Greetings All!

Who could have imagined how spring and summer semesters in 2020 across institutions of higher education and public schools as well as endeavors in other institutional settings (i.e. economic, religious, family, government) could have historic implications? Who could have imagined that the death of George Floyd in the state of Minnesota could serve as a critical proxy for protests and outrages toward social justice across counties, countries, and continents alike? Who could have imagined that remote or distance education could assume the role of being a primary source of teaching and/or for learning? And who could have imagined where health and wellbeing of educational and societal constituencies would be in a political tug of war? Such imaginative questions have been manifested into real life occurrences as we are living in and through unprecedented times.

From the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to civil and cultural unrest both domestically and globally, our collective character and capacity of higher education are being mirrored and reflected through current perspectives, policies, and practices. How we lead, educate, and serve our constituencies through the perils and promises of unprecedented times are reaffirmed, rejected, and/or realized simultaneously. How we come to understand (un)expected, (un)tapped, and (un)fulfilled roles through the perils and promises of unprecedented times as higher education advocates are requiring scaled-up innovations and new technologies. How we embrace different, yet more relevant, norms trying to be birthed through the perils and promises of unprecedented times for our constituencies convey silent and not-so-silent directives to remain open for what is to come and hopeful for what can become of higher education and beyond.

As we forge ahead within our ELHE Department, this issue of Leadership Chronicles ascertains insights from one of our retiring faculty members, Dr. Lee Baldwin. Dr. Baldwin has served our Department and UCF with great distinction and well wishes are extended as he enters into the next phase of life. This issue of Leadership Chronicles highlights ELHE student voices and the contributions of ELHE faculty during the spring and summer semesters. This issue of Leadership Chronicles concludes with a reprinted message from our UCF President and the charted institutional pathway forward despite and in spite of unprecedented times.

Charging on, I remain...

RoSusan D. Bartee
RoSusan D. Bartee, Ph.D.
ELHE Department Chair
ELHE FACULTY AND STAFF (2019-2020)

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In the academic year of 2019-2020, Dr. Lee Baldwin announced his retirement from the University of Central Florida after having served as an Associate Professor in the Educational Leadership Program. Dr. Baldwin had previously served as an Associate Professor at a Laboratory School at the University of Florida as well as with the K-12 public education arena in different capacities at school and district levels and statewide associations. As Dr. Baldwin enters into this new phase of his life, he leaves our ELHE Department and constituencies reflections on his experiences as an educator and administrator in K-12 and university contexts.

What drew you into the field of higher education, and how and where did you begin your career?

Higher education has been a second career for me. I started full time after I retired from public education after 36 years of service. However I had been attracted to higher education ever since I was in graduate school. In a classroom discussion about careers, a professor of mine said that he was attracted to being a professor because he liked “playing with ideas.” That thought stuck with me. As I was preparing to graduate in Educational Research with my Ph.D., I thought a lot about my career direction. I was about equally attracted to the university as I was to applied research in the “real world.” Circumstances and a serious recession limited my options to only one open door, and it was in the public school sector. However, I maintained my interest in higher education and teaching. I started adjunct teaching at UCF in 1987 and enjoyed the intellectual stimulation of teaching and also enjoyed working with students.

I started my career as a high school government teacher in Buckingham County Virginia, a very rural, high poverty, and diverse county. I was also made the debate coach. I hadn't been in debate in high school, but I was a new teacher and couldn't say no. I learned more from my team in the first year than they learned from me, but we were successful. Several of my debate teams placed high in state competitions, and several debaters won individual state championship awards. It was a very rewarding experience to see kids from a modest background excelling in state completions.

Over the course of your career you regularly interacted with students, faculty, and leaders in both K-12 and higher education. What insights might you share regarding teaching, learning, and leadership practices?

I definitely have learned that teaching adult graduate students requires a certain way of teaching. It is important to relate the subject matter to their interests and needs. I teach abstract and complex research, statistics, and measurement concepts but try to relate them to everyday situations faced by leaders. While working in the educational leadership program, I have become much more perceptive of leadership practices, both good and bad, of educational leaders as well as leaders in other realms. That has made me more a student of leadership.
Interview with Dr. Lee Baldwin

How do you want your service at UCF to be remembered, especially when it comes to interactions with students, faculty, and staff?

