STUDENT-ATHLETES’ SELF-EFFICACY REGARDING LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY INTO THE PERCEIVED
EFFECTS OF LEADERSHIP SIMULATIONS

By
CHRISTOPHER ALLEN COOK

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Educational Leadership, Sport Studies, and Educational/Counseling Psychology

AUGUST 2015

© Copyright by CHRISTOPHER ALLEN COOK, 2015
All Rights Reserved
To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the dissertation of
CHRISTOPHER ALLEN COOK find it satisfactory and recommend that it be
accepted.

____________________________
Forrest W. Parkay, Ph.D., Chair

____________________________
Paul Pitre, Ph.D.

____________________________
Jason A. Sievers, Ph.D.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to first thank the late Dr. Len Foster, my initial mentor into doctoral research, who spent countless hours with me discussing the role and responsibility we have as educators and change agents. I would like to recognize my committee chair, Dr. Forrest W. Parkay, for his support and guidance throughout my doctoral program. I want to thank him for the endless hours he dedicated to me so that I could complete this journey. Thank you to Dr. Jason Sievers and Dr. Paul Pitre for supporting me as committee members. It was an honor to work with both of you, and I truly appreciate your positive guidance and patience throughout the doctoral process.

I could not have realized this dream without the love and support of my wife, Brenda. Throughout my degree, we enjoyed the growth and development of our three beautiful children. Brenda possessed the amazing ability to nurture our growing family while giving me that constant gentle push and support I needed. I love you with all my heart Bren. I also want to thank my three children, Byran Ethan, Kennedy Jean, and Liam Paul, for being my inspiration and excuse to take “play” breaks.

Thank you to my siblings Chip and Jen; your simple inquiries and phone calls meant more than you will ever know; I love you guys. A thank you to Bill and Bertha, Brian and Barbie, Daniel and Bonnie, Wes and Billie, my family-in-laws; your support and humor helped me get through this challenging process.
To my close friends, Brent Hoff and Kelly Hewitt-Zimmerman, who patiently listened
over the phone as I rambled on over ideas and research concepts; you are true friends who have
always been there when I needed you most; thank you!

Thank you to all of the educators who have influenced and pushed me throughout my life.
I am the person I am today as a result of the time you have taken to teach me. Finally, thank you
Bill Moos and the WSU Athletic Department for affording me the time and opportunity to
complete this research; Go Cougs!
STUDENT-ATHLETES’ SELF-EFFICACY REGARDING LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY INTO THE PERCEIVED
EFFECTS OF LEADERSHIP SIMULATIONS

Abstract

by Christopher Allen Cook, Ph.D.
Washington State University
August 2015

Chair: Forrest W. Parkay

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to investigate the influence of experiential learning (i.e., leadership simulations) on student-athletes’ self-efficacy regarding their potential as future leaders. More specifically, the researcher sought to understand the “lived experiences” of NCAA Division I student-athletes in a models of leadership course. The following primary research question provided the focus for the study: To what extent, if at all, do leadership simulations and teaching about leadership models enhance student-athletes’ perceived self-efficacy regarding their potential for future leadership?

The study focused on 12 NCAA Division I student-athletes at a land-grant university in the Northwest who were enrolled in a sixteen-week leadership models course that incorporated experiential leadership simulations. Data were gathered through semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviews with the student-athletes. Interview questions focused on how student-athletes make meaning of their simulation experiences in a models of leadership course and how those experiences influence their perceived potential as future leaders.
The analysis of interview data revealed enhanced self-efficacy in three areas: (1) *Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership*; (2) *Finding a Voice*; and (3) *Increasing Knowledge and Skills*. More specifically, four dimensions of *Expanding Awareness* were noted: understanding strengths and weaknesses, increased self-confidence, clarification of core values, and leaders and leadership redefined. Three dimensions of *Finding a Voice* were noted: speaking with authority, maintaining power, and confidence in personal leadership style. Lastly, two dimensions of *Increasing Knowledge and Skills* were noted: improved techniques and strategies and greater understanding of leadership models.

The results of this study can be used to improve leadership development pedagogy and opportunities for emerging student-athlete leaders in academia as well as in the community. Results also provide a framework for colleges and universities that aspire to create and deliver leadership development programs. Understanding how student-athletes experience leadership development programming can contribute to the design of educational programs that enhance the learning and growth of all students in higher education, regardless of their participation in athletics.

*Keywords*: Student-athlete, experiential learning, leadership simulations, leadership development
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER ONE</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question and Sub-Questions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical and Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delimitations</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher’s Positionality</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Summary</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Development</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background on Leadership</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenets of Authentic Leadership</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulations</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaps in the Literature</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Summary</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY ................................................................. 53

Qualitative Research Design ........................................................................... 54
Phenomenological Research Methods............................................................. 57
The Research Question .................................................................................. 60
Participant Selection ....................................................................................... 61
Profiles of Participants .................................................................................. 62
  Abraham ........................................................................................................ 63
  Brandon ........................................................................................................ 64
  Constance ..................................................................................................... 66
  Dalia ............................................................................................................. 67
  Emily ............................................................................................................ 69
  Helen ........................................................................................................... 70
  James ........................................................................................................... 71
  Mateo ........................................................................................................... 72
  Milton .......................................................................................................... 74
  Patrick .......................................................................................................... 75
  Patton .......................................................................................................... 77
  Roy .............................................................................................................. 78
Informed Consent ........................................................................................... 79
Confidentiality ................................................................................................. 80
Simulations ..................................................................................................... 81
Interview Questions ....................................................................................... 82
Data Collection ............................................................................................... 83
Epoche/Bracketing ......................................................................................... 85
Researcher’s Epoche ....................................................................................... 85
In-person and Telephone Interviews, Observations, and Audio Journaling ....... 87
Trustworthiness/Reliability ............................................................................. 89
Validation Strategies ..................................................................................... 90
Member Checking .......................................................................................... 91
Data Analysis ................................................................................................ 92
Chapter Summary .......................................................................................... 98
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership .................................................. 100
  Understanding Strengths and Weaknesses ......................................................................................... 101
  Increased Self-Confidence ................................................................................................................ 103
  Clarification of Core Values .............................................................................................................. 104
  Leaders and Leadership Redefined .................................................................................................. 105
Finding a Voice ..................................................................................................................................... 108
  Speaking with Authority ....................................................................................................................... 108
  Maintaining Power ............................................................................................................................. 109
  Confidence in Personal Leadership Style ............................................................................................. 110
Increasing Knowledge and Skills .......................................................................................................... 111
  Improved Techniques and Strategies .................................................................................................. 112
  Greater Understanding of Leadership Models ..................................................................................... 114
Chapter Summary ............................................................................................................................... 115

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ................................................................. 116

Summary of Findings ............................................................................................................................. 116
  Change 1: Expanding Awareness Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership ................................. 116
  Change 2: Finding a Voice ................................................................................................................ 118
  Change 3: Increasing Knowledge and Skills. ......................................................................................... 119
Implications for Policy and Practice .................................................................................................... 120
Suggestions for Future Research .......................................................................................................... 122
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................................... 123
Researcher’s Reflection on the Study ................................................................................................... 124

REFERENCES: ...................................................................................................................................... 126

Appendix A: Interview Protocol Questions .......................................................................................... 143
Appendix B: Informed Consent Form .................................................................................................... 144
Appendix C: Experiential Leadership Course syllabus ........................................................................ 149
Appendix D: Sample Leadership Simulation ......................................................................................... 155
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Current Perspectives on Experiential Learning.......................................................43
Table 2: Demographic Data for Participants........................................................................62
Table 3: Data on Participant Interviews............................................................................88
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Theoretical Framework for Leadership Development</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Integrated Leadership Development Model</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>Structural Foundations of the Experiential Learning Model</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>Three Changes in Self-Efficacy Regarding Leadership Potential</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the biggest hearted, strong willed, opinionated maverick I ever met, my mother, Joann Carol Cook. Rest in peace mom, I finally “picked it up!”

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to Dr. Len Foster, the man who saw that thing inside of me that I did not see in myself. To both Dr. Foster and my mother, this dissertation symbolically represents the august harvest to the seeds you have sown. Thank you.
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Today, students and student-athletes face extraordinary challenges as institutions of higher learning and intercollegiate athletic departments struggle to adapt to ever-increasing rates of change to both their internal and external environments. Such change influences not only the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes of would-be leaders, but perhaps even more important, the self-conceptualizations of their leadership capabilities and their potential for future growth and development (Avolio & Luthans, 2006, Lord & Hall, 2005).

In spite of ongoing scrutiny of collegiate athletics, college sports continue to be an important cultural aspect of many higher education institutions. While Division I student-athletes make up a relatively small portion of the university population, they occupy a prominent space, whether that be the subject of controversy or celebration. Over the years, student-athletes have provided publicity to their universities and entertainment to the surrounding communities, and they often serve as a source of school pride (Sylwester & Witosky, 2004). While the institutional benefits of college athletics are commonly acknowledged, anxieties over the academic and personal development of student-athletes continue to surface (Duderstadt, 2000; Navarro, 2014; Althouse, 2010). Division I student-athletes in general continue to demonstrate less academic achievement than their non-athlete counterparts (Eitzen, 2009), and yet the reasons they struggle continues to be a complicated and vexing issue (Carthen, 2009).

Institutions and athletic departments continue to be in a perpetual struggle to maintain a balance among academic achievement, student-athlete welfare, and competitive success. As a result of such struggles, the NCAA has historically implemented legislation that has attempted to
address the academic progress and welfare of student-athletes. In 1990, perceived institutional abuses of athletes and low graduation rates prompted an in-depth study of college athletics by an independent organization called the Knight Commission. The Knight Commission, which consists of university presidents and other senior-level executives, made critical observations and recommendations to the NCAA and to its member institutions. The recommendations sought to improve graduation rates and to strongly encourage institutional oversight of student-athletes’ academic progress (Knight, 1991; Hyatt, 2003). Since then, two other Knight Commission reports have worked to address greater connectivity between intercollegiate sport and their respective institution’s academic missions (Knight, 2001; Knight 2010).

Ongoing efforts by the NCAA, athletic conferences (e.g., Pacific Twelve Conference), and member institutions to improve student-athlete welfare as well as engagement have been mostly ineffective. Substantial issues surrounding student-athlete welfare persist. Issues include: athletic verses academic time management (Martin, Harrison, Stone, & Lawrence, 2010; Comeaux & Harrison, 2011), cost of attendance and athletic scholarships (Parent, 2003), systemic financial inequities (NCAA, 2014; Dowling, 2000), slowed academic and career interest, maturity and development (Murphy, Petitpas, & Brewer, 1996; Anderson et al., 2010; Linnemeyer & Brown, 2010), health and wellness (Selby, Weinstein, & Bird, 1990; Carter, 2000; Knight, 2010), faculty and peer stereotypes (Simons, Bosworth, Fujita, & Jensen, 2007; Martin et al., 2010; Lawrence, 2005; Comeaux & Harrison, 2007; Harrison et al., 2009), and commercialization (Moore, 2008; Hawkins, 1999; NCAA, 2014, Duderstadt, 2000). The previously noted issues are significant because they work as impediments to the overall development of student-athletes and their leadership efficacy (Hannah, Avolio, Luthans, & Harms, 2008; Lapchick, 2006). The gradual commercialization of intercollegiate sport has
solidified the necessity for robust leadership as a result of a lack of productivity, both on and off the field of play (Yurdadon, 2005; Carthen, 2009).

