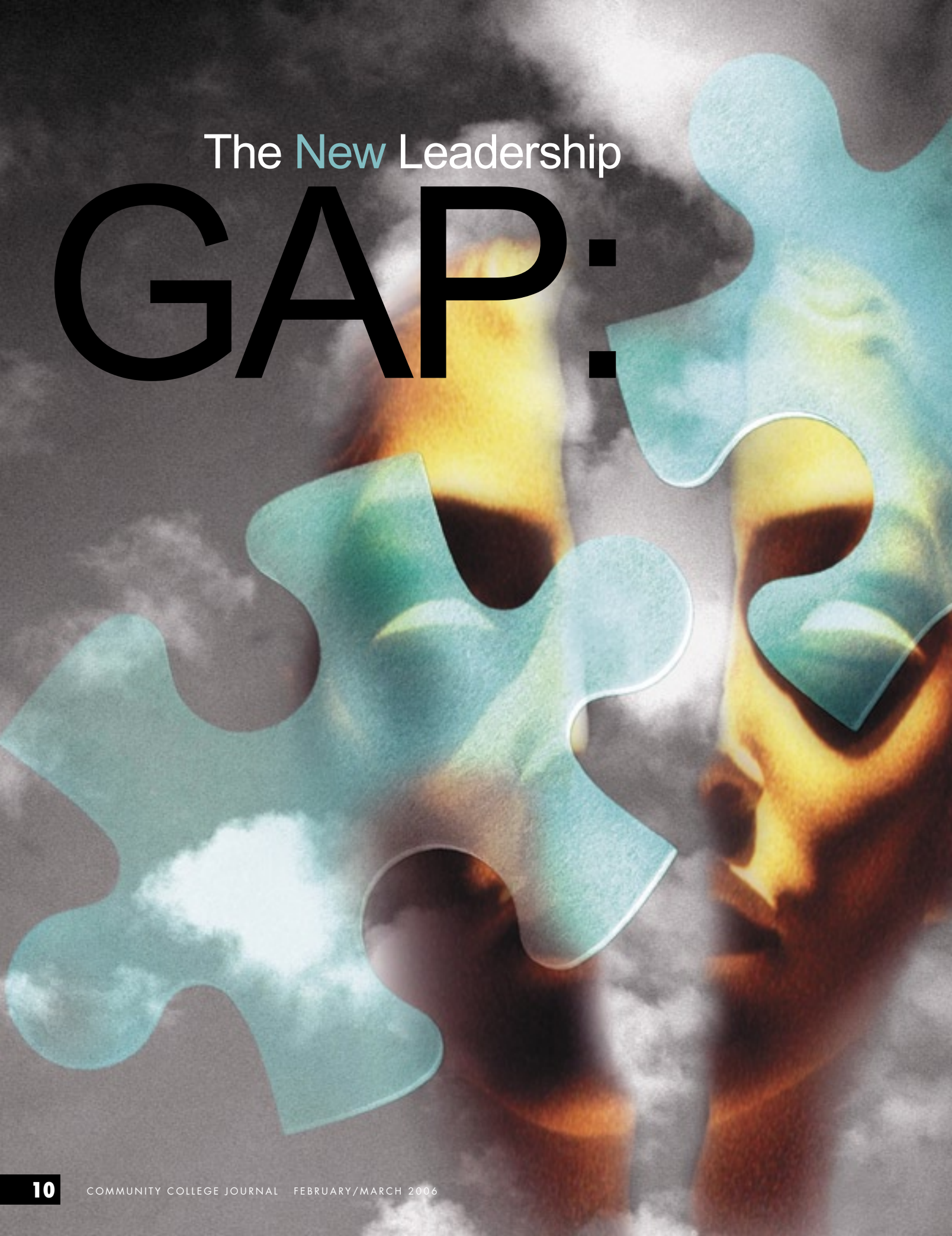


The New Leadership

GAP:



Shortages in Administrative Positions

Community college leaders have been effective in responding to the leadership gap created by the anticipated retirements of presidents and their executive officers that was first identified as a critical issue for colleges in the late 1990s. However, recent research indicates that we have not anticipated a new leadership gap—one potentially even more devastating to the future of community colleges. This gap is reminiscent of the problem facing New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The leaders of the city of New Orleans initially thought that the worst had passed after Katrina hit the gulf, not realizing that the worst damage was to come when the levies were later breached and the city flooded. Similarly, what is the impending impact of retirements of administrators/professionals in highly skilled and specialized positions at your college? New research indicates that colleges could be highly vulnerable and experience major fiscal impact if we do not act now to develop programs to meet this need. Here we report on those findings, and the results of a FuturesLeaders Work Profile Session and suggest recommendations for leaders to address this new critical issue.

Leadership Development Programs

Research conducted by Christopher Shultz (2001) for the American Association of Community Colleges found that the retirement of community college presidents and vice presidents/deans posed a critical problem for the nation's community colleges through 2005. AACC has been instrumental the last five years in developing programs and services to meet this need. AACC called the first Leadership Summit, created a national database of graduate programs, established the Futures Leaders Institute, and gained Kellogg funding for the Leading Forward Project. The AACC board recently adopted Competencies for Community College Leaders. Local institutions, states, and universities have also responded in developing leadership development programs. These programs have all been developed to prepare individuals to assume projected openings in president and vice president/deans positions.

This author recently replicated a portion of Christopher Shultz's original research with the support of Navient Corporation and FuturesLeaders-Assessment Technologies Group. Community college presidents were asked to project the retirements of their administrative/professional staff. These staff are in non-faculty highly-specialized positions that report to the vice president/deans in academic, student, and business affairs.

Community college presidents project the following levels of retirements by area for their administrative staff between 2006–10:

Administrative Staff	11–25%	26 >50%
Academic Affairs (Dir. Learning Resources, Institutional Research, etc.)	38%	13%
Student Affairs (Registrar, Dir. Financial Aid, etc)	31%	9%
Business Affairs (Dir. Accounting, Human Resources, etc.)	28%	10%

A follow-up survey was sent to those presidents expressing interest in participating in a work group to explore solutions to address this issue asking them to rank in order the positions most

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critical to the future of their institution. Eleven community college leaders from seven states including presidents, vice presidents/deans, human resource officers and association presidents (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), National Council for Student Development (NCSA) and the Council for Resource Development (CRD)) accepted the invitation to participate in a FuturesLeaders Administrative Work Profiling Session in Jacksonville, Florida. The purpose of the work group was 1) to develop a work profile for the community college registrar—one of the positions selected by respondents as most critical for their colleges, and 2) to explore new strategies for colleges to reduce their recruitment costs and increase the effectiveness of their hiring processes. This was designed to be the initial step in assisting colleges to fill key administrative positions.

Les Krieger, president of Assessment Technologies Group, facilitated the FuturesLeaders Work Profiling Session. Participants served as an expert panel to identify key work tasks, major job context

elements, and the attribute and competency person specifications for successful performance of a future community college registrar. They were asked to rank not only the priority of tasks, but also the proportionate amount of time that a registrar should spend on each activity. The key tasks and activities identified by the panel were: assessing/evaluating, controlling/directing, deciding, planning, implementing/coordinating, reviewing/evaluating, and interpreting. The following managerial qualities were identified as either of high or extreme importance: planning and organizing, quality orientation, specialist knowledge, problem solving and analysis, commercial awareness, strategic, and personal motivation as shown in Table 1.

The work profile analysis goes significantly beyond the one-page position profiles developed by human resource offices or executive search firms to announce and advertise an executive position as shown in Table 2. The process ultimately enables colleges to use a work styles self-assessment inventory to assess a candidate's person/environment fit or the extent to which there is a match between the candidate and the unique job requirements of the institution.