I would like to be remembered as a professor who cared about students, was able to relate well with students, and helped them learn complex concepts in research and leadership. In working on dissertation committees, I would like to think that I helped students through the conceptualization of their topic and through the methodological challenges of completing the dissertation. Finally, I hope that I communicated high expectations but also a commitment to help students reach those high expectations.

Describe one of the more memorable experiences gained as a faculty member at UCF. How would you use that experience to encourage other current and/or aspiring faculty members in higher education?

On a professional level, I think publishing a book that filled a gap in the literature was very gratifying. Personally I have always greatly enjoyed the pre-graduation celebration in the college for graduating doctoral students. I will also remember the many “little” experiences of working with a student on a difficult concept and seeing the light go on in their eyes as they understood the concept.

I would say to continually look for opportunities to find gaps to fill in your field in instruction, research and service. That is a requirement for professors, but look to how you can best use your talents to fill those needs.

It is undeniable that you will be missed, what will you miss most about UCF?

I do feel that the time is right to end my career and look forward to the next chapter in my life. There are things that I won’t miss, but there are definitely things I will miss. I will miss my interaction with students in class, and office conversations with them about their classwork and dissertations. I will also miss the collegial relations I have had with the Educational Leadership faculty as well as other colleagues in the College.

About Dr. Lee Baldwin: Dr. Lee Baldwin began teaching as an adjunct at the University of Central Florida in 1987 focusing on areas of research, measurement, program evaluation and statistics. In January 2012, Dr. Lee Baldwin served as Associate Professor and, most recently, Doctoral Program Coordinator in Educational Leadership at the University of Central Florida. He has taught the research and statistics course and the Planning, Research, and Evaluation Systems’ course while having served as the methodologist for nearly 120 dissertation committees. Prior to coming to UCF, Dr. Baldwin worked for 25 years in Orange County Public Schools, one of the country’s largest and most diverse public school districts, in various positions from 1986 – 2011. Dr. Baldwin served as the Senior Director of Accountability, Research, and Assessment from 1993 – 2011 where he focused on Student Assessment, Accountability Reporting, Research, Program Evaluation, Data Analysis and Reporting, and School Improvement Planning. He also had responsibilities for Grant Services, Strategic Planning, and School Choice Services (Charter Schools, Magnet Programs, Public School Choice, and Private School Choice). Additionally, Dr. Baldwin has served in various leadership capacities, including President of the National Association of Test Directors (2002-2003), Florida Educational Research Association (1997-1998), and the Florida Association of Test Administrators (2001-2003). Dr. Baldwin has served on many statewide educational committees, including the Florida Education Reform and Accountability Commission (1992-1998), which guided Florida’s reform and accountability efforts in the 1990s. He has also worked on many levels of education, ranging from a classroom teacher at Buckingham County High School, VA (1973-1976), middle school guidance counselor (1976-1979), associate professor at a laboratory school at the University of Florida to his current graduate level teaching at the University of Central Florida (1987-present). Dr. Baldwin received a Ph.D. in Educational Research (1981), a M.Ed. in Counselor Education (1975) from the University of Virginia and a B.S. in Political Science from Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University (1971).
There was a time when a hurricane seemed like the biggest disruption to our journey as doctoral students. Hurricanes, however, always had a definitive end. A few classes would inevitably be cancelled, and assignments would be moved around...but the storm would pass.

I understand the absurdity of describing a hurricane through the lens of predictability— but it was that inevitable “return to normal” that always felt so guaranteed. Now, as a doctoral student in the time of COVID-19, I have spent quite some time contemplating the next iteration of normal:

Will I ever see my committee face-to-face?
Is it appropriate to elbow bump persons with advanced degrees?
Can we say farewell to one of our favorite retiring professors if we stand six feet away?

Thus, uncertainty seems like the only absolute.

After four straight years of graduate work, however, I recognize resilience has been part of the blueprint the entire time. We have always figured out ways to make things work. We balance careers and families and courses and our sanity... and so COVID-19 became just one more (albeit monumental) thing.

Yet, it was this program that helped hone my fortitude, my determination, and perhaps most importantly— my logic. This wasn’t happening to us as doctoral students; instead, this is happening to all of us as humans. So, we make it work. We make it work through email and video conferences, through trial and error, through adapting and through moving forward.