The idea, myth, and/or notion that participation in sport equates to student-development and leadership development is a presumption that is now being examined. Early research suggested a positive association with leadership skills development and sports (Iso-Aloha & Hatfield, 1986; Ryan, 1989; Pascarella & Smart, 1991; Aries, McCarthy, Salovey, & Banaji, 2004; Dupuis, Bloom, & Loughead, 2006), but other studies have concluded that participating in athletics has little influence on leadership development (Fine, 1987; Danish, Petitpas, & Hale 1990; Blinde & Greendorfer, 1992; Spreitzer, 1994; Lesyk, 2000; DeMoulin, 2002; Extejt & Smith, 2009; Grandzol, Perlis, & Draina, 2010). The aforementioned divergent research has effectively problematized how intercollegiate athletics is viewed in the development of student-athletes.

Understanding how student-athletes’ experiences influence student development, learning outcomes, and leadership development is of keen interest to higher education (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2007). The learning outcomes of leadership development have long been proposed in educational institutions’ mission statements, yet little attention has been given as to whether courses and activities delivered by institutions truly stimulate student leadership (Posner, 2004; Grandzol et al., 2010).

**Background of the Problem**

Student development theories continue to be challenged by the unique characteristics of the student-athlete population and their respective sport cultures (Carthen, 2009). Inquiry addressing the psycho-social and social identity perspectives of student development continues to be challenged as a result of students’ participation in sport (Stoll, 2012). Student-athletes
continue to exhibit “slow” identity development (Anderson et al., 2010; Hook, 2012) and moral development as a result of their participation in sport (Camire & Trudel, 2010). Bonfiglio (2011) adds that the moral reasoning of student-athletes has also been negatively impacted as a result of intercollegiate sport. The previous points are relevant on a broader level in that identity and moral development are integral aspects of student-development and leadership development.

The challenge surrounding leadership development is that no agreed upon working model for the development of leadership skills exists (Day, 2000; Yukl, 2002; Day & Haplin, 2004). One significant issue is that both historical and recent understandings of leadership have taken a “trait-based” perspective and offered evidence in support of that approach; personality traits continue to be seen as unchanging constructs as opposed to abilities that need to be developed (Lord, De Vader, & Alliger, 1986; Judge & Bono, 2000). With that, leadership skills have often been understood in terms of explicit behavioral styles, asserting that successful leadership instruction could be delivered over a short period of time, pin-pointing particular learning behavioral strategies (Lord and Hall, 2005).

The previous point is relevant because, according to current research, leadership characteristically involves a more multifaceted mixture of behavioral, cognitive, and social skills that may progress at dissimilar rates and necessitate different learning experiences (Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000, Day & Haplin 2004; Lord & Hall, 2005; DeRue, Nahrgang, Hollenbeck & Workman, 2012). Furthermore, opportunities to advance leadership skills may involve preemptive actions by a budding leader, making the individual’s own incentive and attention to leadership a key prerequisite for leadership development (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). According to Lord and Hall (2005), “there exists little leadership theory regarding the slower development of core leadership qualities through extensive processes (i.e.,
instruction) involving months and years, especially theory that describes how surface features like behavior and deeper structures can be changed and influence skill development” (p. 592).

The pathway to leadership development for student-athletes has been hindered by unique challenges related to sport participation. Due to athletic obligations, potential coaching conflicts, and time constraints, some student-athletes may find it difficult to explore and express their full authentic selves (Frey & Eitzen, 1991; Kenow & Williams, 1999; Carthen, 2009). Due to an evolving overemphasis on sport obligations by athletic departments and institutions of higher education, student-athletes are commonly required to choose between their athletic and academic aspirations.

**Statement of the Problem**

To date, the majority of the literature regarding intercollegiate athletics has focused on inequities among student-athletes (Comeaux, 2013), welfare issues (Broughton & Neyer, 2001; Comeaux & Harrison, 2007; Harrison et al., 2009), support programs (Etzel, Ferrante, & Pinkney, 2002; Sievers, 2008), and/or academic performance (McArdle, Paskus, & Boker, 2013; Woodruff & Schallert, 2008). In recent years, the need for leadership development in intercollegiate sport continues to gain support. Burton & Peachey (2009) state that a growing number of sport management scholars have narrowed their attention to leadership over the past decade, highlighting the importance of this topic. In intercollegiate athletics, inquiry has principally focused on transformational leadership and the influence of those leadership behaviors on organizational outcomes (Burton & Peachey, 2009; Choi, Sagas, Par, & Cunningham, 2007; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996; Kent & Chelladurai, 2001).

While the aforementioned research has been important and groundbreaking, it has been insufficient for three reasons: first, transformational leadership is centered on the organization as
the primary motive for leading, with an emphasis on getting followers to engage in and support organizational objectives (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). The second is that virtually all the research noted has focused on athletic administration and/or coaching professionals; inadequate attention has been given to the student-athlete’s perspective. Lastly, existing research concerning leadership and intercollegiate athletics makes little distinction between the constructs of leadership and leadership development.

These gaps in research illustrate the need for greater focus on the student-athlete, their perspectives, and how their experiences influence their leadership development. The majority of literature on leadership development does not attend to the differences that student-athlete status may play in shaping one’s leadership development. In addition, the literature is limited in studies seeking to understand how student-athlete status might impact their lived experiences as well as their growth as student leaders. This absence of research has left a gap in our understanding of how student-athletes’ identities and participation in sport influence their development as student leaders.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to investigate the influence of experiential learning (i.e., leadership simulations) and models of leadership on student-athletes’ lived experiences in their development as leaders. The goal of the study was to understand how NCAA Division I student-athletes make meaning out of their experiences in a models of leadership course and how those experiences influence their perceived potential as future leaders. A number of studies have addressed the challenges and obstacles student-athletes face as they navigate their collegiate experience (Eitzen, 2009; Hawkins, 1999; Duderstad, 2000; Martin et al., 2010; Comeaux & Harrison, 2007; Harrison et al., 2009). According to Frey and Eitzen
(1991), and Carthen (2009), a potential obstacle in current sport subculture is manifested by coaches who may employ leadership styles that are unproductive and serve to dishearten and obstruct student-athletes from reaching their maximum potential. The thrust of this research was to investigate the leadership development of student-athletes based on their lived experiences in an experientially-based leadership development course.

**Significance of the Study**

There are a number of significant reasons for understanding the lived experiences that student-athletes have while developing and growing as students and leaders within academia. For example, it is not clearly understood how student-athletes’ leadership efficacy might influence their academic, social, and athletic experience. Additionally, it is not clearly understood how student-athletes might respond to experiential leadership instruction as a pedagogical approach. What is known is that student-athletes continue to participate less in university wide co-curricular activities and programs (Spreitzer, 1994; Lesyk, 2000). Student-athletes’ lack of participation, in part, can be tied to their significant time commitments (Dodd, 2015); however, this does not address the topic completely. The study was needed to better understand student-athletes’ lack of leadership efficacy and what experiences might facilitate positive self-perceptions of leadership potential.

**Research Question and Sub-Questions**

The purpose of the study was to examine how experiential learning (i.e., leadership simulations) and models of leadership influence student-athletes’ perceived development as leaders. This phenomenological study was aimed at researching the role experiential pedagogy plays on student-athletes’ leadership efficacy. Exploring factors that promote or hinder student-
athletes’ perceptions regarding their potential for leadership led to the following primary research question: To what extent, if at all, do leadership simulations and teaching about leadership models enhance students’ perceived self-efficacy regarding their potential for future leadership? In addition, the following sub-questions emerged as the investigation unfolded:

1. In what ways do previous leadership experiences inside and outside of athletics impact student-athletes’ approach to academics and athletics at a land-grant, research I, NCAA Division I university?
2. In what ways do leadership simulations influence student-athletes’ understanding of the construct of leadership?
3. In what ways do leadership simulations inform student-athletes’ perspective regarding their view of themselves as leaders?
4. What impact, if any, do leadership simulations have on student-athletes’ confidence regarding their leadership ability and skills?

Qualitative methods were employed to examine the essence of the participants’ stories and to fully understand their common experiences. It was important to use a phenomenological approach, as that methodology seeks to understand and to interpret how people understand themselves in a given setting. It was vital that the “participants of these settings make sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles, and so forth” (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 8). To fully capture the experiences of college student-athletes’ leadership development, a qualitative phenomenological study proved most appropriate.
Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the study consisted of a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supported and informed the research (Maxwell, 2012; taken from Paja, 2013). This conceptual framework addressed, via graphical representation(s) or the participants’ narratives, the central items studied (i.e., key factors, concepts, variables, and supposed associations among them) (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Following the work of Maxwell (2012), the researcher employed personal experience, prior research and theory, pilot studies, and thought experiments as the foundational pieces for the conceptual framework of the study. For purposes of the study, three theoretical areas were foundational in guiding, examining, and understanding leadership development. With that, a visual representation of the theoretical framework for leadership development is provided in Figure 1. Finally, the researcher’s positionality discussed later in this chapter will explain three key points: my personal experiences as they are related to a pilot study, my thought process, and my approach to the study.
Following the introductory chapter, a literature review will be presented to further examine selected theories of student development, experiential learning, leadership development, and leadership efficacy. The theories framed and influenced the research design and study. To provide perspective to the participants’ experiences, the literature review will also examine the basic fundamentals of experiential learning models, leadership simulations, and selected models of leadership development as they influence leadership efficacy. Knowledge gained through experience, reflection, generalization, and then application was epistemologically foundational in the introduction to models of leadership course. With that, an overview of Kolb’s (1981; 1984; 2005) and Dewey’s (1910) approach to experiential learning is also included in the review of literature. Experiential learning theory, authentic or transformative leadership development
theory, and leadership efficacy were used as the theoretical guides and contributed to the overall conceptual framework of the study for two reasons: (a) participants experienced learning in the course via leadership simulations; and (b) learning and leadership theories served as the theoretical guiding posts for teaching the leadership course. The models of leadership were vital as they helped to form a theoretical foundation for the conceptual framework of the study. To further illustrate how the leadership concepts worked in conjunction with one another, a visual depiction is provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Integrated Leadership Development Model

Definition of Terms

The following section provides definitions of terms that apply to the study.

Academia: Institutions of higher education organized into a system, or several systems, of academic institutions, with governing boards elected or appointed for each system or for individual systems (Ehrenberg, 2004; taken from Davis, 2012).
**Authentic Leaders:** Individuals who have a profound sense of self and a mindful commitment to foundational and lasting beliefs, principles, values and ethics that are modeled in everything that they do (Avolio and Gardner, 2005).

