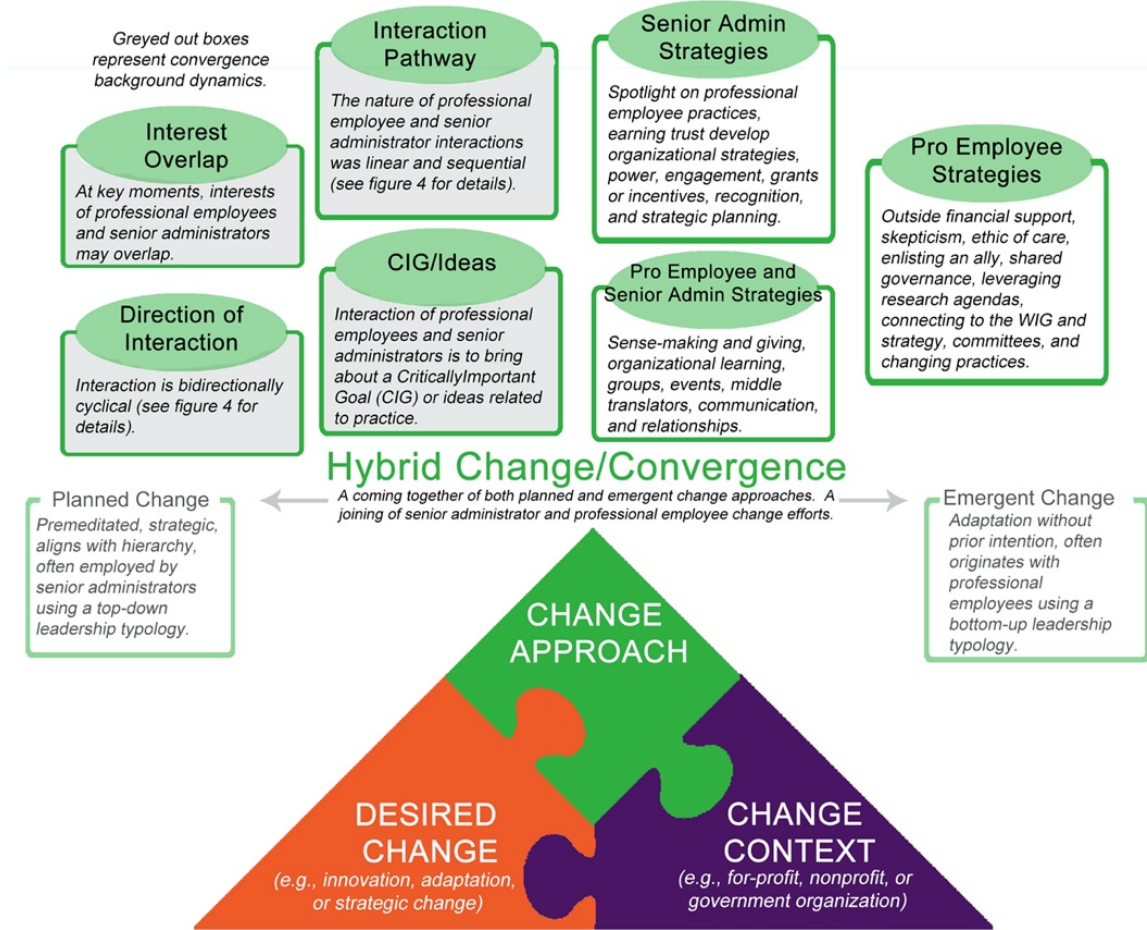


Figure 6a. Original Detailed Conceptual Framework



Adapted from Kezar, 2013b

Institutional Transformation A Higher Education Institution

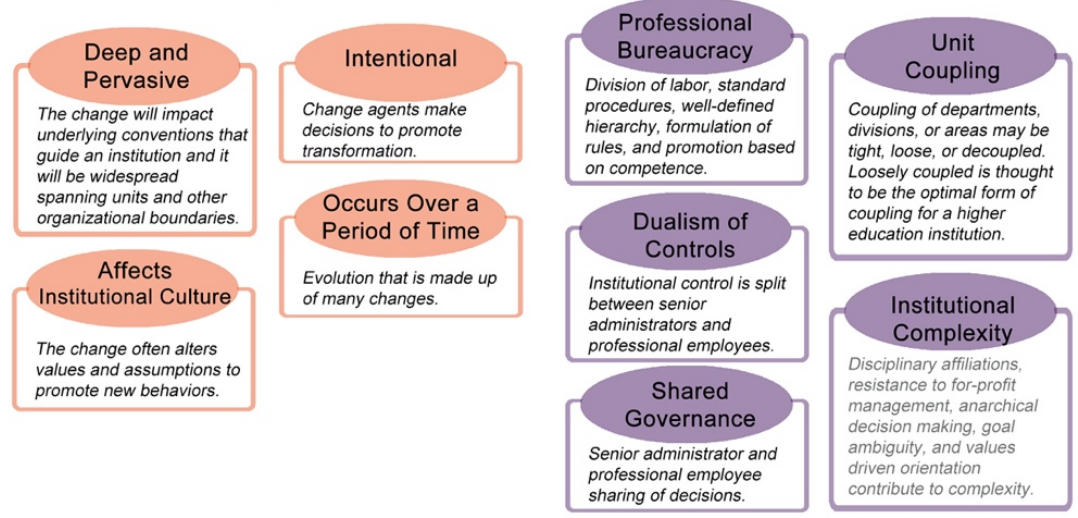


Figure 6b. Revised Detailed Conceptual Framework

have been relevant for Kezar's (2012) study but were not seen at a significant level for this study of transformational change. The idea of coalition was reformed into enlisting an ally, as coalitions seemed to be too formal a concept for a less formal strategy.

Implications for Convergence

To close this discussion chapter, it is helpful to formally advance where Kezar (2012) left the concept of convergence. Kaleidoscopic Convergence as articulated by Kezar developed a new understanding of professional employees using a Hybrid change approach. This study advances Kezar's convergence baseline by offering heightened focus on the strategies of both professional employees and senior administrators. It also more fully considers the role of context on convergence, and specifically defines a desired change: transformation. Accordingly, greater clarity about how convergence operates is now known, and therefore five implications can be articulated about convergence as understood from this study.

The first implication is that convergence can support institutional transformation, but it is not a sufficient change approach to alone bring about transformation. This study has shown two in-depth looks at convergence that led to institutional transformations. Convergence supports a transformational change agenda by combining the strengths of senior administrators and professional employees. That said, it is important to note that during these transformations there were periods when other change approaches may have been in use. These other change approaches were beyond the scope of the study, but it is reasonable to assume over multiple years that convergence was not the only change approach

used to bring about transformation. Therefore, there likely were pauses or even breaks in the convergence activity.

The second implication is that context has a high level of influence upon convergence, in both positive and negative ways not previously understood. The context in many ways bound the operating plane for convergence to play out upon. Specifically, context in the form of bureaucracy, dualism of controls, shared governance, unit coupling, and institutional complexity provided the platform for change agents to act upon using convergence strategies. The effect of the convergence strategies was influenced by the contextual platform, and therefore needs to be considered by both groups prior to and during convergence in order to ensure productive interaction of the change strategies and the context. Kezar (2013b) concluded this, saying that there is a relationship between change approach and change context that affects the desired change outcome, which was the basis of this study's framework. Additional contextual considerations, beyond those in the original framework, deepen the understanding of level of influence the context has on convergence. Those additional considerations include the campus culture being open to change, and the level of resourcing for the campus. The former being necessary for convergence to function and the latter in higher quantities leading to a reduced need for convergence to occur. Therefore, this study has confirmed that context interacts with convergence.