Both the understanding of the faculty and the cohesion of my cohort helped with the transition to a virtual environment. Zoom quickly became part of daily vocabulary—often used interchangeably as a noun, an adjective, or a verb. In only a few short months, Zoom became as integral to the graduate experience as the APA manual or SPSS; it also became both a convenience and a cause for reflection. While selecting the perfect virtual background for class replaced the 45-minute commute to campus, (an example of convenience), I have also been forced to self-reflect: “Does my face look as angry in real life as it does in the little Zoom box?” In some ways then, Zoom provided yet another opportunity for growth.

While much of this may not be ideal and certainly not what any of us imagined, it is what we are left with. The underlying truth is this: I do not have to write a dissertation .... I get to write one. And as I find myself in awe listening to stories of those inspiring leaders who completed their research before the internet or even computers, we too are part of a historical time: writing a dissertation in an era when thanking our chairperson will not include a handshake and when graduation ceremonies are formidable threats to human welfare. If this upsetting in any way, I remind myself that the journey matters so much more than the destination. More than anything, COVID-19 has been a sacrifice in human connection. Nevertheless, we charge on, unrelenting to our goals.
STUDENT REFLECTION

The Corona Life

Joseph Gregory Rhue

MA Career and Technical Education Program

As college students, the title of this article may evoke images of Spring Break: the memory of sitting on a sunny beach in a southern climate with your favorite adult beverage but an arm’s length away. Unfortunately, today we are in a different place entirely.

I've followed the Covid-19 Corona virus pandemic from its earliest appearance. I visited Wuhan, China a few years ago, so when I read the first account of the troubles there it sparked my interest. When the first cases appeared in the US my eyes widened and some concern crept in. When Europe began to experience serious outbreaks more concern appeared. The timeline from that point on is a blur; news reports came fast and furious and the statistics and models filled the news cycle.

Suddenly we found ourselves in a world transformed by a single event: a virus that we (still) don’t understand. Nobody was prepared for this, how could we be? Lockdowns, closures, masks and social distancing took hold and none of us had any idea how to incorporate these things into our lives.

As graduate students we all have a plan. If you look up the word “plan” in a dictionary you will see a picture of a graduate student right there beside the definition. We know where we want to go and we’re in a program that will increase the possibility of getting there. But now? The Corona virus will impact all of us and now our new plans have contingencies. If plan “A” is no longer possible, how far down the alphabet do I need to go to get to a realistic plan? Not knowing the long-term impact of the virus will cause us to think hard about what we plan - and expect - for the future.

The psychological impact of facing the unknown is weighing on us all. There are similar impacts from restricted movements, interrupted routines, shortages of necessities and perhaps a friend or relative made ill from the virus. Many of us have support from loved ones but others do not, being far from home. The increased stress from facing such an event alone is a factor that we should be aware of and be ready to give help where needed.

Even as the virus seems to be ebbing somewhat and society is going out again there is not much good news on the economic front. The recent unprecedented surge in unemployment - and equally unprecedented intervention by the Federal Reserve Bank - leave us with more unanswerable questions. How bad is the economy and how long will it take to recover? Graduate students face enough pressure in a normal job market when trying to land their dream job. Now we face another unknown as we graduate and go out into the world.

This all leaves us with yet another question: what will we do? Graduate students have vision, and the determination to achieve it. Great events make great people and the events we find ourselves in need not deter us.
STUDENT REFLECTION

Reflection of Experience as a Graduate Student within the Midst of COVID-19

Michael Gilmer
Higher Education Ed.D. Program, Director of the Office of Student Conduct

When given the prompt and asked to respond from my major professor, my mind was racing with all that I would share with whoever would read my reflection. I landed on the intersectionality of homeschooling my children, working full-time, and taking the time to continue my research. This intersection is conflated further now with the expectation and need for social distancing where the delicate balance between my competing priorities was now off-kilter and there is a need to quickly find new balance or else all the sacrifice my family has made for me to be where I am with the program was for nothing.

I feel blessed for the fact that I have completed my course work and I am now in dissertation hours where I now have the freedom to adapt and balance the needs of my family with the expectations of my academic progression. Furthermore, my major professor is supportive of my progression and was ready to adapt the expectations of dissertation hours with distance learning. Though the spring term was cut short, Dr. Cox still clearly stated his expectations and what were the measurables needed for successful progression.