**Experiential Learning:** The manner whereby knowledge is produced via the transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984).

**Intersectionality:** Denotes the various ways in which race, gender, social class, and athletic status interact to shape the multiple dimensions of the everyday lived experiences of individuals (Crenshaw, 1989, Shields, 2011).

**Leader:** Individuals who inspire and motivate others to follow and foster an environment of solidarity, trust, and collaboration (Bass, 1990).

**Leadership:** The reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition or conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers (Burns, 1978).

**Leadership Development:** An intentional pedagogical and experiential process to provide and empower leaders and emerging leaders with opportunities to learn leadership competencies, identify core values and expand personal paradigms and perspectives (Seemiller, 2014).

**Leadership Efficacy:** A specific form of efficacy associated with the level of confidence in the knowledge, skills and abilities associated with leading others (Hannah, et. al., 2008; Hoyt, 2005; Murphy, 1992).

**Leadership Simulation:** An experiential event in which the participants have functional roles, duties, and sufficient key information regarding the problems to carry out these duties without play acting or inventing key facts. Participants keep their own personalities but take on a
job, duties, and responsibilities, and perform to the best of their ability in the presented situation (Herbert & Surtridge, 1979; Jones, 1995).

**NCAA:** The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), a non-profit association that governs and regulates athletes of 1,281 institutions, conferences, organizations, and individuals that organizes the athletic programs of many colleges and universities in the United States and Canada (National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I manual, 2014).

**NCAA Division I Intercollegiate Athletics:** NCAA Division I institutions generally offer the greatest number of sports for the largest number of participants and represent the highest level of collegiate sport competition (see: [http://www.athleticaid.com/Chapter1-first5.pdf](http://www.athleticaid.com/Chapter1-first5.pdf)).

**Self-Efficacy:** Perceived or personal beliefs regarding judgments of one’s capabilities to organize and successfully execute courses of action to attain designated types of performances (Bandura, 1995).

**Student-Athlete:** A student whose enrollment was formally or informally solicited by a member of the athletics staff, or other representative of athletics interest with a view towards the student’s ultimate participation in an intercollegiate athletics program. Any other student becomes a student-athlete only when the student reports for an intercollegiate squad that is under the jurisdiction of the athletics department, as specified by the NCAA. A student is not deemed a student-athlete solely on the basis of prior high school athletic participation (National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I manual, 2014).

**Assumptions**

In a phenomenological research study, it is assumed that the researcher will actively interact with his or her participants. The researcher uses oneself as an instrument that is granted privileged access to the subject’s lived world (Creswell, 2009). Husserl (1931) and Moustakas
(1994) recognized the influence of human perceptions noting that “The object that appears in consciousness mingles with the object in nature so that the meaning is created, and knowledge is extended. Thus a relationship exists between what exists in the conscious awareness and what exists in the world” (p. 27). What appears in the consciousness is ontologically fashioned, while what appears in the world is a manifestation of learning.

Limitations

According to Patton (2002) and Creswell (1994), outlining the limitations of a study establishes the borders, omissions, uncertainties, and qualifications inherent in the study. Research bias was likely a limitation for the completed qualitative phenomenological study, as the researcher served as the instrument for data collection and analysis. Another limitation is that the researcher interviewed only a small sample of student-athletes regarding their perceived self-efficacy for future leadership. In conducting this research, the researcher acknowledged that he effectively had no control regarding the authenticity or reliability of the participants’ answers to the interview questions. In fact, it was not possible to assert that the participants’ answers were truthful and/or precise. As a result, the researcher cannot generalize any of the findings broadly and apply those findings to all student-athletes’ development as leaders.

Delimitations

Patton (2002) and Creswell (2003) assert that delimitations are choices made by the researcher which need to be noted; they frame the limits of the study. With regard to the study, the researcher was keenly interested in understanding student-athletes’ perceptions regarding their development as potential leaders. The researcher made assumptions that the participating student-athletes had a unique story regarding their pathways to becoming leaders. With that, the
completed research plan focused on student-athletes in an effort to gain a better understanding of their growth and development. The researcher acquired information in the study that can serve as baseline data for future studies that investigate leadership development and student-athletes.

**Researcher’s Positionality**

In this work, careful consideration was given to potential researcher bias, as I am an associate athletic director, executive administrator, and teaching member of the course associated with the study. I am a forty-five year old heterosexual Caucasian male who is married and father of three children. Additionally, my own participation in NCAA Division I track and field events was a formative period in my life, and those experiences continue to be an important part of my identity today. I am a first-generation university graduate from a working-class family (i.e., my father was a bowling mechanic). I am generally familiar with the academic profiles of each of the participants via their participation in intercollegiate athletics at the university they attend. It is vital to disclose my positionality in this work, so that any bias I may have had is apparent throughout the process. To counter any latent bias, I incorporated the participants in every aspect of the research process throughout the study. For example, participants were engaged in the research by reading transcripts, profiles, and member checking matrices and reports.

Finally, both experiential learning models (Dewey, 1910; Kolb, 1981, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005) and authentic leadership theory (Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Gardner, Avolio, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Avolio & Gardner, 2005) were used throughout this study as a point of reference and inquiry tool. Additionally, a closer look at self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2003) and leadership efficacy (Hannah, et al., 2008) served to further frame the study.
Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 described the problem and need for the study. The purpose of the study was outlined and gaps in current research were noted. Efforts were made to outline the purpose of the study as well as call attention to the gaps in current research. In the following chapter, literature relevant to addressing the phenomenon of leadership development is presented.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

To provide support, context and a theoretical framework for the study, Chapter Two reviews literature central to leadership development, authentic leadership, experiential learning self-efficacy and leadership efficacy. This literature review framework will examine experiential learning with models of leadership development; the research aimed to understand the experiences that student-athletes feel regarding their emergence, or the lack thereof, as developing leaders. The study sought to explore the challenges and barriers faced by student-athletes who are developing as undergraduate students. Much of the research on leadership development of student athletes inadequately addresses the unique experiences of this student population. A lack of research has resulted in a lack of scholarly inquiry regarding the leadership development of student-athletes as they navigate their collegiate experience. One measure to examining student-athletes’ development as leaders was to understand their lived experiences.

In recent years the amount of literature on student-athlete leadership has increased; however, few studies have pedagogically explored student-athlete leadership development via experiential learning models, leadership simulations and authentic leadership. A great deal of the literature has been defined in limited ways. That is, much of the research to date has concentrated on leadership from the athletic administrative, sport program, or coach perspective. The literature lacked studies that investigated how student-athletes might perceive and/or respond to experientially minded instruction that fuses leadership simulations and models of leadership.

To date much has been written on the subject of experiential learning as a catalyst for student growth and development (Dewey, 1910, 1938; Lewin, 1946; Kolb, 1984; Moon 2004).
Fishman (1998) suggested that education should be a process rich of experiences that leave students with the capacity for even richer, larger, and deeper experiences. Dewey (1938), Lewin (1946), and Piaget (1971), the patriarchs of experiential learning, consistently addressed what they considered, a “disconnect” between experiential learning and traditional teaching methods; they asserted that students needed to be given the opportunity to practice and apply what they learned in a multitude of settings. The concepts of experiential learning and leadership connected well with the student-athlete population given their familiarity of active learning through sport. Conceptually, NCAA Division I student-athletes have a tremendous understanding regarding how the actual practice of a given concept is best learned through experiencing it. However, the need for meaningful reflection, generalization and application (Dewey, 1910; Kolb, 1984) has been generally neglected regarding the student-athlete sport experience.

While a great amount of attention has been given to leadership theory and leadership development theory, there remains a degree of ambiguity regarding how best to develop those who institutions of higher learning seek to empower. The following sections will briefly describe and outline the historical foundations of student development theory, leadership theory and leadership development in relationship to student-athlete leadership efficacy.

**Student Development**

Student development theories are uniquely qualified bodies of knowledge that investigate the student development process. Through psycho-social, cognitive-structural and social identity perspectives, a great deal of the influential research in higher education has come to fruition. Much can be ascertained about the leadership development of student-athletes by briefly reviewing certain aspects of student development theory. Regardless of how one approaches student-development theory, it can safely be said that psycho-social, cognitive-structural and
social identity models provide a multitude of perspectives through which to examine leadership principles and the student-athlete population.

Student-development theory makes explicit the point that developing leaders and student-athletes need to grow from a position of simple analysis and individual focus to a more complex and relational perspective (Perry, 1968; Kohlberg et al., 1976; Chickering & Riesser, 1993). Rest et al.’s (1986b, 2000) Neo-Kohlbergian perspective added, future developing leaders must move beyond their personal interests and meeting the expectations of social norms of society, to a better understanding of moral reciprocity and social awareness. This perspective aligns with leadership development literature in that leadership is best realized through authentic, transparent and self-aware leaders who are cognizant at the micro and macro levels (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Moorosi, 2013). An individual leader’s growth surrounding “relativeness,” “contextuality,” and “self-awareness,” directly correlates with strong identity development, personal purpose, as well as integrity (Chickering and Riesser, 1993; Day, 2001). What is relevant to the discussion, is that potential leaders move through vectors and/or schemes at different speeds, as well as deal with multiple psycho-social, cognitive-structural and social-identity factors simultaneously (Foubert, et. al., 2005). Hannah et al. (2008) proposed that individuals who can conceptualize the principles of authentic leadership (Avolio, & Gardner, 2005) are more apt to exhibit leadership efficacy.

What is known regarding the student-athlete population is that while there are positive associations with student development and intercollegiate athletics, there also exists research that suggests the opposite. Some current research and literature regarding student-athlete development indicates that identity development and engagement is consistently below their peers (Hook, 2012). Such research appears to reflect how the complexity of intercollegiate
athletics can and does influence what student-athletes are focused on. Camire and Trudel (2010) assert that moral development among student-athlete population is negatively impacted as a result of their participation in sport. Specifically, Camire and Trudel put forward that the majority of student-athletes believe social character best describes the development that occurs in sport; and the gamesmanship that is employed and legitimized, is considered a part of the game. The conclusions from Stoll (2012) and Camire and Trudel (2010) suggest a need for greater character and moral development. Bonfiglio (2011) asserts that sports at the intercollegiate level can be detrimental to student-athletes’ development, and the longer athletes participate in sport the more their moral reasoning is adversely affected by the competitive experience. While the previous research indicates a host of development issues associated with collegiate student-athletes, it also illustrates how polarizing and relevant this relatively small group of students can be. What was clear to the study is that student-athletes warranted further research that carefully sought to better understand their academic and athletic experience. To better understand the student-athlete, their development, and leadership theory, a brief discussion surrounding the relevant literature is needed.