The third implication is that convergence requires a significant input commitment in order to generate outcomes. The first input is time. Convergence for transformation has a cyclical nature and it takes time for the convergence process to make a single cycle, which may or may not shape the transformation, requiring additional cycles. Therefore, this change

approach may take longer than other approaches. This was evident at GMCU where it took perhaps only a year or so for senior administrators to label the institution as an “honors university” through planned, top-down change. Yet, it took over 15 years for the institution to more fully realize its identity as an Honors University through convergence. Additionally, convergence strategies require inputs of effort and resources, the use of which was significantly noted. The approach depends heavily on relationships and interactions, which need to be fueled by the commitment of both groups. Therefore, convergence may be a more costly approach than other change approaches. Institutional expenses for focus groups, feedback mechanisms, the development of a culture of evidence in support of organizational learning, town hall events, brown bag lunch and learn programs, staff time invested in committees, professional development, and incentives may be a steep price in the end. However, institutions may often be engaging in these activities in uncoordinated and siloed ways. Therefore, with the right planning and coordination, it may be possible for institutions to yield the benefits of convergence while keeping costs constant. More research though is necessary to determine how to unlock convergence hybrid change benefits, with consideration to the costs.

A fourth implication is that transformational change does not have to be a conflict laden process. According to Wall and Callister (1995), conflict is defined as a “process in which one party perceives that its interest is being opposed or negatively affected by another party” (p. 517). Change can therefore sometimes be portrayed as senior administrators versus professional employees, where one group may see its interests as being opposed by the actions of the other group. Conflict can consume great energy and time, and therefore, it is

often the aim of organizations to avoid or remedy it (Bess & Dee, 2008). In fact, Kezar's (2012) initial writing on convergence touched on conflict, mentioning skepticism by professional employees of senior administrators, change agendas usurpation by senior administrators, and professional employees managing up of senior administrators. That said, in this study, conflict was minimally observed. Skepticism was present, but not overwhelmingly so, as change agendas were not usurped by senior administrators, professional employees engaged senior administrators and not in a manner that required managing up for negotiation. A deeper dive in the literature review found that some level of conflict can lead to positive organizational outcomes (Wall & Callister, 1995; Brown 1986). In these cases, the change approach of convergence provided conflict de-escalation mechanisms for conflict to be heard and in some instances addressed through the iterative shaping of the transformational agenda through convergence, managing a level of conflict that resulted in positive organizational outcomes. Additionally, low level of conflict observed may have been caused by the scale and length of the change process, which may have dulled the partisan nature of the dual control system. One group or the other could regroup or redirect transformational efforts that were not progressing through convergence to other change approaches, or groups could have pivoted to other changes where there was clearer interest overlap and likelihood of convergence. Moreover, the length of time may have caused participants' views on conflict to soften, or those critical of the transformation may have departed the institution and therefore did not contribute to this study.

The final implication is that convergence, when studied in service of a transformational agenda, is a process with varying levels of activity over the course of the

interaction pathway that can be thought of as iterative. That is, the approach did not have interaction from both groups occurring simultaneously, as Perry (2014) found in a study on hybrid change. Therefore, this study proposes a new specific flavor of convergence, which extends and revises Kezar's (2012) Kaleidoscopic Convergence. The study refers to this new flavor as "Transformational Spiral Convergence" (figure 7). It is a change approach that can be employed by senior administrators and professional employees who seek to make transformational change using the assets of each group to overcome limitations of change enacted by one group alone. The model is grounded by the context of the institution, serving as a foundation for a convergence spiral, which reflects convergence's iterative nature. The features of that context and its dynamics influence the spiral in positive and negative ways. Senior administrator and professional employee activity moves the transformational change effort along the spiral, reaching increasing levels of progress with each complete loop. At points, one group engages in more convergence activity than the other (i.e., the yellow or blue portions of the spiral), at other points both groups engage in similar amounts of convergence activity (i.e., green portions of the spiral). This spiral can expand or collapse in width based on the number of change agents involved in the transformational change effort. The change effort can slow or even pause in its upward spiraling, as other change approaches may be utilized to advance the transformational effort.

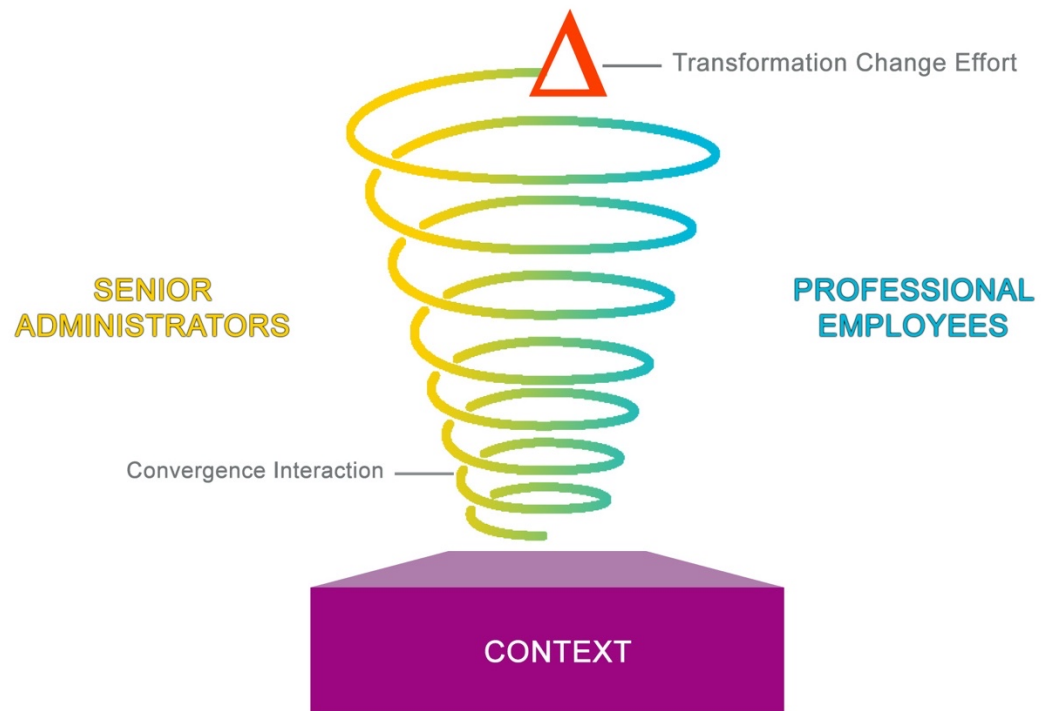


Figure 7. Transformational Spiral Convergence
 A transformational change effort here represented by the red delta rests upon the context of the institution. The convergence interaction that advances that effort spirals sometimes being more closely associated with senior administrators, sometimes with professional employees and other times existed in a blended state of activity.