As I work at the University, I believe that the continued focus on my research has become even more challenging with the unknown of what work life will look like once the University ends remote instruction, long term financial forecasting with state budget for the University, the desire to show production while remote to continue to reinforce the importance of job function during remote instruction. I have found that at the end of the workday (which is after 5:00 p.m. most days), I find myself drained of the mental elasticity needed to switch gears and to focus on research. I believe this is because prior to remote instruction, I would physically change locations to focus on my research (office to the library). Now that my family is waking up reviewing work schedules, planning what is needed academically for the children, where my partner’s schedule overlaps with mine so there will be a plan in place for the children that does not disrupt a Zoom call. Prior to remote instruction, I would walk to meetings, now I find myself clicking from one meeting to click on to another. This constant activity for the past three months has created significant mental fatigue. When I am tired and want to just watch Netflix with my family because the day has just steamrolled my soul, I think of the an online university’s commercial of the working parent who comes home from a hard day at work and finds time to study while looking exhausted. Though I work and study at UCF and not this online university, this ad campaign gives me life!

I believe in my research and I know that this time will pass, and I will find a new normal with my balance of conflicting priorities. I am blessed to have a wonderful family that keeps me moving forward as well as a committee that supports my continued research and progression. I know that there are many other students like me that are working through the same issues so there is comfort in knowing I am not alone.
STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Lisa Martino

During this unprecedented time, the Career and Technical Education online programs have also seen challenges and changes. As a university, we’ve had daily updates and changes to our policies and practices, some of which required immediate implementation. As a college and department, we’ve had numerous meetings along with changes in how they are conducted. For our online students, challenges included issues of stress, hardships, and illness. As the academic program coordinator, other challenges became apparent. Although our courses were already online, they all had to be updated with Zoom with informational training sessions conducted for adjunct faculty. Students required additional academic sessions to provide emotional and academic support. Throughout these times, one positive outcome for our online courses was the university-wide implementation of Zoom. As an experienced online teacher, a more robust virtual conference tool is essential for asynchronous (video recordings) and synchronous meetings with students, staff, and external partners. However, at UCF pre-COVID-19, we only had the Webcourse conference tool for courses and the Skype for Business tool for staff. These tools were not efficient for conducting communication activities for online programs. Skype for Business tool was not utilized widely and the Webcourse conference tool was limited to students in a course. With the implementation of Zoom, I now have the ability to schedule virtual meetings with a single individual or a group of people with ease. Other opportunities arose from the pandemic using the virtual platform as the academic world learned to embrace our new normal. As a career and technical educator professional, I was given two wonderful opportunities that helped to nationally promote our CTE programs at UCF. One was the opportunity to host the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) Member Chat webinar for Region II: https://youtu.be/pE7pVDHhpKS. I also was honored with an invitation to be a panelist for ACTE’s Prepared & Effective Program Staff webinar discussing tips and strategies for CTE leadership during the pandemic: https://youtu.be/XTpSaSmTGAs. Both webinars are on YouTube and ACTE’s webpage. Lastly, this year I was honored with another fellowship: The 2020 Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) Leadership Fellow for Region II: https://www.acteonline.org/professional-development/leadership-development/acte-national-leadership-fellowship-program/. One of the duties of this fellowship was to attend the 2020 National Policy Seminar in Washington D.C. to meet with CTE leaders and legislators on Capitol Hill. Unfortunately, this conference was cancelled due to COVID-19, but I will attend the 2021 conference where I will get the chance to promote CTE policy with our elected leaders. There were other accomplishments this year: attending the Teach CTE: A National Recruitment and Retention Summit in Ft. Lauderdale, FL (in January); and developing online and virtual program orientation sessions for the undergraduate and graduate CTE programs. All-in-all, we have risen up to our challenges and overcame them. We are better for them.

Nancy Marshall

The Spring 2020 semester brought us new challenges to conquer in response to the global pandemic of COVID 19. The virus has had a tremendous impact on program coordination for the Student Personnel Track. The effect on course delivery has probably been the most significant aspect, and even with trainings on teaching and learning with Zoom, there has still been challenges for students and faculty. Advising has also been affected by a lack of one-on-one meetings and has the potential to create a disconnect with advisor and students.