**Background on Leadership**

In 1922, Max Weber introduced the term charismatic leadership and asserted that there were certain unique qualities that differentiated the bureaucratic leader from the charismatic leader. Weber (1922/1947) further argued that social crisis was important and necessary to promote the emergence of charismatic leadership (Avolio, 2007). Many other sociologists followed Weber’s position, proposing that charismatic leadership was authority legitimized on the basis of a leader's extraordinary personal traits, or the manifestation of astonishing insight and achievement (Crawford et al., 2005). It was further suggested that those traits ultimately
inspired allegiance and compliance from followers (Diana, et. al., 2000). Said leaders have the authority to disseminate a positive energy and sense of magnitude. As such, success or disappointment rested almost entirely on the leader; the absence of that leader for any reason would lead to the authority's power dissolving.

The previous notion of leadership would significantly change in 1978 when James Burns published his seminal work on transformational leadership. His work signaled a shift in leadership research from transactional leadership (i.e., leaders interact with followers with a focus on exchange) to transformational leadership (i.e., leaders seek to satisfy follower needs, engage the full person, and most critically, convert followers to leaders and leaders into moral agents) (Burns, 1978). Burns additionally recognized and addressed the complex role power and authority play in the inner workings of the leader-follower relationship.

Building on the foundational works of Burns (1978), Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999, 2011) further developed transformational leadership (i.e., full range leadership) by providing greater depth to the constructs of: emotion, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and contingent aversive reinforcement. The research of Burns and Bass was significant as it set the stage for distinguishing traditional theories of leadership (i.e., leader behavior described in terms of leader-follower exchange relationships, goals, etc.) as opposed to what Bass (1985) termed as new-genre leadership (i.e., emphasis on symbolic leader, vision, inspiration, emotional feelings, values, and intellectual stimulation) (Avolio, et. al., 2009). However, through the process of developing and framing Burn’s (1978) model of transformational leadership, the social justice or activist element became lost (Blackmore, 2011). “The down side is that transformational leadership effectively moved away from the radical roots of empowerment in an effort to emphasize organizational effectiveness and employee improvement” (Leithwood, Harris, &
Hopkins, 2008. p.30). As a result, there has been an effort to revitalize Burn’s (1978) conception of transformational leadership, and this approach is called transformative leadership (Shields, 2001).

**Transformational Leadership**

In Burns’s (1978) influential work, the discussion of leadership ranged widely addressing areas such as moral leadership, social sources of leadership, political leadership, reform leadership, and even revolutionary leadership. Burns’s (1978) concept of transformational leadership envisioned moral agents actively working to address social inequities as well as empower others; those principles are: (1) acknowledging power and privilege, (2) articulating both individual and collective purposes (public and private good), (3) deconstructing social-cultural knowledge frameworks that generate inequity and reconstructing them, (4) balancing critique and promise, effecting deep and equitable change, (5) working towards transformation: liberation, emancipation, democracy, equity, and excellence, and (6) demonstrating moral courage and activism (Shields, 2011).

**Authentic leadership:**

Like transformative leadership, authentic leadership shares a similar heredity and/or family tree of influences; so much so, that Bass’ (1985) version of transformational leadership was widely accepted as the precursor to authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). With that, it becomes necessary to build upon the theoretical contributions provided by transformational leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985).

While the construct of authenticity has historical roots in Greek philosophy (i.e., to thine own self be true) (Gardner et. al., 2005; Harter, 2002), the contemporary conception of authenticity emerged some 80 years ago (Erikson, 1995a). Since then, the definition has been
expanded and molded to include ownership of one’s lived experiences (i.e., thoughts, emotions, needs, wants, beliefs) as well as actions (i.e., expressing what you think and believe) (Harter, 2002). Kernis (2003) boiled the concept down even further, noting that authenticity facilitates “optimal” self-esteem.

As noted to above, transformational and authentic leadership share a common history. Authentic leadership has ties to Weber (1922) and his notion of charismatic leadership, again recognizing that authority was legitimized based on personal traits, insights or achievement of those autocratic leaders (Diana, et. al., 2000). The premise of the alpha male (i.e., white heterosexual Christian) at the head of command fed the need for focus on individual traits, skills, and behaviors; this was pertinent to transformational leadership as well as authentic leadership, because said behaviors included elements of context and being true to one’s self via application (Rosch & Anthony, 2012).

While Burns work may have ignited a shift in leadership research from autocratic to transformational leadership, it was Bass (1985) who added methodology and empirical measurement to the construct of leadership. In 2003, Luthans and Avolio fashioned the theoretical principles of authentic leadership based on the works of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). During the same year George (2003) also popularized authentic leadership, but pointed his work towards the general practice community while Luthans and Avolio (2003) geared their work towards the traditional academic population. What is central and germane to the conversation, is that the theoretical work asserted by Luthans and Avolio provided a flexible and robust multi-dimensional leadership model which has been applied in a host of studies as well as organizational environments. Having briefly reviewed the seminal literature associated with leadership theory, a closer examination of authentic leadership is necessary.
Tenets of Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership theory has been identified as, a process that pulls from both positive psychological capabilities and a highly evolved organizational context, which results in both improved self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and peers (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Authentic leadership is multilevel in that it includes the leader, follower, and context specifically in the way it is conceptualized and measured. The multilevel structure and principles of authentic leadership have been broken down into the following pieces: (1) positive psychological capital, 2.) positive moral perspective, 3.) leader self-awareness 4.) leadership self-regulation, 5.) leader processes/behaviors follower development, 6.) follower self-awareness/regulation, 7.) follower development, and 8.) organizational context (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

(1) *Positive psychological capital* refers to confidence, optimism, hope, and resiliency as internal and personal resources. When said resources come together with positive organizational context and challenges, positive psychological capital helps the leader by keeping their state-of-being (i.e., self-awareness and self-regulation) open to improvement, development and/or change; this was important as it played a key role in developing individuals and/or teams (Luthans, 2002a; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, Snyder & Lopez, 2002). Current literature on self-efficacy and leadership efficacy support the position that psychological capital is greatly influenced persistence, agency and belief in one’s self (Bandura, 1997; Hannah et al., 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008)

(2) *Positive moral perspective* describes the ethical and transparent decision making process whereby authentic leaders develop and draw upon reserves of moral capacity, efficacy, courage, and resiliency to address ethical issues. While some see positive moral perspective as
only a precursor (Cooper et al., 2005; Sparrowe, 2005), Luthans and Avolio (2003) and Avolio and Gardner (2005) counter that it is imperative to invoking a transformational perspective (Burns, 1978).

(3) **Leader self-awareness** manifests when individuals are mindful of their own reality, and what creates that reality within the context which they operate in over time. Self-awareness then becomes framed as a never ending process through which the authentic leader comes to know his/her unique assets, purpose, core values, beliefs, and goals (Silva and Duval, 2001). Functionally, this has been often described or defined as knowledge, beliefs and desires. (Day, 2000; George, 2003)

(4) **Leader self-regulation** is just that, it involves the processes where people exert self-control by (a) adjusting their standards, (b) assessing and recalibrating expected outcomes vs actual outcomes, (c) and identifying the necessary actions to reconcile the desired outcomes (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1988). “Hence, self-regulation is process through which authentic leaders align their values with their intentions and actions” (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). The key point is that authenticity is largely constructed as an internally driven process.

(5) **Leadership processes/behaviors** or positive modeling, is described as “leading by example.” Authentic leaders work to demonstrate transparent decision making, confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience between what they say and what they do (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Ilies et al. (2005) note that authentic leaders work towards developing staff and maintaining positive social exchanges. However, current leadership cautions researchers to understand that leading by example does not preclude the interactive and relational aspects associated with ones colleagues, subordinates and context (Rost, 1993).
(6) **Follower self-awareness/regulation** relates to the self-understood and self-regulated leader being able to develop and maintain positive authentic relationships with his/her followers and/or associates. Specifically, follower self-awareness or regulation is characterized by open and positive exchanges that authentic leaders pursue in an effort to achieve shared goals that reflect deeply held and overlapping values (Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; May et al., 2003). Shield’s (2011) further suggests that an active attempt to understand the positionality of a colleague or follower greatly aids in the development and/or management of positive relations.

(7) **Follower development** is one of key tenets of authentic leadership theory because it is asserted that both leaders and followers are developed over time as the relationship between them becomes more authentic (Gardner et al., 2005). Along those lines, this is an area where authentic leadership separates from transformational leadership because, “the leader may not actively set out to transform the follower into a leader, but may do so simply by being a role model for followers” (Bass, 1985; Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 327); the focus then being on the relational rather than the transformational.

(8) **Organizational context** is the “X” factor to a large degree; present-day and historical interactions and experiences shape the very environments which all leaders must navigate and all leadership development models should include (Day, 2000; London, 2002). With that, a four dimensional context measure (i.e., uncertainty, inclusion, ethical, & strength based culture/climate) addresses the authentic leadership-performance connection, which can openly contribute to leader–follower self-awareness (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio 2003). Inclusive contexts (or environments) that afford open access to information, resources, support,
and equal opportunity for everyone to learn and develop will empower leaders and their associates to accomplish their goals more effectively.

The noted eight tenets reflect the basic principles of authentic leadership as they were understood by today’s literature. Specifically, the framing of authenticity through the internal, external, and contextual perspectives reflected a comprehensive theoretical model. The principles noted played an important role in leadership development and offered a robust platform through which student-athlete’s lived experiences could be understood.

**Leadership Development**

Because the construct of leadership continues to be understood through a host of theoretical perspectives such as: trait theories (Stogdill, 1974; Covey, 1991, Goleman 1998b), behavioral theories (Lewin et al., 1939; Blake & Mouton, 1964), contingency or situational theories (Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971; Hersey and Blanchard (1969), power and influence theories (Yukl, 2002; Bass, 1985; Greenleaf, 1977), transformation, cultural, and symbolic theories (Burns, 1978; Bass 1990), making explicit and clear what leadership development is, and how it related to the study was as important as it was complex.

Many industrial and educational organizations currently view leadership as a source of competitive advantage (McCall, 1998). But how exactly are organizations defining leadership development? While there currently is great interest in leadership development among practitioners and educators, there also exists conceptual confusion regarding leader development and leadership development (Day, 2001). Crawford et al. (2005) noted that with the shift to the post-industrial paradigm, more focus is being put on leadership development. Until recently however, “leader development programs” and “leadership development” programs were
synonymous. But under contemporary paradigms, there is a difference, and that difference is key (p. 101).

*Leader* development programs can be characterized as programs that focus on developing the individual leader rather than the relationship between leaders and followers (Day, 2001). Conversely, *Leadership development* programs focus on the relational and communicative aspect between the leader and the follower (Rost, 1993). Thus the emphasis was no longer on teaching leaders to play the role of a leader, but rather exploring the interactions and collaborative relationships needed to find success (Avolio et al., 2009). While efforts were made to introduce and articulate some of the differences between leader development and leadership development, further discussion is needed regarding how the construct is actually defined.