This new model extends the work of Kezar (2012) in several keyways. The first is that it provides a formal visual for the convergence in service of institutional transformation. Kezar’s work as previously discussed looked at convergence with the desired change being incremental, and Kezar’s study did not visualize convergence. Secondly, it recasts the directionality to be bi-directional, revising what could be interpreted in Kezar’s original model as mono-directional (i.e., one group’s work merging with the others, as opposed to the more frequent give and take observed in this study between professional employees and senior administrators). Thirdly, it provides an acknowledgement that the convergence interaction itself is dynamic. While this was talked about in Kezar (2012), that study did not

deeply discuss the ebb and flow of the process, perhaps because it was not seen as bi-directional, which accounts for periods of intense activity and periods of less intense convergence activity. For instance, in Kezar's study an example was provided of STEM faculty innovating pedagogical approaches to be more interdisciplinary. In this example, the faculty attempted to converge with a campus presidential agenda of teaching reform. At first the merge was productive as the president provided seed funds and professional development opportunities, causing faculty to change their practices. However, when tenure and promotion criteria did not change to reflect this new focus on teaching, poor outcomes for faculty reviews resulted in the faculty largely abandoning these practices and diverging from the president's goal of teaching reform, ending the convergence attempt. Had this example been studied through transformational spiral convergence, the case may have continued evaluate the response of senior administration and re-engage faculty and perhaps other senior administrators.

Finally, this model provides a firm foundation for the process on the context in which it is occurring, a stance not previously highlighted in the Kezar (2012) model, and indicates a process that is continuous and ongoing. The nature of transformation as a long process necessitated this change from kaleidoscopic convergence, which could be described as more episodic, and closely linked to individual change efforts that could be at some points measured as complete. This is not the case for transformation which may take years if not decades, as seen at GMCU, requiring an ever growing spiral of progress in this new model, the speed and pace of which likely will modulate as other change approaches wax and wane in their use.

Limitations

The first noteworthy limitation is that while interviewees did talk about top-down as well as bottom-up leadership, grassroots leadership, formal positional based leadership, and the varying mixture of these concepts for various change scenarios, none spoke of the concept of convergence by name. Therefore, the preceding model is this study's attempt to make associations between the data that indicated positive change results and parts of the convergence phenomena data relayed by change agents that led to those results. Additionally, it was difficult to fully isolate convergence for such a large and lengthy transformational process. Therefore, this study acknowledges that other change approaches were at work as described by Eckle and Kezar (2003) and Kezar (2001), but that the documentation of these other approaches was beyond the scope of this study.

The nature of transformational change itself encapsulates the second limitation of this study. While it may be a critical need for higher education institutions across the country, as discussed earlier in this manuscript, transformation is a very high bar for change; meaning it is very difficult to achieve. It was also challenging to study in the sense that the case bindings for each institution were difficult. Case bindings were originally conceptualized as loose, but with defining criteria including transformation having occurred recently and that the case is the transformation at the institution. While this was a useful starting point, data collection quickly demonstrated that at GMCU the transformational arch was much longer than "recent," therefore, the binding was revised to include a longer time period. A similar occurrence happened at Hill, though for a different reason. There, the original binding was to explore the institution's experiential education improvement. The challenge arose when this

proved to be too diffuse of a binding, therefore it shifted into transformation of conventional educational places, which was a sub-goal of the institution's overall transformational aspirations for an institution that has experiential education as a core belief, as opposed to a key activity as the study originally interpreted it.

With these changes to the binding in mind, it is likely that some richness of the complicated and lengthy process of institutional transformation was lost. It is possible some of the multifaceted aspects were not collected as data or not elevated to findings due to their existence outside of the binding in Hill's case, or downplayed due to the sheer temporal volume of data at GMCU. Additionally, the binding provided a logistical challenge of trying to distill an institution-wide phenomenon to a manageable number of interviews. While saturation was noted in both cases, the nature of the snowball sampling method may have neglected to include views that could have added additional dimensionality to this study. That is to say, subjects may have recommended others to interview that they converged with, limiting this study's ability to capture failed convergence.

Closely related to the binding limitation, is the nature of this study not occurring in real-time. The study of convergence relied on participant memories and what documents could be located. While triangulation of multiple data sources attempted to mitigate this limitation, participant memories may have been distorted and some documents referenced by interviewees were not located. Therefore, as any study with a historical dimension to it has, the study is limited by what information was presented and what verification was possible for a complex social phenomenon.

Additionally, neither site presented the opportunity to study convergence within a system of decoupled or tightly coupled units. While Hill did have aspects of tight coupling in the form of chain of command supervision and sub-goal setting, the institution cannot be characterized as having consistent tight coupling. Therefore, the understanding of convergence is limited to institutions with functioning loosely coupled units.

Furthermore, it was not clear if convergence was a vehicle for overcoming tradition. Both cases had cultures of experimentation and a general willingness to change. Therefore, it is not known how convergence might operate in a case where this culture does not exist, as for both GMCU and Hill, convergence was used as a tool to bring about change, rather than a way to make a case for transformation. How convergence could serve making the case for a transformation and changing a campus culture that is rich in tradition and committed to preserving the status quo is not known.

Finally, the nature of this project as a case study endeavor is a limitation, in the fact that the study's design does not posit the prevalence of the phenomenon beyond these two cases. While it has provided data on how common the premise is within this limited sample, this data is not overly generalizable due to the research design. The study has attempted to thickly describe convergence as a way for it to be understood in these cases, within their institutional settings, so that readers may determine if and how these convergence examples may apply to their situation. Therefore, while the generalizability to practice and the literature may be limited, the value of these case examples in advising practical and scholarly understanding of convergence in these settings is ample.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This chapter will review this study in its entirety through recommendations for specific groups. Those recommendations will be for practitioners, groups external to higher education, and for future research. Finally, this chapter will conclude with final, general thoughts.

Recommendations for Practitioners and Scholars

This study aims to offer insight into convergence strategies and background dynamics that can aid institutional transformation efforts, for the applied use of senior administrators and professional employees. Practitioners, regardless of their place within the organizational hierarchy should familiarize themselves with these strategies and dynamics for their own group and for their colleague group. Reviewing both will provide the opportunity to gain an understanding of how to effectively use their own group strategies as well as how to identify pertinent patterns and engage with their colleagues' group strategies.

Practitioners should also be prepared if engaging in convergence for a process that will necessitate a give and take of Emergent change meeting with Planned change. This may be a concern for senior administrators who should not use convergence if they are seeking a direct top-down implementation or for professional employees who may be inflexible in their

grassroots innovation. In other words, practitioners who are considering engaging in a convergence spiral should do so knowing their ideas will be shaped and altered by the process of convergence. This may be difficult for senior administrators to agree to in certain situations where a particular change is needed according to specific guidelines that cannot be deviated from. Instances of governmental mandates, accreditation recommendations, or compliance regulation changes are planful top-down changes that need precise execution that leave little room for grassroots adaptation, and accordingly, convergence. Conversely, it may be difficult for professional employees to forgo their emergent nature in situations where change may need to be free to adapt and respond to local stimuli. Examples of curriculum experimentation, advising and mentoring practices, and programmatic strategies are emergent bottom-up changes that need flexibility that senior administrative scrutiny can stifle, and accordingly may not be a match for the convergence change approach. Because of the limitations on Planned or Emergent change, groups should enter into convergence knowing there will need to be compromises made.