There are lessons to be learned on the effects of the pandemic. Faculty and staff have been shown to be flexible and adaptable, despite facing many challenges. Our students have met with challenges, as well, but report being frustrated with their inability to interact with their undergraduate students. Some possible implications for the future are that more classes will be delivered remotely or using mixed mode. Our students indicate that they miss face-to-face classes and interactions with their faculty and peers. Recruitment activities will have to be adjusted for the near future as well. On a personal note, my main takeaway from this pandemic is how much I miss the face-to-face interactions with my students and colleagues. I am looking forward to Fall 2020 with a return to our new normal.
Lee Baldwin...Reflection Essay on Program Coordination

As we approached spring break this past semester, I was preparing to go on a hiking trip with my wife. I was aware of the Corona virus and was following news reports about it, but I thought it would run its course like so many other viruses in the past, such as swine flu, SARS, etc. I had also thought that with only one and a half semesters left before my retirement, I would not have much new to learn or worry about. As we went on our trip, I tuned out most news. But as we returned to our Bed and Breakfast after a wonderful hiking and canoeing outing, I received a text that UCF would shut down for two weeks. I thought, this is a new world now!

My first two immediate thoughts were that I would have to figure out remote learning. And what about the Cohort 8 Celebration of Research scheduled in three weeks? I had been looking forward to the celebration and had made most of the plans for it. I hated the idea of canceling the event. But after a few days, I realized that it would not be safe to hold the meeting and so I canceled it. A few days later the university announced extensions of the shutdown. Although sad about canceling the event, I was glad that I had been the one to cancel it and inform the students.

We were in the middle of a recruiting campaign for the doctoral program when everything had to go remote. There could be no meetings on campus to process applications or to interview applicants. Also testing centers were closed so students could not take the GRE. We had to do everything through remote meetings and mostly without GRE scores. We have, as a team, made the process work well under difficult conditions.

We have found ways to work together without being together and have maintained a cohesive program. I read about people having safe-distance cocktail hours in their neighborhoods and got the idea that we could bond more as a faculty if we could gather socially in a virtual environment. We started having regular virtual cocktail hours at 5:00 on Fridays. That has become a fun and enjoyable experience to meet and share socially for an hour.

So, what are some lessons learned and implications for the future? First, I think we have to get ready for a “new normal” and different ways of acting going forward. We already know that the fall semester will mostly be remote learning in our program. We don’t know what the future beyond that holds. We will eventually get through Covid-19, but will there be a Covid-21 next year and the year after? We will need to be continually prepared to make adjustments. We will rely on technology and infrastructure more than ever. We will have to continue to figure out how to maintain a functional and cohesive organization with limited face to face contact. But we have learned to adapt and work together through the pandemic in the last few months, and we will continue to do so.
**Bill Gordon**

This year Dr. Gordon worked to establish a successful multi-pronged approach to increase program visibility in an effort to increase viable doctorate candidates for the Executive Ed.D. program at UCF. Some strategies included running Facebook Ads, print ad in the OCPS Orange Peel employee publication, email campaigns, and webinars.

He also headed the redesign of the program website, designed a new program brochure, and communicated with all Central Florida area School District Superintendents as well as Executive Leadership from Orange County Public Schools. To date, the efforts have resulted in 15 acceptances and 5 new applicants for the program.

Dr. Gordon has also provided important commentary to NEWSY, a nationally syndicated TV network, related to the opening of Florida schools and COVID-19 as well as been featured on panel in a COVID Education Town Hall.

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**Marjorie Ceballos**

As part of the Dual Language Support through Technology Enhanced Programs and Strategies (STEPS) Grant, Dr. Ceballos facilitated a dual language principal professional learning community (PLC) for 38 individuals, which included both principals and school-district level administrators. The PLC included school leaders from Hillsborough, Manatee, Orange, Osceola, Pinellas, and Seminole schools districts. Additionally, there were school leaders from charter schools and a private school.