**Leadership Development Defined**

Seemiller (2014) proposed that leadership development is a deliberate pedagogical and experiential process that provides budding leaders with opportunities to learn leadership competencies, identify core values, and expand personal paradigms and perspectives. Rosch and Anthony (2012) add that Leadership development programs should focus on leadership as a multifaceted concept, where students see their own leadership practice as their traits, knowledge, and skills implemented within organizations and systems of other people.

The previous two definitions are built on the post-industrial perspectives that focus on connecting the relational aspects of leadership development. The literature was relevant to the study in that both definitions addressed elements of context, positionality, as well as self-awareness and self-regulation; characteristics grounded in the principles of authentic leadership.

**Authentic Leadership Development**
According to Moorosi (2013), when authentic leadership development is positioned as human capital investment, it is implied that an overarching organizational development strategy is executed to build intrapersonal competence which is needed for effective performance of institutional or organizational roles. As a result, the individual’s leadership development is not separated from the institutional context. Day (2001) noted that the significance of intrapersonal competence associated with leader identity development through initiatives of self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation can enhance individuals knowledge, trust and personal power, all of which are essential in the practice of leadership (McCullum and O’Connell, 2009).

It is through the development of the aforementioned competencies that authentic leaders potentially develop. However, according to Cooper et al. (2005), leadership development need not be a bound to traditional seminars, but rather to a course of pedagogy that facilitates interventions or trigger events. This line of reasoning supports experiential learning and the use of simulations (Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014). Because authentic leadership development is attentive to in-depth pedagogy, extended programming (i.e., six months to a year) is recommend as opposed to weekend or week long immersion programs (Cooper et al., 2005). Longer periods of time are necessary for development so that authentic and in-depth one-on-one coaching and trigger events can occur.

While trigger events can be profound in nature, Cooper et al. (2005) note that such events can also be a culmination of smaller events which accumulate over time until a threshold level is reached; this in turn evokes behaviors that are characteristic of authentic leaders. Avolio and Gardner (2005) cautioned practioners that authentic leadership development involves complex processes, and that it is unlikely to be achieved simply through a training program. They further
assert that their approach to authentic leadership development is more a life program than anything else (Avolio and Garder, 2005).

Eventually, leadership development is about the realization of competences in context (Day, 2001). Seemiller (2014) suggests, while leadership capabilities can be learned, earlier possession of certain abilities can impact the depth, speed, and effectiveness in gaining and using a certain skill. Those competencies are not the only tools of development and evaluation that can be used to aid students in their development as leaders, but they can be viewed as a kind of educational toolbox (Jarvis, 2004). It was not necessarily the goals of the course to have all students develop a full menu of competencies; but rather the focus was on developing the competencies that a student may need to use more frequently or more effectively than others (Crawford et al., 2005).

According to Shamir and Eilam (2005), emergent authentic leaders can be identified from other forms of leaders in four key ways: 1.) the degree to which there is salience of the leadership role in relationship to an individual’s self-concept, 2.) the level of self-concept clarity and the extent to which that clarity aligns with their values and beliefs, 3.) the extent to which their goals are in alignment with their convictions, and 4.) the degree to which their day-to-day behaviors match their concept of self (p. 399). The previous points were relevant to the study in that contemporary research on leadership development remains connected to identity, self-knowledge, self-values, self-goals, self-expression and one’s clarity and consistency regarding those constructs (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Literature noting an individual’s belief in self played a key role in shedding light on the motivation, or lack thereof, when investigating leadership development (Hannah et al., 2008; Moorosi, 2013).
Leadership Development and Student-Athletes

Some current literature proposes that leadership development has been promoted through involvement in intercollegiate athletics and club sports; other research has focused on the impact of coaching or leadership demonstrated by team captains (Grandzol, et al., 2010; Dupuis et al., 2006). While the aforementioned research has been valuable, it has been unable to recognize the vast complexity of intercollegiate athletics as well as the thousands of student-athletes who are not formally identified as team leaders (i.e., captains). Current research does not account for the installment of student-athlete leaders by athletic administration (i.e., coaches) as a result of athletic prowess rather than leadership characteristics. As a result, other studies have countered that participating in athletics has little or negative influence on leadership development (Fine, 1987; Danish et al., 1990; Blinde & Greendorfer, 1992; Spreitzer, 1994; Lesyk, 2000; DeMoulin, 2002; Extejt & Smith, 2009; Gradzol et al., 2010, Stoll, 2012).

Studies on leadership development from the field of sports management have principally focused on transformational leadership and the influence of those leadership behaviors on organizational outcomes (Burton & Peachey, 2009; Choi et al., 2007; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996; Kent & Chelladurai, 2001). While that lane of research has provided excellent insights into the administration and culture of intercollegiate athletic departments, it’s done little to address the lived experiences and leadership development of student-athletes themselves.

Other organizations vested in intercollegiate athletes, such as the NCAA, have made modest attempts recently to provide programing and support student-athletes’ leadership development. In 2000, the NCAA mandated that universities and athletic departments offer life skills programming in addition to academic support services (NCAA, 2014). Since then, the main mechanism through which the NCAA CHAMPS/Life Skills leadership development
program has been promoted and delivered, has been through transition courses on university campuses and NCAA leadership forums. Nationally, the NCAA continues to offer; life skills symposiums, postgraduate intern opportunities, career in sports forums, and student-athlete leadership forums (http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/leadership-development-programs-and-resources). While those programs are valuable, only a handful of student-athletes have access (via an application process) and little or no research has come from the NCAA’s pragmatic approach to leadership. This approach has made assessment of their programming difficult.

At the campus and institutional level, athletic departments deliver life skills or transition courses to meet the NCAA requirement. Athletic departments are also required to maintain a Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) so that student-athletes have a voice in their respective athletic departments. While those programs, services, committees and courses are in place, they don’t necessarily account for leadership development. The process of becoming a leader is implied based on one’s attendance and access to a committee or class. Furthermore, life skills programming is a broad topic which ranges from nutrition to violence prevention to library services. If leadership is addressed, it is typically delivered in a single lecture class or weekend immersion program which is similar to the NCAA’s approach. As a result of such broad programming by institutions and the NCAA, little research on leadership development has been conducted regarding the student-athlete population.

The previous points were important to the study in that contemporary research on leadership development has remained connected to identity and self-concept, self-knowledge, self-values, self-goals, self-expression and one’s clarity and consistency regarding those constructs (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). The literature was limited with examples of student-athlete developmental leadership research that articulated how an individual’s belief in self
influenced their motivation, or lack thereof. To better understand the challenges associated with one's belief in self, it might prove helpful to explore the literature associated with self-efficacy, leadership efficacy and simulations.

**Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy has been the most widely studied form of efficacy and has received considerable attention in the field of cognitive and social psychology though extensive theory building and research by Bandura (1997). Bandura asserted that self-efficacy is belief in one's abilities to mobilize through motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to meet situational demands. Research has shown strong positive relationships between personal identity, self-efficacy and various criteria of human performance (Luthan, 2002; Lord & Hall, 2005). Central to leadership and its development, Bandura (1997) noted that efficacy is the most persistent among the mechanisms of agency and provides a foundation for all other facets of agency to operate. How individuals’ beliefs impact their conceptualization in self-enhancing or self-debilitating ways is directly tied to their efficacy (Bandura & Locke, 2003).

**Leadership Efficacy**

Hannah et al. (2008) proposed that,

leadership efficacy is an explicit form of efficacy associated with the level of self-assurance in the knowledge, attributes, and capacities associated with leading others. It can be clearly distinguished from belief in the knowledge, skills, and abilities a person holds associated with other societal roles such as a teacher (i.e. teacher efficacy) or statesman (i.e., political efficacy) (p. 669).
Leadership efficacy was framed in terms of a multi-level understanding regarding the emergence of efficacy in organizations, including individual (leader and follower), team and organizational levels.

Hannah et al. (2006) further notes that leadership efficacy is a role-based subdivision of a person’s overall makeup. Drawing from Bandura’s (1997) four core features, Hannah et al. put forward that leadership agency is made up of the following four dimensions: 1) the level of intentionality and “ownership” leaders apply to their role(s), 2.) the amount of forethought leaders give to the goals, means, and probable outcomes of their actions, 3.) leaders’ level of self-reactiveness and self-motivation to act and seek further improvement and development, and 4.) leaders’ level of self-reflectiveness, as evidenced by their level of introspective reflection on their past actions and future abilities and performance (p. 10)

Despite the call by some researchers (Gist, 1989) to utilize this powerful construct in leadership research and development, there have only been limited theory building contributions linking self-efficacy and work-related performance (McCormick, 2001; Luthans et al., 2002, Hollenbeck & hall, 2004; Popper et al., 2004; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Leadership self-efficacy has not only been tied to higher levels of performance for individual leaders, but it has also been linked to higher levels of performance for groups (Chen et. al, 2001; Eden & Sulimani, 2002; Tasa et al., 2007). One possible mechanism to explain this link is that leadership self-efficacy could serve to increase the collective efficacy of the team (Kane et al., 2002). We can envision a highly efficacious team enhancing the leader efficacy of the individual leader, just as we can see how the leader can build higher levels of collective efficacy. The noted concept speaks to the fluid and dynamic relationship that exists between the leader and the followers.
According to Hannah et al. (2008), there exists a visible give-and-take influence of a leader’s efficacy with the efficacy of each follower and the collective whole. In other words, the leader and follower connection grows over time to create a kind of collective efficacy, which in turn helps fuel and maintain efficient outcomes. Ultimately, when groups form such a shared conceptual framework regarding their collective efficacy, the ensuing beliefs encourage communal agency and increased collective performance.

Building upon the discussion above, the study conceptually supported Bandura’s (1997) and Hannah et al. (2008) arguments that efficacious beliefs are task and context specific but can also be generalized across a range of tasks and situations. In sum, the literature suggested that a leader with a broad spectrum of self-efficacy would by definition see himself or herself as more flexible to meet a wide array of leadership challenges (Hannah et al. in press). According to Hannah et al., (2008),

A greater understanding is needed regarding how leaders’ efficacy beliefs for specific tasks interact within their broader concept of self and with their general efficacy beliefs to provide greater overall levels of efficacy; and thus adaptability and performance-across numerous challenges, roles and performance contexts (p. 675).

The discussion regarding self-efficacy and leadership efficacy makes clear an important distinction; that the construct of self and leadership efficacy have direct ties to advancement and development of potential leaders. What has not been made clear through the discussion is exactly how that leadership efficacy is to be grown, fostered and assessed. With that, a discussion regarding leadership simulations is warranted.
Simulations

Since their inception, experiential simulations have been broadly explored and pragmatically applied to a host of industries. Specifically, simulations have been actively utilized in development of military officers, (Hunsaker, 1978), educational administrators (Olson, 2007), lawyers (Crossly & Wang, 2010), nurses and doctors (Radovich et al., 2011), as well as high school and college students (Pickert, 1992; Stewart et al., 2011). It should come as no surprise, given the broad applications of simulations, that defining and narrowing what a simulation is remains a challenging task. Herbert and Sturtridge (1979) asserted that the term simulation has been interpreted in a variety of ways depending on the literature and direction of research; they offer that a simulation is an activity in which a participant negotiates a problem which is in a setting that has been clearly described and/or constructed for them (p. 1).