Additionally, practitioners should take into account that convergence may not be an efficient process for transformational change, and that efficiency likely will vary based on institutional context. This inefficiency may be caused by the scale of transformational change being so large that change efforts are slow and require significant inputs. It may also be due to convergence as a change approach requiring a noteworthy amount of effort to build productive relationships, engage effective communications channels between the groups, and engage in the give and take of sense-making and giving. Therefore, practitioners should consider activities that can help support convergence iteration even before a transformation is

declared the desired change at the institution. Doing so could increase the change approach's efficiency. One can think of this as Transformational Convergence Spiral preparation for potential future transformational needs. That is to say, institutions can do things now to develop a strong contextual base that a convergence spiral can grow from when the time comes for transformation, thereby making it easier for the process to begin. Activities such as good communication, openness to sense-making and giving between the two groups, trust building, senior administration engagement, empowering shared governance groups, and relationship building are all things that institutions can be doing without a transformational agenda that will build a foundation when and if the time comes, likely reducing the initiation energy needed to have convergence spiraling start yielding results.

Finally, practitioners should adopt a learning leader approach to their practice for convergence to be an effective change approach. Preskill and Brookfield (2009) described learning leaders as individuals who have a capacity to be taught, work collaboratively, listen, and learn from others. This orientation is important for two reasons. The first is that change agents as leaders, regardless of their organizational position, must be engaging in continuous organizational learning about the status of their organizational and its relationship with the environment. Doing so is vital for the initial formation of the transformation that sparks a convergence spiral, but it is also important to sustain it as learning about the organization and environment helps inform the spiral process and makes the loops more effective in advancing the transformational agenda as they occur. Additionally, an orientation as a learning leader requires, especially from senior administrators, a checking of egos, which is a dimension of being a learning leader. The level of responsibility of senior administrators' executive roles

on campus may encourage a propensity to own accomplishments as they look to exemplify their leadership skill to more senior administrators, board members, or governmental officials. While this level of personal initiative and drive has a role in highly competitive, challenging positions, senior administrators must be willing to openly dialogue with professional employees, hear their needs and ideas, and co-create with professional employees a transformational agenda, as well as share credit for convergence successes. The presence of this leadership practice was integral to both sites in this study and may be necessary for convergence universally.

In addition to recommendations for practitioners, this study has shown that there is insight to be gained embracing by shedding a bipolarity approach to change research. Studying the middle ground between the Planned and Emergent camps has provided a new holism and complexity to transformational change. Therefore, higher education scholars should embrace the study of hybrid change, as it is a new frontier in higher education change scholarship that can help practitioners who are seeking change, but maybe struggling applying an incomplete literature base to the challenges that they face. Potential hybrid change research ideas are detailed in this chapter's section on recommendations for research.

Recommendations for External Higher Education Groups

This study has shown that convergence is an intensive process as evidence by length of time and number of people involved in convergence for transformational change. This intensiveness should more fully be considered by professional associations and accreditation bodies that advise institutions on change. Often, these external groups advise institutions about needs that should be addressed through reports, institutional studies, professional

meetings, and literature. However, these groups could provide richer guidance by considering the needs of transformation and the role the change approach of convergence can or cannot play to bring about such a desired change. These groups could advise institutions on the appropriateness of convergence for transformational needs, based on the urgency of the transformational needs. For example, if an institution requires a financial model change that has great urgency to ensure the stability of the institution, another change approach should potentially be advised as convergence may be too resource intense and/or take too long to yield the financial transformation necessary for institutional preservation. Whereas, a transformation that seeks to reposition the university in the higher education marketplace, aims to address a dated curriculum, or desires to improve educational effectiveness could be a better match for the convergence approach.

Additionally, knowing that sense-making and giving is a high point of convergence interaction, professional associations could offer targeted professional development for senior administrators or professional employees to could hone middle-translator tactics. Fostering such learning opportunities could provide a way to capacity build for this important group of convergence change agents.

Finally, pertaining to the professional development space, professional associations that target senior administrator professional development could revise training for senior administrators to apply knowledge of convergence strategies. Curriculum could include convergence power dynamics, engagement techniques, messaging tactics, trust building, and strategic planning. While these concepts are not new to the change discipline, the understanding of them as part of the convergence change approach and their importance to

transformational change is elucidated through this study. Application of this knowledge can provide additional new perspective for such training that could better support these associations in preparation of senior administrators to advance change on their campuses, in a way that is effective and responsive to environmental forces.

Recommendations for Future Research

As a qualitative endeavor, this study has sought to present findings in rich detail of an embedded process and human behavior that was not previously fully understood. Such an approach has provided new detail on convergence. Readers may find there is great transferability of the institutions presented here to their own, and therefore the findings related to convergence may map to their situation well. However, these two sites are two schools in a sea of institutions, therefore future research could help quantify the occurrence of these strategies for a diversity of institutions seeking transformation. Therefore, a line of quantitative research that evaluates the presence of convergence and its strategies based on institutional size, type, and method (e.g., online only vs traditional), could increase the reach and generalizability of this study's findings.

Additional research could also continue this qualitative line of inquiry by attempting to situate convergence as a change approach next other change approaches used during institutional transformation. While it can be speculated when other change approaches could be useful, based on the convergence findings, first-hand accounts of change agents making decisions of which change approaches to use were not captured. Such data could help deepen the perspective about why convergence is and is not used by change agents seeking institutional transformation.

A variation on a qualitative continuation of this research could look into how to increase the efficiency of convergence through enabling practice work before a transformational agenda is decided, which could be looked at through a deeper dive into the context of an institution prior to the transformational agenda, coupled with an ongoing study. Efficiency could also be assessed by examining institutional methods to decrease friction on the convergence spiral to promote the convergent activity passing back and forth between groups. Things like specific techniques of middle translators and the ways in which sense-making and giving occur could help in this regard.

A final line of research could also investigate the workings of convergence seeking to transform due to crisis. This study found that both institutions engaged in convergence to bring about transformation, and that engagement in convergence occurred at times of relative stability for the institution (i.e., there was no threat of closure, natural disaster or leadership turmoil, or disfunction in the ranks of professional employees). Any such scenario could change the operation of the strategies or may even preclude the choice to engage in convergence due to the urgency of the crisis situation.

Final Thoughts

The forward sections to this dissertation references a passage from Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek (2009) about the coming together of planned and emergent change. It conveyed a foreshadowing of the concept I hoped to provide more detail about – convergence. This passage served as an inspiration for each phase of the project. Therefore, it seems fitting to revisit it in the final section of this study as a postscript to the project. In the passage, Livne-

Tarandach et al. wrote about a teacher and an elementary school student struggling with a painting. They wrote:

She had a wonderful picture, but there was a blank in the middle. She had painted a strip of sky and a strip of ground. She felt something was wrong. I knew, but I realized that it would not help to tell her; she had to find the answer herself. I suggested that she go out on the balcony and look very carefully. She returned all smiles. She finished her painting and discovered the horizon.

This study of convergence aimed to reveal new understanding of the theoretical horizon, the relationship between Planned and Emergent change in higher education organizations that are seeking transformation.