Throughout the year, Dr. Ceballos presented at a national conference (AACTE) and state conference (FERA). Some of those conferences included:


In addition, Dr. Ceballos also successfully published an article with two co-authors on TeachLive’s contributions to educational leadership preparation.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Dr. Cox, Dr. Krsmanovic, and Dr. Johnson recently co-authored the article, *Who Improves Most? The Differences in First-Year Students’ Learning Attitudes and Behaviors Measured by College Success Factor Index*. The article is published in the Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Dr. Krsmanovic, one of our ELHE alums and former Post-Doctoral Scholar in the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, accepted the tenure-track position of Assistant Professor at the University of Southern Mississippi for Fall 2020. Dr. Jamil Johnson currently serves as Academic Coordinator for the UCF First Year Experience Program. Dr. Cox currently serves as Associate Professor and Program Coordinator in the Higher Education and Policy Studies Program.

Dr. Wilkerson published her first edited book, *From Student to Scholar: Mentoring Underrepresented Scholars in the Academy*;

Dr. Wilkerson, along with ELHE colleague, Dr. Daniel Eadens, secured competitive grant funding for the Interdisciplinary Research Initiative (DIRI); and

Dr. Wilkerson received the distinction of being recognized by the UCF’s Center for Faculty Excellence as an honoree for Women’s History Month.
STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Dan Eadens

In the several months, Dr. Dan Eadens has been productive with both teaching and publishing. Dr. Eadens has worked on sixteen proposals for conference presentations with other faculty and eleven publications alongside his teaching. In addition, Dan has been involved with the DIRI Funding Grant opportunity at UCF. In this opportunity, he is Co-PI along with PI Jennifer Sandoval, Co-PI Amanda Wilkerson, and GA Vasily Yurin. Together the group has been developing the program Academic Educational Enrichment through Conflict Resolution Skill Development. With this DIRI seed grant, the Nicholson School of Communication and Media (NSCM) and the College of Community Innovation and Education (CCIE) are partnering with Man Up Mentoring to assist Orange County Public School Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) to secure a larger external grant that will support this Conflict Resolution Skill Development Project. The tutoring program will be administered by the Man Up Mentoring instructors and directed at children enrolled in Voluntarily Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) at ACE. The primary objective, through the development of social and conflict resolutions skills, is to shape best practices of the mentors/ instructors with a goal of the most outstanding-quality teaching and learning occurring for the students. Ultimately, these VPK students will arrive at kindergarten with the requisite skills and abilities that will enable and empower them for a lifetime of people skills and better potential for academic and career success as productive contributing Central Florida and global citizens. The group is currently applying for additional grant funds from the Spencer Foundation to continue with the program.

Sheila Moore

Dr. Sheila Moore was busy in the Spring 2020 semester. Dr. Moore was reappointed to the AACTE Meetings and Professional Development Committee for a second term April 2020 and elected Secretary of FAPEL for a second term. She currently has two manuscripts under review and four publications published. Dr. Moore served as one of the first instructors for our new newly established Seminole County Public School Cohort for Educational Leadership programs. With this endeavor she was instrumental in helping to establish the cohort with quality instruction. Another accomplishments this Spring 2020 was setting up and running the FELE Saturday Academy, which ran from January to April 2020. The Academy served as a support for twenty three of our Educational Leadership students who were preparing to take the FELE exam for certification. As of the date of this publication, three of the students who took the professional development in March 2020 reported passing the exam on the first try. Dr. Moore shares credit for recruitment for the academy with Drs. Thomas Vitale, Marjorie Ceballos, and William Gordon. Former UCF faculty member, Dr. Valerie Storey authored the text materials that were used in the program, “Preparing for the Florida Educational Leadership Exam (FELE) 3.0.:12 Essential Tips”. Due to the overwhelming popularity of the program, Dr. Moore plans to offer it again virtually in Fall 2020.
Dr. Larry Walker, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, recently published an article focusing on online course delivery for school leaders. The article offers innovative insights for school leaders to implement given COVID-19 and need for online course delivery. Previously Dr. Walker served as a lecturer at Loyola University Maryland and has held a faculty appointment at Howard University. He has nearly a decade of experience working in rural, urban, and suburban school districts. Dr. Walker has co-edited two books, authored/coauthored several peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters. Further, he served as the Legislative Director for former Congressman Major R. Owens.