Radovich et al., (2011) added that individuals put in new leadership roles can often feel unprepared to handle some of the situations that occur daily. It is important to provide a setting through which those participants can receive instruction and develop their skills. Simulation-based training can provide a safe interactive way for new leaders to develop their leadership skills. Given their broad applications as well as value, simulations have been proven to be an excellent pedagogical approach; but what exactly are simulations and how does the literature surrounding leadership define them?

Simulations Defined

According to Herbert and Sturtridge (1979), a simulation can contain either role-play or role-simulation. Role-play requires a student to take the part of a character (i.e., teacher, pilot, etc.), while role-simulation mandates the participant maintain his/her own persona (p. 5). For purposes of this study, participants were identified as those who experience role-simulated lesson
plans where they maintained their identity while reacting to experientially based leadership simulations. Specifically, the leadership simulations presented a decision-making situation in which both the information quantity and complexity were controlled; personality and performance measures were administered before, after, and during the experience (Hunsaker, 1978).

Jones (1995) added that simulations are not unrehearsed dramas or spontaneous role play, nor do simulations attempt to recreate reality. In fact, the more an instructor tries to replicate the real world, the more ineffective the simulation becomes. While some simulations use invented circumstances (i.e., make believe country) and other elements of imagination; those factors are not necessary (Herbert & Sturtridge, 1979). What is vital, is that the factors embedded in the simulation create open ended problems that require the participants to deal with values, opinions, emotions and attitudes (Diekmann, 2009). Ideally, such simulations help the students to think about what questions they should be asking as opposed to what answers they should give (Kolb & Kolb, 2009).

It is not vital that a simulation have overtly defined educational objectives. Educational objectives are like hopes and desired outcomes: they are not the simulation and are not part of the event. However, facilitators of simulations work to achieve specific educational learning outcomes, but these are not necessarily part of the simulated event itself (Jones, 1995). Additionally, it is not critical that the active part of a good simulation include effective learning. Experiential learning frequently occurs after rather than during the event (Diekmann, 2009). The action part of the simulation can include a host of errors and misconceptions (Kolb, 1984). While the discussion above briefly outlined the general characteristics of a simulation, how do simulations relate to the leadership development?
Simulations and Leadership Development

According to Hunsaker (1978), “a leader’s capability to perform effectively under stress is not usually identified until after he has been exposed to turbulent conditions in the field” (p. 115). The previous statement articulates the value of experiential learning via concrete activities or simulations. Hunsaker further added that simulations have the ability to facilitate the development of effective and observable leadership behaviors in a variety of ways. Those benefits include but are not limited to the following:

- Participants learn from each other during the decision-making process as they perform the functions of decision makers and leaders.
- Self-observation and observation of others in these capacities provide additional opportunities for experiential learning which the peer and instructor-conducted feedback sessions provide a reflective learning experience in behavioral competencies and skills.
- Participants and instructors share with each other relevant feelings and behavioral responses elicited during the simulation in a task-directed and constructive manner.
- Concrete examples are uses to document feedback regarding the impact of an individual's actions on others (p. 121).

The benefit of simulations is that the participants are endowed with specific data about their personal leadership skills through instructors, peers, self-reflections, and leadership in general from watching others and listening to professor explanations. “Learning leadership through simulations has the potential to create an environment that supports learners in making discoveries themselves, then applying those discoveries” (MacNeil & McClean, 2006, p.99).

During a simulation there is no teacher or trainer during the “action” phase of the process; the participants ideally exercise autonomy, including the power and the authority to
make mistakes. If a simulation is to work, then team leaders must be afforded the opportunity to struggle and fail. Allowing for inevitable mistakes is something to be strived for so that the participant has concrete experiences to reflect and draw upon, according to Jones (1995), “the greater the disaster, the greater learning opportunity” (p. 10). Failure in a controlled and positive environment is a critical aspect to leadership development in that the participants are given the opportunity to respond to key facts and then grow from those positive or negative outcomes (Silberman, 2007).

Simulations and Experiential Learning Process:

Simulations facilitate the experiential learning process because they place the participant in a problem based environment, which allows for immediate feedback on questions, decisions, and actions. This is relevant to the experiential learning process in that simulations actively incorporate the cognitive, behavioral and methodological aspects of learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2009). In simulation training, learners are inserted into an active environment where cognitive, behavioral, and pragmatic skills can strengthen learning (Radovich et al., 2011).

Jarvis (2004) states that “simulations encourage active participation, which in turn allows problems of human behavior and relationships to be presented and extend the cognitive into the emotional” (p. 172). Thus through the active process of participation, participants gain experience via lived experiences which are the initial point of entry into the experiential learning process. Silberman (2007) asserts, “until leaders are asked to reflect on their key or trigger events, they often have not fully realized what they have learned from those experiences or how much they have benefited from that learning process” (p. 308). Of course, experiencing an event does not comprise the experiential learning process; individuals require debriefings, so that they can reflect for a period of time after the event for an appraisal of what really happened;
“Learning from experience often needs time to think and consider what transpired; the process of reflection is a critical tool regarding one’s growth and development” (Jones, 1995, p. 12).

**Simulations and self-efficacy:**

Simulations have the advantage in that they are student-centered and not lecture driven per se; therefore we can conclude that simulations provide a flexible pedagogical approach that can effectively transfer leadership competencies and inform a belief in one’s leadership ability (Herbert & Sturtridge, 1979, p. 7). Radovich et al. (2011) added that the use of simulations can provide opportunities for refining communication and problem-solving skills and establish competence and confidence in a safe environment (p. 60). Those factors, when executed properly, directly support Bandura’s (1997) positive self-efficacious principles.

Because “simulations provide for the observation and recording of behavior that is difficult to study in the field” (Hunsaker, 1978, p. 119), they represented an excellent pedagogical approach to fostering leadership development and leadership efficacy. Well-constructed simulations can capture conditions that stir up and solicit managerial action. Silberman (2007) asserts that if simulations are authentic enough and accompanied by rich debriefing sessions (i.e., assessment, challenge, and support), they can provide a credible basis for powerful feedback, reflection, and learning.

In this section, a review of the literature regarding what a simulation is, how it is currently defined as it relates to leadership development, and how it relates to self-efficacy, leadership efficacy, and the experiential learning process was explored. Having discussed what a simulation is with respect to the study, further discussion is required on experiential learning models.
Experiential Learning

While this study took a nonspecific view of learning at its foundation, a conversation regarding experiential learning is relevant to discuss and explore as it represented the philosophical positionality of the instructors. The forthcoming discussion is important as it provided a contextual guide to the educational environment the participants of the study experienced. In order to better understand the lived experiences of the participants regarding their perspectives on leadership, it is important to understand the pedagogical context of the course and its instructors.

To date there are enormous amounts of research and analysis on experiential learning in numerous vocations and fields (Abe, 2011). According to Moon (2001), there are examples from training and development, adult education, school science, work experience and work-based learning, nursing, outdoor education, and other forms of professional development, management, decision-making, and political social activism (i.e., Freire, 1970).

Experiential learning is recognized as a philosophy of education largely based on the works of Dewey (1938) who referred to it as a “theory of experience.” Dewey suggested that while traditional education had little need for theory since practice was guided by tradition, the new experiential model required a robust theory to guide its practice and inquiry (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). To Dewey (1938), Lewin (1946), Piaget (1971) and Kolb(1984), experiential learning theory offered a fundamentally different view of the learning process from that of the behavioral theories of learning. Experiential learning was based on an empirical epistemology that underlay traditional educational methods; methods that for the most part were based on a rational, idealist epistemology.

In seeking to organize the concept experiential learning, William Torbert (1979) argued,
we must recognize that we are stepping beyond the personally, institutionally, and epistemologically reconstituted universe and that we deeply resist this initiative, no matter how often we have returned to it. We must recognize too that the art of organizing through living inquiry – the art of continually exploring beyond pre-constituted universes and continually constructing and enacting universes in concert with others – is as yet a publicly undiscovered art. To treat the dilemma of organizing experiential learning on any lesser scale is to doom ourselves to frustration, isolation or failure (p. 42, taken from Kolb, 1984).

While the overall understanding and framing of experiential learning has made significant strides in recent decades, there does exist the challenge of defining it in such a fashion to incorporate its wide range of interpretations (Fowler, 2008). With that, a variety of definitions have emerged in an effort to better understand and operationalize experiential learning (see Table 1). It’s been argued that the working definitions of experiential learning vary based on contextual factors (i.e. industrialized world versus less developed areas) (White, 2005). According to Peruniak (1993), there are at minimum 58 terms related to defining experiential learning. He asserted that it is the involved and contingent nature of experiential learning that is, in fact, its strength. In other words, it’s simplicity and functionality gives experiential learning the integrity to operate and reflect reality’s complexity. Table 1 below, which was modified and taken from White (2005, p. 32), aptly summarizes the variety of vantage points on the topic of experiential learning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miriam Hutton</td>
<td>Experiential learning is focused on solution finding by engaging learning in a variety of issues or foci of concern in order that they have the opportunity to both perform and experience an outcome (Hutton, 1989).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rooted in the work of Donal Schon on change, process development, and problem solving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari Peterson</td>
<td>Experiential learning is all learning that actively involves the learner, without specific focus on learning outcomes (Peterson, 1989).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rooted in works of David Kolb on learning cycles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costas Criticos</td>
<td>Experiential learning is &quot;from experience, through experience, to experience&quot; (Criticos, 1989, p. 212).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rooted in works of Frank Youngman and Paulo Freire on conscientization and praxis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Mezirow</td>
<td>Experiential learning is that attachment of meaning to a situation in which one experiences a disorienting dilemma, through reflection of past meaning perspectives and meaning schemes (Mezirow, 1991).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rooted in the works of Jurgen Habermas' work on critical self-reflection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Kolb</td>
<td>Experiential learning is a continuous process of experience, reflection, concept formation, and testing (Kolb, 1984).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rooted in the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin and Jean Piaget on development and cognition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tara Fenwick</td>
<td>Experiential learning is the process of human cognition achieved by differentiating meaning derived from theoretical and non-formal life experience attained through formal education (Fenwick, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rooted in the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin and Jean Piaget on development and cognition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experiential learning is the creation of meaning from direct experience (Peruniak, 1993, p. 17).

Rooted in works of Peter Jarvis on cognition and David Kolb learning cycles.

Experiential learning is a philosophy of learning which encompasses the traditional learning theories but emphasizes that the source of learning material can be from experience" (Folwer, 2008).

Rooted in the works of David Kolb and Peter Jarvis learning cycles, reflection processes and lifelong adult learning.