Our new understanding of this horizon has enabled the updating of the Kaleidoscope Convergence model in the form of a new model– Transformational Spiral Convergence. It is a change approach that can serve a diversity of environmental forces, which therefore means it has the potential to address some of higher education’s most pressing institutional challenges such as more inclusive admissions practices, campus climate improvements for students of color, a reinvention of the financial model for public higher education institutions, or improvements to institutional effectiveness via gains in research productivity and student retention.

This concept may have great value as a change approach that engages the strengths of the two primary change agents groups: professional employees and senior administrators. It provides a way to optimize the contributions, and honor the tradition, of both groups having an active role in oversight of the institution. Moreover, it addresses a common flaw of higher

education change approaches: change agents groups pursuing change separately from each other, initiating changes at different levels of the organization, causing redundancy, inefficiency, and diminished chance of success. The convergence change approach has been shown to- lead to deep, effective change, and offers the potential for institutions to address criticisms citing the mismatch between external demands and inadequate responses to change. Engaging the Transformational Convergence Spiral has the potential to be a more effective change approach to reverse negative outcomes such as the slipping of higher education's graduation rates.

In short, convergence as a horizon of change has the potential to bring change agents and their natural change strengths together in ways that can support transformational change for higher education institutions. The words of president Fabian perhaps best encapsulate Transformational Convergence Spiraling: "A single person cannot carry a university to the heights we have attained. That requires the relentless efforts of hundreds of fiercely committed people over many years." Such words reflect the length of a transformational change, the extent of people involved in the convergence transformation, and the results – achieving great heights.

APPENDIX A – SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

Begin by reviewing the human subject protocol as dictated by the IRB, obtain documentation of informed consent, inform participant of the post interview member check process, and ask if the participant has any questions for me. Briefly explain that I'm studying how people work together to bring about change, that the transformational change case I am looking at for that campus and that my interest is in looking at the change approach actions of people and the institutional factors that helped or challenged people attempting to make change.

1. **THE DESIRED CHANGE:** Can you tell me about your perspective of the change that I've just described? *Probe about how deep and pervasive the change was, what was the influence on institutional culture, the intentionality of the change process, the length of time, and/or the collaboration involved.*
2. **THE CHANGE APPROACH:** How did faculty/staff and senior administrators work together to bring about that transformation? *Probe about the kind of interactions the two groups had, were they planned, top-down in nature, bottom-up, emergent, or a mixing of the two?*
3. **THE CHANGE APPROACH:** Why do you think faculty/staff and senior administrators approached the change process in a joint manner? *Probe about if it helped deal with bureaucracy, siloed units, navigating institutional complexity or if it fit within existing shared governance structures, overlapping interests between the two groups.*
4. **THE CHANGE APPROACH:** Were there specific strategies that senior administrators used to work with faculty/staff to bring about that change? *Probe about power dynamics, organizational learning, and group facilitation.*
5. **THE CHANGE APPROACH:** Were there specific strategies that faculty/staff used to work with senior administrators to bring about that change? *Probe about timing, negotiation, and skepticism.*
6. **THE CHANGE CONTEXT:** Were there particular institutional features that helped or challenged the coming together of faculty/staff and senior administrators? *(e.g., structures, culture dynamics, shared governance arrangements, strategic or master plans, a leader, or an active grassroots group)*
7. **FURTHERING THE SAMPLE:** Are there other senior administrators of faculty/staff you would recommend I talk to?

At the end of the interview, thank the participant, remind them of the post interview member check process, and ask if the participant has any questions for me.

APPENDIX B – DATA SOURCE TABLES

Table 4. Documents Analyzed

<u>Document Number</u>	<u>Document Name</u>	<u>Case</u>	<u>Type of Document</u>	<u>Date Added to NVIVO</u>	<u>Original Publication Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Summary</u>
D1	University Mission and Vision	GMCU	Mission Statement	6/3/18	6/3/2018	GMCU's Website	Mission and vision for the campus.
D2	Our GMCU: A Strategic Plan for Advancing Excellence	GMCU	Press Article	6/4/18	Spring 2016	GMCU's Website	Timeline for a strategic planning drafting and implementation process.
D3	Our GMCU: A Strategic Plan for Advancing Excellence	GMCU	Press Article	6/4/18	Spring 2016	GMCU's Website	Article detailing a strategic planning drafting and implementation process.
D4	Our GMCU	GMCU	Report	6/5/18	Spring 2016	GMCU's Website	Strategic plan document outlining GMCU's CIG and strategies.
D5	Up on the Roof – Winter 2013	GMCU	Press Article	6/13/18	2/5/2013	GMCU's Website	A Q&A with GMCU's President that shared his leadership style and interest overlap with professional employees.
D6	Advancing the Greater Mid-Atlantic County Region: The Strategic Enhancement of GMCU	GMCU	Report	6/30/18	5/1990	GMCU Institutional Archive	Taskforce report detailing the University's Strategic Plan.
D7	GMCU: An Honors University Strategic Framework for 2016	GMCU	Report	6/30/2018	11/10/2003	GMCU Institutional Archive	Taskforce report updating the University's Strategic Plan.
D8	In Mid-Atlantic, lessons for Harbor University	GMCU	Press Article	7/23/18	7/21/2018	Boston Globe	Article offering advice for Harbor University based on GMCU's success story.
D9	Great Colleges to Work for 2012	GMCU	Press Article	7/25/18	8/10/2012	Chronicle of Higher Education	Listing of colleges and their attributes earning them

							distinction as "great colleges."
D10	Improbable Excellence: The Saga of GMCU	GMCU	Monograph	8/1/2018	2016	Caroline Academic Press	Institutional history written for the campus's 50 th anniversary.
D11	Missing from Science Class	GMCU	Press Article	1/26/19	12/10/2013	New York Times	Article highlighting the STEM achievement gap for underrepresented students and GMCU's efforts to close that gap.
D12	GMCU Institutional Timeline	GMCU	Press Article	1/27/19	1/27/2019	GMCU Institutional Archive	Institutional history timeline for 1989-2012
D13	Assessment and Analytics in Institutional Transformation	GMCU	White paper	2/8/19	9/12/2011	Educause.edu	Article on the role of assessment and analytics in institutional transformation written by GMCU's president and CTO.
D14	GMCU's Blackboard Use Differs from Most Schools	GMCU	Press Article	2/9/19	12/11/2018	GMCU's Website	Article sharing findings of Blackboard research on course archetypes from the learning management system.
D15	About GMCU's Innovation Fund	GMCU	Marketing Webpage	2/12/19	2/12/2019	GMCU's Website	Information about GMCU's invocation fund for faculty and staff.
D16	Shared Governance Group Description	GMCU	Marketing Webpage	2/13/19	2/13/2019	GMCU's Website	Website detailing the role and membership for one of the campus's shared governance groups.
D17	Police on Shared Governance in the University of Greater Mid- Atlantic System	GMCU	Operation Document	2/13/19	10/4/1996	University of Greater Mid- Atlantic System Website	Purpose and function of the various shared governance groups as defined by the state system that GMCU is part of.
D18	Shared Governance MOU	GMCU	Operation Document	2/15/19	12/9/2016	GMCU's Website	MOU defining shared