GENERAL OVERVIEW: Increasingly post-secondary institutions are dedicating resources to develop online courses. This includes hybrid (classroom and online instruction) and fully online classes. The growth of online options coincides with the creation of various platforms that make communication between graduate students and faculty members seamless. However, there is a gap in the research which examines the development of online courses for current and aspiring school leaders (e.g., teachers, principals, district staff). For this reason, this article utilizes extant literature and autoethnographic vignettes to 1) investigate the steps universities and school districts should take to make online classes more accessible for school leaders; 2) discuss the advantages and challenges of taking online classes for school leaders and 3) describe a faculty members experience developing a graduate online course. Following are highlighted areas of consideration:

1) Investigate the steps universities and school districts should take to make online classes more accessible for school leaders: Considering millions of undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled in distance education classes, school districts have to ensure employees have access to leadership courses. It is important to remember that educators dedicate significant hours to tutor students, attend school related events, fundraise among other challenges (Rothman & Henderson, 2011). Thus, it is critical that school district leaders collaborate with post-secondary institutions that offer rigorous courses, quality instructors, and interactive online environments. Although some individuals will choose F2F classes; districts should not limit opportunities for those with busy schedules.

2) Discuss the advantages and challenges of taking online classes for school leaders: The growth of online classes presents current and future school leaders from a variety of backgrounds with the opportunity to pursue a graduate degree. Unfortunately, there is a gap in the research which investigates the challenges/opportunities they may encounter and what steps postsecondary institutions are taking to make classes more accessible. Moreover, researchers have failed to consider the experiences of faculty members. Deconstructing each issue was important for several reasons including 1) increasingly college students are enrolling in hybrid or fully online classes; 2) educators have job commitments that may limit opportunities to take F2F classes and 3) there is scant research that considers the benefits and problems faculty members developing online classes for school leaders could encounter. The extant literature suggests that postsecondary institutions are offering more classes because it is cost effective, recognize the importance of meeting the needs of diverse groups, and understand shifts in market demand.

3) Describe a faculty members experience developing a graduate online course: The results from the first author’s experiences suggest that university programs that are supportive, data driven, encourage feedback, offer a combination of online and F2F sessions can succeed. However, the findings also highlighted how faculty members can struggle to balance requirements for university sponsored programs while meeting other obligations. The findings also illuminated the important role of instructional designers (ID). For example, the first author shared autoethnographic vignettes which described how feedback from the ID informed class design and content. Furthermore, the first author determined that working with an ID with a background teaching an online class was helpful. Overall the findings can help post-secondary institutions design faculty centered programs while considering whether school leaders have access to an array of online classes.

Article can be retrieved from: https://www.lindenwood.edu/academics/beyond-the-classroom/publications/journal-of-educational-leadership-in-action/all-issues/volume-6-issue-3/moving-beyond-tradition/
Excerpts from the following article, ‘We Must Do Better at UCF, as published on June 22, 2020, can be retrieved from the following:


President Cartwright provides important approaches to be taken by UCF to address issues involving COVID-19 and social and civil unrest matters.

With a student body that is nearly 70,000 strong and incredibly diverse, UCF must be a model for how a community fully commits to inclusive excellence, President Alexander N. Cartwright told university trustees during a meeting Thursday.

“Not only is our community dealing with added emotional, personal or financial stress because of the pandemic, but racial and social injustices also weigh heavily upon us right now,” he said.

“Witnessing the peaceful demonstrations taking place across our nation and in our community these past few weeks has been very powerful.

“It has become clear to me that we must do better at UCF. University leadership, in partnership with our students, faculty, staff, and with this board, must take action together to make UCF more inclusive for all.”

Cartwright laid out a series of actions, including elevating the university’s chief equity, inclusion and diversity officer to a vice president position; recruiting and retaining more diverse leaders and faculty; and requiring training for senior administrators.

Excerpts from President Cartwright’s remarks, including many details of the plan, are below:

“I have had the opportunity to engage with our faculty, staff and students over the past two weeks, in addition to our recent virtual conversation on race and equity.

“We must do a better job promoting a culture of inclusion and holding each other accountable to speak out.

“UCF is not a place where anyone should ever feel that they cannot be their true selves or that they are not supported because of who they are or what they look like. What we need to do right now is listen to those voices to inform our actions.”

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“What we need to do right now is listen to those voices to inform our actions.

“I would like to thank members of our community who have offered me candid insight into their concerns and their experiences, as well as ideas for how we can make UCF their institution, their home.