While experiential learning appears to be at a crossroads, there does seem to be a shift away from the traditional concept of education in favor for a broader understanding of what constitutes learning. Brah and Hoy (1989) illustrated the point in their assertion that, “the value of any experience will depend not so much on the experience of the subject, important through this is, but on the struggles around the way that experience is interpreted and defined and by whom” (p. 72). The previous point was important to the study as it illustrated how experiential learning theory was not homogenous, but rather diverse in the ways it can be understood.

Phenomenological inquiry was ideally suited as it was the perspective and interpretation of the participant that defined the experiential paradigm through which to understand their experience. While contemporary positions and definitions of experiential learning are diverse and broad, for purposes of the study, we will turn our attention to the review of three particular understandings of experiential learning (i.e., Kolb, 1984; Weil & McGill, 1989; & Fenwick, 2000).

Kolb’s Experiential Learning Model:

Drawing on the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget, David Kolb (1984) worked to develop a holistic model of the experiential learning process based on six key propositions (Kolb & Kolb, 2005); those propositions include: (1) Learning is best conceived as
a process, not in terms of outcomes, (2) Learning is a continuous process grounded in experience; all learning is relearning, (3) The process of learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectally opposed modes of adaptation to the world, (4) Learning is holistic process of adaptation to the world, (5) Learning involves transactions between the person and the environment, and (6) Learning is the process of creating knowledge (p. 194).

To represent how the aforementioned propositions could be realized, Kolb (1984) developed his seminal experiential “learning cycles” to demonstrate how the structural dimensions underlying the process of experiential learning operate (p. 42). Kolb’s four cycle experiential “learning cycle” model includes: (1) concrete experience followed by (2) observation and reflection followed by (3) forming abstract concepts followed by (4) testing in new situations (see Figure 3, taken from Chapman, 2005).
Through the experiential learning cycle, Kolb (1984) argued that learning happens via the ‘comprehension’ of knowledge, or what he calls ‘prehension’ and the following ‘conversion’ of that experience. Initially, this can be accomplished by ‘reflective observation,’ which helps make sense of and organize the experience via ‘active experimentation’ (Fowler, 2008, p. 429). Kolb (1984) suggested that the two dimensions of ‘prehension’ and ‘transformation’ each contain dialectically opposed adaptive orientations and it is the resolution of the conflict between said
orientations that results in learning. The understanding of the ‘prehension’ dimension resides at both the concrete and abstract ends of comprehension.

The reflection process for Kolb was anything but quiet (as Dewey suggested), rather it was an active and evolving process that sought to resolve internal conflicts between the two continuums (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Fowler, 2008). Upon completion of the reflection stage, knowledge convergence allows the learner to reconceptualize and generalize the information in other domains or areas of their respective lives (Kolb and Kolb, 2005). After the knowledge has been converged via reflection and generalization, the learner then moves into the active experimentation phase and application stage. In this cycle the learner transforms the knowledge via extension and application; this stage completes one full cycle which then repeats over and over.

As participants in the study negotiated the experiential learning cycles through leadership simulations, understanding their lived experiences through their own words was critical in understanding how student-athletes conceptualized and constructed leadership. Critical to the experiential learning model and participants’ growth process, was their ability to take divergent knowledge, grasp and converge it, and then transform and act upon that knowledge in a concrete way.

**Weil and McGill’s Experiential Villages:**

In 1989, Weil and McGill worked to classify and define experiential learning; they suggested that experiential learning was, “the process whereby people engage in a direct encounter, then purposefully reflect upon, validate, transform, give personal meaning to, and seek to integrate their different ways of knowing. Experiential learning, therefore, enables the discovery of possibilities that may not be evident from direct experience alone” (p. 428). In
addition to defining experiential learning, Weil and McGill (1984) also strove to incorporate a variety of experiential learning practices with the intent to produce a typology as a means of ordering papers for a conference (Fowler, 2008). Through their efforts, four clusters of interrelated ideas were formed and framed as, ‘villages’ of thought (White, 2005).

- Village One relates to the assessment and accreditation of prior experiential learning that results from life and work experience and for which there is no formal academic outcome. Individual learning outcomes and means of assessment are identified in an attempt to create a standardized process.

- Village Two relates to the changes in the focus, infrastructure and curricula (the process of learning) that are precipitated by experiential learning. Changes are essential ingredients in the preparation for learning and for building partnerships between education and other elements of society.

- Village Three relates to social change and conscientization as the results of learning from experience. Individuals and society become empowered through the relationships between personal learning and public participation.

- Village Four relates to personal growth and development stemming from interpersonal experiences. Focus is on establishing goals leading towards new attitudes and behaviors that engender self and communal awareness and effectiveness (p. 33)

While Boud and Walker (2000) later added five propositions of their own on experiential learning; experience as foundation and stimulus for learning, learners learn via the active process, learners learn in holistic ways, learners learn in a socially and culturally constructed environment which is guided by socio-emotional context in which it occurs (Folwer, 2008), what
is important in understanding Weil and McGill (1989), is that their villages, while different, compliment one another; none are exclusive nor dominant to one another (White, 2005).

According to Fowler (2008), the outcome of learning, subsequent to the ideas contained within the four villages asserted that experiential learning has the ability to facilitate self-growth, ranging from the individual to the communal level under the vocational umbrella of professional life and academia. With that, the application of experiential learning theory has moved beyond the initial points put forward by Dewey (1938). The previous noted research was relevant to the study in that said positions show how the earlier framings of experiential learning may have been conceptually narrow, and that a broader approach could more aptly operate in an interrelated fashion (i.e. Wiel & McGill, 1989; Fenwick, 2000).

Fenwick’s Perspectives Cognition and Experiential Learning:

Weil and McGill’s efforts in 1989 to create an experiential typology informed and guided Fenwick’s (2000) perspectives on cognition and experiential learning. Fenwick (2000) proposed that experiential learning could be seen through the following lens: a participatory or situated view, a constructivist or reflective view, a resistant or critical cultural view, an inferential or psycho-analytical view, and a enactivist or co-emergent view (Fenwick, 2000). Fenwick’s points are important to the discussion as her work more clearly articulated how the varying perspectives on experiential learning operate in conjunction with one another. Furthermore, Fenwick’s model provided a broad and articulated paradigm through which the participant’s perspectives on leadership could conceptually nest.

Complications and Solutions to the Experiential Model

While experience-based education has become widely accepted as a method of instruction in colleges and universities across the nation (Kolb, 1984, p. 3), there are counter
points and complications that need be discussed. Because educational experiences are mostly constructed by a facilitator, they tend to include a more objective and structured view of what the experience is supposed to be (Moon, 2004). At times this has led some researchers and practitioners to assert that experiential learning is nothing more than having an experience through a series of activities as portrayed by Kolb’s experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). The issue, is that there can be an assumption that learning comes from the experience if the activities or techniques are ‘properly’ employed; learning then becomes a product purported as ‘knowledge’. This perspective has tended to come from training and development literature (Moon, 2001).

Because learners dictate to a great degree their learning experiences, it is critical to recognize the difficulty and slipperiness experience brings to the conceptual model of experiential learning. Understanding, assessing, and developing experiential learning is a challenging process as each learner will interpret the same event in different ways. Additionally, as learners, individuals internalize their understanding of the world in a manner which is consistent with their world view. There exists an ongoing potential for distortions of the experience. Because of noted challenges, it appeared critical to understand and validate the process of experiential learning via the perspective of the participant. Similar to the completed study, Torbert (1979) recognized the difficulty of assessing constructed nature of experiences and thus incorporated phenomenological and empirical methods in his study (Moon, 2004).

Despite extensive evidence regarding the constructed nature of experience, a naïve practitioners continue to assert that the experience reflects the true depiction and voice of the individual (Usher, 2000). Per Moon (2004), “it is important to understand that experience itself has no meaning until it is endowed with meaning by the individual who mainly draws on socially
constructed meanings.” Which that, it appeared a phenomenological approach to inquiry represented the ideal format through which to examine the experiential learning process.

**Gaps in the Literature**

While some recent research has been conducted specifically regarding student-athlete leadership development, those studies have focused on coach influence (Carthan, 2009), the role of athletic department leadership/organizations (Burton & Peachey, 2009), student-athlete leadership status on team (Baumgarten, 2013; Grandzol et al. 2010; Extejt & Smith, 2009), student-athlete desired faculty and coach leadership styles (2014, Klein), and role of implicit theories on leadership (Shaffer, 2014). As a result, there exists a lack of research surrounding how student-athletes might actually develop as leaders outside of sport. Limited pedagogical research existed regarding how leadership simulations might influence student-athlete identities and inform their development as leaders. A great deal of research surrounding the student-athlete continued to focus on the environmental influences, academic outcomes, and student-athlete academic and sport perceptions.

**Chapter Summary**

The review of the literature suggests that the leadership development experiences of NCAA Division I student-athletes are different from those of other student populations. As evidenced by the literature, there is a need to further investigate leadership development modalities related to the development of student-athlete leaders.

Chapter Two examined experiential learning models, self-efficacy, leadership efficacy, and leadership development of student-athletes. A discussion of the study’s theoretical framework was put forward to provide relevant literature regarding the influence of experiential
learning via simulations on student-athlete leadership development. A visual depiction of these theories is provided in Figure 1 with a discussion of each theory presented in Chapter Two. A number of theories provided evidence that student-athlete leadership efficacy can be achieved by exploring leadership simulations and models of leadership. Chapter Three will provide an in-depth discussion of the research design and will outline the research methodology and procedures for the collection of data.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The intent of this qualitative phenomenological study was to investigate the degree to which leadership simulations influence student-athletes’ beliefs about their potential for leadership. This study examined the lived experiences of student-athletes in an introductory models of leadership course at a land-grant, research I, NCAA Division I university. The study investigated to what extent, if at all, leadership simulations and teaching leadership models enhanced students’ leadership efficacy regarding their potential for leadership. The study utilized a phenomenological research method that explored the lived experiences of current NCAA Division I student-athletes who expressed an interest in developing as leaders. The research was conducted through in-person interviews, in-class observations, video-journaling, and telephone interviews as needed.

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the historical context regarding the philosophy and methods of phenomenology and summarize key aspects of phenomenological research methodology. The researcher will then provide a detailed framework of the methodology that was utilized for the study. The goal of the phenomenological study was to investigate how, if at all, teaching leadership models via leadership simulations enhance student-athletes’ leadership efficacy regarding their potential for leadership. The intent in conducting such a study was to gain a deeper understanding of how leadership simulations influence the leadership development of student-athletes in academia.

This study was designed to better understand how leadership simulations and models of leadership influenced the leadership development of 12 student-athletes who completed an
introductory leadership models course. The researcher worked to flesh out stratagems that future instructors and administrators could use to improve leadership development among the general and student-athlete populations. The phenomenological research method was the most appropriate method to employ, as it methodologically embraced and captured the lived experiences of the individuals from their perspectives (Lester, 1999). Phenomenology is a method of research that strives to minimize presuppositions as well as suspend all judgments about what is real (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher must dedicate himself/herself to the perspective described in the following:

Seeing the social world from the point of view of the actor, a theme which is rarely omitted from methodological writing within this tradition. The commitment to see through the eyes of one’s subjects requires close involvement. Finally, there is a simultaneous expression of preference for a contextual understanding so that behavior is to be understood in context of meaning systems which is employed by a particular group or society (Bryman, 1984, p.78).