							governance arrangements between employees and administration.
D19	Shared Governance Committee Meeting Minutes	GMCU	Minutes	2/18/19	1/10/2019	Shared Governance Group President	Minutes for a shared governance group meeting.
D20	Shared Governance Committee Meeting Minutes	GMCU	Minutes	2/18/19	1/10/2019	Shared Governance Group President	Minutes for a shared governance group meeting.
D21	About the Project	GMCU	Marketing Webpage	3/3/19	3/3/2019	GMCU's Website	Summary of new campus construction projects
D22	Faculty Development Center History	GMCU	Monograph	3/8/19	In press.	Case Study Monograph on the Advancement of Faculty Development Centers	Historical review of the bottom-up emergence of GMCU's Faculty Development Center.
D23	Educating Undergraduates in a Public Honors Research University in the Twenty-First Century	GMCU	Report	4/16/19	5/31/2000	GMCU's Website	Report of the Honors University Taskforce detailing strategy revisions and adjustments to the institution CIG, to more fully realize the Honors University identity.
D24	A Plan of Organization for the Senates of GMCU	GMCU	Operation Document	9/13/19	4/2017	GMCU's Website	Purpose and function of the various shared governance groups as defined by the state system that GMCU is part of.
D25	Academic Plan: Hill University 2025	Hill	Report	4/19/18	Fall 2016	GMCU's Website	Strategic plan document outlining Hill's CIG and strategies.
D26	Hill EIP Offered 4-year Degrees	Hill	Press Article	6/30/18	12/9/2009	Boston Globe	Article detailing plans to modify Hill curriculum from a five-year experience to four years, while remaining committed to EIP.

D27	Using Analytics for Institutional Transformation	Hill	Press Article	2/9/19	9/4/2012	Educause.edu	Case study report on GMCU's use of analytics, which helped drive the campus's culture of evidence.
D28	Online Education at Hill	Hill	Press Article	4/5/19	10/25/2012	Hill's Website	Letter from Hill's President detailing online expansion plans and seeking ideas from professional employees.
D29	Global Mission	Hill	Mission Statement	4/8/19	4/8/2019	Hill's Website	A high-level summary of the campus's global mission.
D30	Hill's Silicon Valley Campus	Hill	Press Article	4/8/2019	3/30/15	Marketplace.org	Article detailing Hill's expansion plans into the Silicon Valley marketplace.
D31	Our Programs	Hill	Marketing Webpage	4/11/19	4/11/2019	Hill's Website	A review of the International Education Office's Programs.
D32	EIP Program Helps Students Gain Experience Before Graduation	Hill	Press Article	4/11/19	4/8/2012	USAToday.com	News story on the value of EIP for student's experiences.
D33	In Seattle, Virtual University Will Have a Physical Campus Too	Hill	Press Article	4/11/19	10/29/2012	New York Times	Article detailing Hill's expansion plans into the Seattle marketplace.
D34	Hill Will Open Education 'Hub' in Silicon Valley Company	Hill	Press Article	4/11/2019	3/30/2015	Chronicle of Higher Education	Article detailing Hill's expansion plans into the Silicon Valley marketplace.
D35	Board of Trustees Approves New Academic Plan	Hill	Press Article	9/22/19	10/4/2016	Hill's Website	Release announcing approval of Hill's new academic plan to the community at large.
D36	Hill Announces New Academic Plan	Hill	Press Article	9/22/19	10/11/2019	Hill's Website	Release announcing details of Hill's new academic plan to the community at large.

Table 5. Interviews

<u>Interview Number</u>	<u>Interviewee Name</u>	<u>Case</u>	<u>Interview Date</u>	<u>Employee Type</u>	<u>Length of Service</u>	<u>Profile</u>
1	Daisy	GMCU	2/15/19	Senior Administrator	26+ years	Started at the institution as a faculty member in the 1990s. During her tenure on campus, she moved into administration, serving as the founding academic administrator responsible for key pieces of the undergraduate student experience. Programs in her portfolio included student success bridge programs, talented and gifted student programming, and academic support. She recently retired from the institution.
2	Damien	GMCU	8/23/18	Professional Employee	16-20 years	Staff member in the Campus Life & Community Engagement Office. His work includes student leadership, community engagement, and the TrailBlazing Initiative.
3	Dorothy	GMCU	2/14/19	Professional Employee	6-10 years	She currently serves in the campus's Academic Affairs Division as a program manager and is also president of one of the school's shared governance senates, which represents about 100 employees.
4	Fabian	GMCU	6/17/19	Senior Administrator	26+ years	Campus president.
5	Jake	GMCU	2/11/19	Professional Employee	21-25 years	He is the lead technology administrator for the faculty use of technology. His responsibilities include instructional technology such as audience response and in-classroom assessments, learning analytics, and user support.
6	John	GMCU	1/30/19	Senior Administrator	26+ years	He currently serves as the campus's Chief Technology Officer (CTO). He has reported to the president of the campus since the early 2000s. His portfolio includes technology services in support of teaching and scholarship, research computing, and administrative support.
7	Kevin	GMCU	2/27/19	Professional Employee	21-25 years	Program director.
8	Karl	GMCU	6/17/19	Professional Employee	16-20 years	Currently serves in academic affairs administration at GMCU, specifically charged with academic advising and student success. Previously, he has worked in several academic and student support roles during his career. He holds a Ph.D. and is a trained counselor.
9	Lizzie	GMCU	3/8/19	Professional Employee	6-10 years	She is a leader in academic affairs administration, focusing on faculty affairs – specifically, faculty development, diversity, and assessment. She is a trained scientist and has vast experience in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

10	Lynn	GMCU	2/15/19	Senior Administrator	26+ years	She serves as the chief communications officer for the campus and an advisor to the president on key strategic initiatives. Her work includes branding and communications strategies, serving as a liaison for key constituent groups on the behalf of the president, supporting the institution's strategic planning process, and managing government relations.
11	Sadie	GMCU	2/22/19	Professional Employee	6-10 years	She holds a teaching focused position. Her pedagogical practices include team-based learning, which she describes as a collaborative, flipped-classroom, learning practice.
12	Travis	GMCU	9/25/18	Professional Employee	6-10 years	He is a middle manager for their academic advising and student success area. He has responsibility for academic advising leadership in various capacities including academic review processes, advising assessments, and business continuity.
13	Yasmeen	GMCU	2/7/19	Senior Administrator	26+ years	Yasmeen is an alum of the institution. She serves as the chief enrollment management officer having strategic responsibility for recruitment and aspects of retention, through the functional areas of undergraduate admissions and orientation, financial aid and scholarships, academic advising, and the Registrar's Office.
14	Adam	Hill	10/5/18	Professional Employee	6-10 years	A manager in the Alcott School's academic advising area.
15	Connor	Hill	11/4/18	Professional Employee	11-15 years	He is a senior unit leader who oversees student services and experiential learning for graduate studies and the college of continuing studies.
16	James	Hill	9/10/18	Senior Administrator	6-10 years	He served as dean of the school's college of professional studies for six years starting in 2010. From 2016-2018 he headed up the school's opening of a campus in southern Canada.
17	Jayden	Hill	6/13/19	Professional Employee	1-5 years	Jayden is a STEM faculty member. He holds a teaching position appointment. His teaching load focuses on foundational science courses. Additionally, he has led Critical Issues Experience courses, which are abbreviated experiential learning courses offered abroad.
18	Jenna	Hill	11/5/18	Professional Employee	6-10 years	She is an experiential education coordinator in the international affairs program.