“Since interviewing, I have said UCF looks like the future of America. Looking like the future of America is a start, but certainly is not sufficient. We must be an example for the rest of the country and the world for how a community fully commits to inclusive excellence.

“I am truly grateful to groups, such as the Black Faculty and Staff Association, our African-American student leaders, Pride associations, Office of Social Justice and Advocacy, and our interim Chief Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Officer Kent Butler, who are supporting our students, faculty and staff every day, and I would like to recognize them for everything they are doing. But they cannot do it alone.

“They need the support of our leadership, of this board, and our entire campus community to commit to inclusive excellence.”
UCF’s Plan for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

“First, we will formalize an action plan for equity, inclusion and diversity.

“In the past two years, there have been valuable recommendations made by those who are doing this work across our campus community, and now it’s time for us to document those recommendations in a plan that we adopt for the institution.

“I expect this plan will include:

- Making the position of chief equity, inclusion and diversity officer a vice president and, as such, a member of the president’s cabinet.
- Creating a President’s Executive Committee on equity, inclusion and diversity to help hold us accountable to this plan and to advise on the continued work we will need to do across campus. We know that sustainable change does not happen overnight. It requires commitment at every level, and is most effective when we are listening to the collective voices of our community on the steps we must take together.
- We need a requirement that all units and colleges demonstrate their own commitment to inclusive excellence, through dedicated resources and training.
- And we need to increase our institutional resources and full-time staff who are dedicated to helping deliver on these promises.

“I have to tell you that I am anxious for this plan to be complete by the time our fall semester starts. However, I also want Trustees [Joe] Harrington [Faculty Senate Chair] and [Sabrina] La Rosa [Student Government President] and their constituencies, as well as our staff council, and others across campus involved in this daily work, to ensure their recommendations are represented in our final plan.

“Second, we are launching a comprehensive review of our reporting processes at UCF. Our students, faculty and staff should feel comfortable speaking up when they see behavior they believe isn’t right or doesn’t live up to our values.

“The past couple of weeks have shown us that we need to help people understand where and how they can report, and we need to do a better job of raising awareness of both the mechanisms and the responsibility we each have when we hear or see something.

“Additionally, we will improve our search committee trainings and education. This is a concern I have heard from our faculty and staff, and we will be working with UCF Human Resources, Academic Affairs and our Office of Institutional Equity to conduct implicit bias training and other trainings for everyone who participates in our hiring and search committee processes.

“As Trustee Harrington mentioned yesterday, this also involves strong recruitment efforts to encourage qualified applicants from underrepresented backgrounds, and providing the resources to be competitive in attracting and retaining top talent.

“It is up to our leadership team to model behaviors for our entire campus community, which is why I will require equity, inclusion, and diversity training, starting with our senior administrators in my cabinet and senior leadership positions across campus.

“The ways we act must be informed by the needs and experiences of our campus community, and we have a responsibility to listen to them, to hear their stories, and to have difficult conversations that help us moving forward.

“We will be hosting more open forums and smaller group dialogues to raise issues and talk about shared experiences and expectations of how we can better support each other. “And, lastly, just as the institution will deliberately invest in equity, inclusion and diversity as a pillar of excellence, we will seek out partners who share these same values and, together, can help us make a bigger impact on campus or in our community, as part of a broader philanthropic strategy.”
Upcoming Dates of Importance

• **August 8, 2020**: Faculty may begin returning to campus to prepare for Fall term

• **August 8-23, 2020**: Limited numbers of student may begin moving into campus dormitories in a phased approach

• **August 24, 2020**: Fall 2020 Academic term begins

• **September 7, 2020** (Labor Day): No Classes

• **November 11, 2020** (Veterans Day): No Classes

• **November 25-28, 2020** (Thanksgiving): No Classes

• **December 4, 2020**: Last day of classes, Final Exams begin

• **December 18, 2020**- **December 19, 2020**: Commencement

• **January 11, 2021**: Spring term begins

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**LET’S HEAR FROM YOU!**
If you have any suggested stories or topics for the newsletter, please contact Lindsay Archambault (Lindsay.a@ucf.edu). You are asked to contact Lindsay by June 15 (for the July newsletter distribution) or December 15 (for the January newsletter distribution).

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