Changing Nature of Administrative/Professional Positions

The FuturesLeaders Work Profile Group concluded that the nature of the work of the registrar has changed dramatically and requires higher skills and greater knowledge than in the past. The position is increasingly called upon to not only preserve the integrity of institutional records and student privacy, but also provide strategic planning and decision-making for the institution in student recruitment and enrollment management. Both areas of responsibility have the potential for major financial impact in the millions for a college should the wrong decisions be made. The group concluded that due to the increasing strategic responsibilities of the position that it should be renamed the dean/director of enrollment management and registrar. One of the presidents participating announced that he was

going to give his registrar a raise when he returned, having had no idea how the complexities and responsibilities of the position had changed.

Unfortunately, there are currently no clear career paths or opportunities for staff to explore moving into highly specialized positions like the registrar. The AACRAO provides a one-day intensive session for new registrars—but the person already has to have been selected by a college for the position. College applicant pools for community college registrar positions tend to be limited to experienced classified support staff without academic credentials or younger professionals without the specialized experience

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required in the field. The group concluded that the severity of this problem was like two trains on a collision course—no one in the field was currently aware of the extent of the problem. This work group also found this to be true across the wide range of administrative/professional

positions studied, including financial aid, librarians, information technology, and resource development.

General findings and conclusions of the work group session included:

- There will be a critical leadership gap in the highly specialized administrative/professional positions between 2006–2010.
- The availability of skilled and trained professionals to fill these highly specialized positions is extremely critical to the future of the colleges.
- The need to build awareness of the forthcoming gap as a major issue that should be widely disseminated to community college trustees, presidents, vice presidents/deans is clear.

Table 1
Inventory of Management Competencies Profile*
Dean/Director of Enrollment Management & Registrar**

	Baseline	Moderate	High	Extreme
Managerial Qualities				
Importance Level				
Leadership		■		
Planning & Organizing Quality				■
Orientation Persuasiveness		■		
Professional Qualities				
Importance Level				
Specialist Knowledge			■	
Problem Solving & Analysis				■
Oral Communication		■		
Written Communication	■			
Entrepreneurial Qualities				
Importance Level				
Commercial Awareness			■	
Creativity & Innovation		■		
Action Orientation		■		
Strategic				■
Personal Qualities				
Importance Level				
Interpersonal Sensitivity		■		
Flexibility		■		
Resilience		■		
Personal Motivation			■	

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Table 2
Dean/Director, Enrollment Management & Registrar

Specific job objectives would be as follows:

- Maintain integrity of the institution through accountability, accuracy, and ethical behavior.
- Interpret, implement, and maintain continuous compliance with all governmental and accreditation regulations.
- Manage the enrollment process and records, ensuring privacy of the data contained therein.
- Champion technology and utilize it to project trends appropriately, maintaining student privacy as required.
- Develop campus network to assure integration of services.
- Assure quality internal and external customer service through measurement and results.
- Recruit, manage, and develop well-qualified staff.
- Create an environment where the team works collaboratively to achieve outcomes.
- Continuously improve the process of student recruitment and retention.

- No clear avenue currently exists for career exploration or development for those interested in entering the administrative/professional ranks.
- Encourage professional organizations such as AACRAO, NCSD, CRD, Community College Business Officers

(CCBO) and AACC to collaborate in developing professional development programs to meet this need.

- College presidents must identify, recruit, development and invest in their current staff with the potential to move into these positions.

- University leadership programs should partner with colleges and professional organizations and provide accessible graduate masters and certificate programs targeted to address the projected critical shortage areas.

Future Development

It is vital that community college leaders attend to the staffing needs for these highly specialized positions. The article is the first step that the work group recommended to help build awareness that the new leadership gap of administrative/professional positions is a major issue that must be widely disseminated to community college trustees, presidents, vice presidents/deans. We must continue to collaborate with other community college and association leaders to develop similar work profiles and programs to address this new leadership gap for other administrative/professional positions.

Reference

Shultz, Christopher. "The Critical Impact of Impending Retirements on Community College Leadership." American Association of Community Colleges, Research Brief, No. 1, Leadership Series, 2001.

*Dale F. Campbell is professor and director of the Community College Leadership Consortium at the University of Florida. Campbell is the author of *The Leadership Gap: Model Strategies for Leadership Development* published by Community College Press, 2002.*