19	Mari	Hill	9/15/18	Professional Employee	26+ years	She currently serves as the senior leader for the Alcott School. Her portfolio includes academic advising, admission yield efforts, retention, and cooperative education.
20	Michelle	Hill	9/22/18	Professional Employee	21-25 years	She is a senior leader in the Career Services area.
21	Miriam	Hill	5/18/19	Senior Administrator	1-5 years	She is a unit leader at Hill for a central office of education abroad. The unit works across all academic colleges to provide students with international experiences. Services include recruitment and advising, as well as the programs themselves. Programs are mostly targeted at undergraduate students, but graduate students on occasion do participate. Most experiences are for academic credit.
22	Patricia	Hill	9/26/18	Senior Administrator	16-20 years	She is a seasoned line leader who is responsible for leading the strategic planning, global market expansion, marketing, new business development, digital platforms, learner experience, and academic programs for adult learning at the institution. She also oversees the institution's global campus initiatives.
23	Paul	Hill	9/5/18	Senior Administrator	26+ years	He worked in the Provost's office at the time when the institution first started international pathway programs. Currently, he has responsibility for international engagement within Hill University's College of Continuing Education.
24	Simon	Hill	6/11/19	Senior Administrator	6-10 years	His lineage from other institutions includes time as a STEM faculty member and multiple positions in academic leadership including another Provost position and time as a Dean. He recently retired from the institution.
25	Rahan	Hill	10/14/19	Professional Employee	6-10 years	Distinguished Professor of Business

Table 6. Observations

<u>Observation Number</u>	<u>Observation Name</u>	<u>Case</u>	<u>Type of Observation</u>	<u>Date Added to NVIVO</u>	<u>Original Observation Event Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Summary</u>
1	Our GMCU	GMCU	Institutional Video	6/3/2018	6/3/2018	YouTube	Institutional video detailing the process used to create the strategic plan, the institutional values that guide the plan, and the implementation plan.
2	President Fabian's 20 th Anniversary Gala	GMCU	Institutional Video	7/13/2018	10/11/2012	YouTube	Celebration gala honoring the years of service by President Fabian and launching a named innovation fund.
3	Fabian: An Educator Focused on Math and Science	GMCU	60 Minutes	4/11/2019	11/13/2011	YouTube	Story chronicling Fabian's journey to leadership and his values for the campus.
4	First Year Orientation	GMCU	Program	6/18/2019	6/18/2019	In person observation	Observed various sessions at first year orientation.
5	General Campus Observation	GMCU	Passive Observation	6/18/2019	6/18/2019	In person observation	Observation of campus psychical artifacts.
6	Applicant User Journey Workshop	GMCU	Workshop	6/19/2019	6/19/2019	In person observation	Half-day workshop of enrollment management stakeholders to revised and update their collective understanding of a student's journey to enrollment at GMCU.
7	Commencement Address	Hill	Speech	4/8/2019	5/2/2008	YouTube	Commencement speech by Hill's President detailing global leadership.
8	2008 State of the University Town Hall	Hill	Speech	7/1/2019	10/17/2008	YouTube	Presidential address reviewing the progress of institution for its CIG and updating on new institutional strategies.
9	2013 State of the University	Hill	Speech	7/1/2019	10/24/2018	YouTube	Remarks from the president, provost, and shared governance leader reviewing the progress of institution for its CIG and updating on new institutional strategies.
10	2017 State of the University Trailer	Hill	Speech	7/1/2019	11/6/2017	YouTube	Short video detailing the global nature of the campus and the GIC dimensions that will guide the State of the University address.
11	General Campus Observation	Hill	Passive Observation	8/12/2019	8/12/2019	In person observation	Observation of campus psychical artifacts.

APPENDIX C – CODING RESULTS

Table 7. Basic Codes

<u>Deductive</u>	<u>Inductive Continued</u>
bottom-up strategies	incentives
collaborative leadership +	inclusive excellence
convergence	input gathering
culture	institutional history
deep and pervasive	interviewee profile
direction of interaction +	leveraging tech
groups	life-long learning
institutional transformation	scholars program
interaction pathways	need
interest overlap +	transformation of place
organizational learning +	online
over a period of time	organizational meaning making
power +	Ph.D. completion project
shared governance	power of why
strategies +	practices
top-down strategies	prioritize
translator (middle)	problem
	professional development
	professional employee change in practices
	professional employee idea
	program review
	relationships
	reputation
	request to senior admins
	resources
	restructuring
	senior administration sense-giving
	senior leadership strength
	sense-making
	social civic center
	skunkworks
	small wins
	spotlight
	staff
	staff longevity
	stem gap
	stories
	strategic plan
	study abroad
	task force
	team based learning
	transparency
	trust
	ugrad, teaching, learning, and research
	union
	unit and individual goals
	why attempting convergence

“+” Denotes Sensitizing Concept

Table 8. Categorical Codes with Nested Basic Codes

<p><u>Challenge</u> <i>contracting pressure</i> <i>prioritize</i></p>	<p><u>Interaction Pathways</u> <i>cascade</i> <i>change in org strategy</i> <i>request to senior admins</i> <i>restructuring</i> <i>skunkworks</i> <i>staff longevity</i> <i>unit and individual goals</i></p>	<p><u>Uncategorized</u> <i>awards and recognition</i> <i>bottom-up strategies</i> <i>change context</i> <i>convergence</i> <i>direction of interaction</i> <i>events</i> <i>filter</i> <i>groups</i> <i>institutional history</i> <i>institutional transformation</i> <i>interest overlap</i> <i>interviewee profile</i> <i>professional development</i> <i>relationships</i> <i>reputation</i> <i>resources</i> <i>senior leadership strength</i> <i>spotlight</i> <i>strategies</i> <i>top down strategies</i> <i>translator (middle)</i> <i>why attempting convergence</i></p>
<p><u>Communication</u> <i>stories</i></p>	<p><u>Organizational Learning</u> <i>data based decision making</i> <i>double loop learning</i> <i>environmental scanning</i> <i>focus groups</i> <i>input gathering</i> <i>leveraging tech</i> <i>program review</i></p>	<p><u>Underlined codes represent category codes</u> <i>Italic code represent basic codes</i></p>
<p><u>Critically Important Goal & Employee Ideas</u> <i>critically important goal</i> <i>need</i> <i>power of why</i> <i>problem</i> <i>professional employee idea</i></p>	<p><u>Power</u> <i>distributed authority</i></p>	
<p><u>Elements of Transformation</u> <i>collaborative leadership & facilitated by</i> <i>collaboration</i> <i>culture</i> <i>deep and pervasive</i> <i>occurred over a period of time</i></p>	<p><u>Sense-making</u> <i>organizational meaning making</i> <i>senior administration sense-giving</i></p>	
<p><u>Faculty</u> <i>curriculum</i> <i>fdc</i> <i>ugrad, teaching, learning, and research</i></p>	<p><u>Shared Governance</u> <i>union</i></p>	
<p><u>Honors University</u> <i>civic center</i> <i>hu example</i> <i>inclusive excellence</i> <i>Ph.D. project</i> <i>scholars program</i> <i>social civic center</i> <i>stem gap</i> <i>team based learning</i></p>	<p><u>Staff</u> <i>practices</i> <i>professional employee change in practices</i> <i>small wins</i></p>	
<p><u>Incentives</u> <i>grant</i></p>	<p><u>Trust</u> <i>transparency</i></p>	
<p><u>Institutional Background</u> <i>change context</i> <i>institutional history</i> <i>institutional transformation</i></p>		

Table 9. Thematic Codes with Nested Categorical and Uncategorized Basic Codes

Bottom Up Strategies

bottom-up strategies

Faculty

Shared Governance

Staff

Organizational Learning

relationships

Sense-making

strategies

translator (middle)

Convergence Background Dynamics

Critically Important Goal & Employee Ideas

direction of interaction

Interaction Pathways

interest overlap

Top Down Strategies

awards and recognition

Incentives

Power

professional development

senior leadership strength

spotlight

Strategic Plan

top down strategies

Trust

Elements of Transformation

Elements of Transformation

Institutional Background

change context

Honors University

institutional history

institutional transformation

reputation

Transformation of Place

Bolded codes represent thematic codes

Underlined codes represent category codes

Italic codes represent basic codes

Key Analysis Concepts

Challenge

resources

why attempting convergence

Participants

interviewee profile

Strategies Irrespective of Directionality

Communication

convergence

events

filter

groups

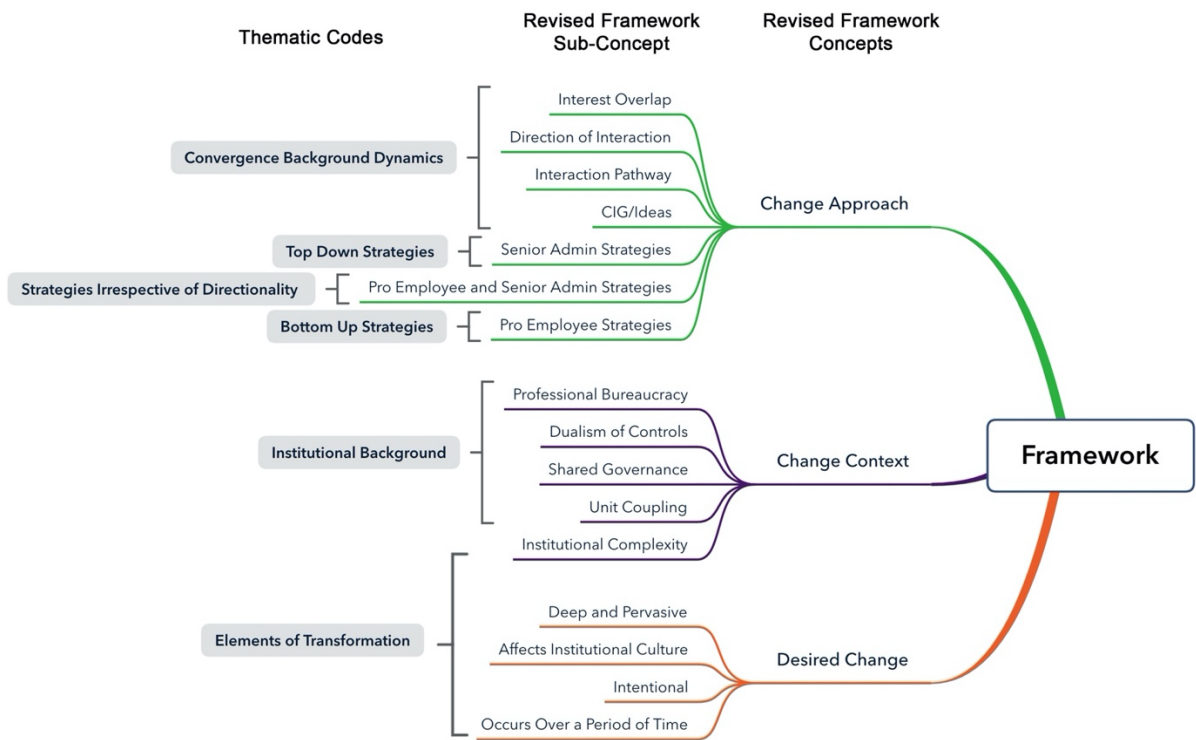


Figure 8. Connecting Thematic Codes to the Conceptual Framework

APPENDIX D – TRANSFORMATIONAL TIMELINES

GMCU

Mid-1980s	The campus's first non-administrator president was appointed
Late-1980s	Fabian, a young STEM scientist, recruited to the campus's provost office
Late-1980s	GMCU's first strategic plan published
Early 1990s	Fabian ascended to be GMCU's second president
Early 1990s	Initiation of the Honors University identity begins with consultant-led focus groups with perspective students and interviews with institutional leadership. "Honors University" adopted as temporary tag line.
Mid 1990s-	Letter submitted to President Fabian by Daisy (faculty member) expressing concern about the institution's self-proclaimed "Honors University." Voices concern that campus had "not discussed what it means" and had "not worked toward truly being an Honors University."
1999	Faculty Development Center founded
1999-2000	A taskforce was convened to flesh out GMCU as an Honors University
2000	Honors University taskforce report published
Early 2000s	Daisy was appointed the first dean of undergraduate education and built a Division of Undergraduate Education
2003	GMCU's strategic plan, <i>Strategic Framework for 2016</i> published
Mid-2000s	Data warehouse developed and launched
Late-2000s	Presidential Change Fund (PCF) launched
2012	Damien's Student Affairs democratic engagement program launched
2013	<i>Our GMCU 2016-2020</i> strategic plan published
2014	Math Gym established using Presidential Change Fund money
2019	GMCU officially retired the Honors University marketing campaign

Hill University Timeline

- 2006 Arrival of President Joel, bringing new energy and a focus on globalism.
- 2008 Environmental scanning detected institutional forces included increasing globalism and shifts in financial models (e.g., the great recession of 2007-09) This leads to senior administrator idea called “domestic market expansion”
- Late 2000s Organizational learning conducted to determine relationship of Hill programs and environmental forces
- 2008 Taskforce formed to develop domestic market expansion, which would later expand to the CIG of transforming conventional educational places
- 2008 Center for Emerging Markets Founded
- 2010-11 Responsibility Center Management (RCM) budgeting launched
- 2011 Hill’s first satellite location launched in the US southern region
- 2013 Hill launches a satellite location in the US Pacific Northwest
- Mid-2010s International Education Office launched to better coordinate development of intentional experiences and global EIP
- 2015 Hill launches a satellite location on the US west coast
- 2015 Hill’s president and provost discuss framework for the forthcoming academic planning process with the Faculty Senate Agenda Committee
- 2015-16 Seven town halls held related to the development of an academic plan
- 2015-16 “#TrueHill” social media listening campaign active
- 2016 Hill launches first international satellite location in Canada
- 2016 Release of Hill’s 2025 academic plan
- 2016 Launch of the Learners Syndicate
- 2018 Hill acquires a London-based campus for its second international location
- 2019 Launch of first fully mobile degree linking the satellite campuses

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