**Qualitative Research Design**

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, two traditions of inquiry dominated the social sciences and education (Creswell, 2009). From the late 19th century through the middle of the 20th century, quantitative research, which grew out of the physical sciences (i.e., chemistry, physics, and geology), dominated research focusing on objectivity, statistical analysis and broad narratives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). However, during the 1920s and 1930s, qualitative research would gain a foothold via the “Chicago School” of thought and begin a tradition of inquiry that was adept at investigating social as well as equity issues (Denzin, 2008).
Qualitative inquiry is an overarching term addressing a spectrum of interpretive techniques which look to describe, decode, translate, and then come to terms with the meaning, not the occurrence, of specific naturally occurring phenomena in the social world (Van Maanen, 1997). Patton (2002) asserts, qualitative research is a field of inquiry that is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. The qualitative researcher is interested in making sense of a phenomenon in its natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Merriam, 2009). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) assert that qualitative research is positioned in a way that places the observer in the active world.

According to Burg and Lune (2012), “qualitative researchers seek to understand and interpret how humans arrange themselves in their settings, and how inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles, and so forth” (p. 8). Patton (1985) further asserts that:

Qualitative research is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting – what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what’s going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting – and in the analysis to be able to communicate that faithfully to others who are interested in that setting…the analysis strive for depth at of understanding (p. 1).

Qualitative inquiry should be utilized when we want to empower those we are trying to understand through their unique and personal narratives (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2012).
Researchers employ qualitative research with the intent to describe or address questions about unique localized manifestations, or contexts and viewpoints of a participant group toward events, beliefs, or practices (Gay & Airasian, 2004). Additionally, the researcher seeks to reduce the power dynamics that exist between research and participants as well as attempt to speak to the mechanisms or connections in causal theories (Creswell, 2007).

Qualitative researchers are engrossed in understanding the meaning people have fashioned, that is, how people organize and make sense of their world and their experiences (Merriam, 2009). To achieve that end, qualitative researchers pursue answers by investigating numerous social settings and the groups or people who inhabit those settings (Burg & Lune, 2012). Berg (2004) suggests that researchers are most interested in how humans organize themselves and their environments, and how individuals in these contexts make meaning of their realities via symbols, ceremonies, social institutions, structures, and roles. With that, Merriam (2009) points out that humans cultivate a worldview or outlook that is framed by their perceived environment, which includes the individuals themselves, their context as well as their social-historical context. If we are to understand the experiences of those we seek to investigate, it is critical that we try to make meaning of how those persons understand the circumstances and obstacles they face (Moustakas, 1994).

Qualitative studies are suitable when there is a paucity of research, while quantitative inquiry is more favorable when a wealth of literature and research exist (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Since there was a lack of literature on student-athletes’ experiences via experiential leadership simulations, a qualitative research method was chosen to effectively capture the lived experiences of the participants in the study.
Phenomenological Research Methods

Through the unearthing of social realisms, phenomenology is an interpretive research methodology which strives to offer specific meaning and references for the ways in which human beings live, act, and think (Schultz, 1967). This means phenomenology is less about ascertaining facts or singular truths, and more about understanding lived experiences (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2012). The aim of conducting a phenomenological study is to describe and interpret the experiences of participants in order to understand the “essence” of the experience as perceived by the participants (Creswell, 2014). The basis of phenomenology is that there are numerous ways of understanding the same experience, and that the meaning of the experience to each participant is what formulates reality (McMillan, 2004).

Phenomenology, which has pre-World War I ties to Germany, was first used by German philosopher Edmund H Husserl who was concerned with the discovery of meanings and essences of knowledge (Patton, 2002; Moustakas, 1994). Later, the phenomenological work of Alfred Schutz would prove to be influential in applying and establishing phenmenology in the field of social sciences (Patton, 2002, Zahavi 2001). Phenomenology evolved out of a concern with scientific research, which some felt did not consider the experiencing persons perspective and the connections between the human consciousness and objects that exist in the material world (Husserl as cited in Moustakas, 1994). To flesh out the essence of a phenomenon, the researcher must embrace the concept of phenomenological reduction. Reduction is a term for the thematization of the correlation between subjectivity and world (Stapleton, 1983; Zahavi, 2003). Merriam (2009) adds that phenomenological reduction is the process of continually returning to the essence of the experience to develop the inner structure or meaning in and of itself. We as
researchers work to isolate the phenomenon in order to comprehend its essence of the lived experience.

According to Husserl, the thrust of phenomenology is a comprehensive and unbiased study of a phenomenon as it manifests itself so that the researcher can arrive at the essential understanding of consciousness and experience (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2012). Husserl further defined phenomenology as a way to investigate how people express things and experiences through their senses; “Husserl’s most basic assumption being that we can only know what we experience by attending to perception and meanings that awaken our conscious awareness” (Patton, 2002, p.105). According to Moustakas (1994), each experience in transcendental-phenomenology is evaluated with respect to its own uniqueness. The phenomenon is seen and outlined in its sum, in a new and open way. A complete description is given of its essential constituents, variations of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colors, and shapes. Ultimately, through the phenomenological process, we derive a textural description of the meanings and essences of the phenomenon, the unchanging variables that compose the experience in consciousness from the vantage point of the participant (Creswell, 2007). Schmitt (1967) suggests that “the content of experience is dependent on myself as subject; experiences present to me and its claim to validity: I must certify this claim…I, as subject, (am)…not only the course of validity of experience, but also of its significance” (as cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 67). The previous point is important as it supports Husserl’s earlier position that whatever meaning we as human beings create has its foundations in human exchanges.

Creswell (2009) supports Mustaka’s (1994) approach, noting the systematic steps in the data analysis as well as guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions as ideal. Furthermore, Creswell (2009) states that a phenomenological study encompasses the following
steps: (1) the researcher identifies a research problem or phenomenon whose essence they want to understand; (2) the researcher recognizes and stipulates the expansive philosophical assumptions of phenomenology and works to bracket out, as much as possible, their own experiences and world views; (3) the researcher gathers data (i.e., narratives) from participants who have experienced the phenomenon by conducting open-ended semi structured interviews; (4) the researcher ascribes equal value to all data (i.e., horizontalization process) and then advances clusters of meaning form the aforementioned narrative statements; (5) the researcher utilizes the textural descriptions in recounting how the participants experienced the phenomenon (i.e., imaginative variation); and, (6) from the structural and textural descriptions, the researcher then writes an amalgamated description that illustrates the essence of the phenomenon (i.e., essential, invariant structure) repeating steps four and five until there is nothing left to unearth regarding the lived experiences of the participants studied (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

To effectively and appropriately apply the phenomenological method, explanations cannot be put forward before the phenomena has been understood from within (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). The phenomenological approach provides an excellent structure and process to carry out the analysis and synthesis of lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Phenomenologists are not interested in modern science’s efforts to categorize, simplify, and condense phenomena to theoretical laws; rather they are engrossed in lived experiences (Van Maanen, 1990). Researchers attempt to reduce pre-existing theoretical positions while at the same time describe as accurately as possible the emergent evidence related with the phenomenon (Van Maanen, 1997). To achieve that end, researchers need to go through a process of suspending or bracketing (i.e., epoche) any predetermined thoughts for delineating a phenomenon’s foundational elements and critical structure (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell, 2009).
Through bracketing, researchers set aside their experiences and prior beliefs in an effort to prevent the introduction of personal presuppositions (i.e., biases) into the study (Creswell, 2007).

In the end, phenomenology is based on a supposition that there is an essence to shared experience. These essences are the foundational meanings mutually understood through a phenomenon regularly experienced. The lived experiences of identified participants are bracketed, analyzed, and compared to recognize the essences of the phenomenon (Patton, 2002, p. 106). Thus, for the study, a phenomenological approach was best suited to examine the lived experiences of student-athletes as they negotiated the leadership simulations.

**The Research Question**

According to Wheeldon and Ahlberg (2012), the research question is the principal question, concern, or argument that will be examined in a study and serves as the main point for the remainder of the paper or report. As such, any central question needs to be broad and ask for an examination of the key phenomenon in a study (Creswell, 2014). While the central question provides the foundation for data collection and analysis, the handful of associated subquestions address more specific and supporting inquiry (Cooper & Schindler, 2006).

In phenomenological inquiry, research questions are explicitly open-ended so that participants can recall what is important to them in their own words (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher is less interested in the factual status of specific instances (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2012 p. 96), and more concerned with better understanding how the individual describes things and experiences them through their senses (Patton, 2002). The job of the researcher in phenomenology is to collect lived experiences from participants by developing and deploying strong, broad, open-ended questions that probe and foster rich responses.
This study sought to examine the leadership development of numerous student-athletes in two distinct enterprises: academia and intercollegiate athletics. The focus of the study was on student-athletes who had taken an experiential leadership course that incorporated a simulated or situational pedagogical approach (see Appendix C for a course syllabus). The following primary research question guided the study: To what extent, if at all, do leadership simulations and teaching about leadership models enhance students’ self-perceived efficacy regarding their potential for future leadership?

The phenomenological method of inquiry included four sub-questions:

1. In what ways do previous leadership experiences inside and outside of athletics impact student-athletes’ approach to academics and athletics at a land grant, research I, NCAA Division I university?
2. In what ways do leadership simulations influence student-athletes’ understanding of the construct of leadership?
3. In what ways do leadership simulations inform student-athletes’ perspective regarding their view of themselves as leaders?
4. What impact, if any, do leadership simulations have on student-athletes’ confidence regarding their leadership ability and skills?

**Participant Selection**

The study focused on 12 student-athletes enrolled in a sixteen-week leadership models course that incorporated experiential leadership simulations. Each participant met the following criteria:

- He/she was an “active” roster student-athlete participating in NCAA Division I intercollegiate sports.
- He/she had been at the university for a minimum of one term.

Table 2 shows demographic data for the student-athletes who participated in the study.

### Table 2: Demographic Data for Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Sport Program</th>
<th>Years in college</th>
<th>Academic Interest</th>
<th>Athletic Scholarship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Construction Mgt.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalia</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>International: Lithuanian</td>
<td>Rowing</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>International: Canadian</td>
<td>Rowing</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Pre-Med</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>International: Canadian</td>
<td>Rowing</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Kinesiology</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mateo</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>International: African</td>
<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patton</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Profiles of Participants

The following sections present brief profiles of the 12 student-athletes who participated in the study.
Abraham

Abraham is the third youngest of four boys who were born and raised in Central Washington. He credits his family and a number of significant events as playing an important role in his understanding of leadership. Abraham described his father as a hard working provider for the family who had a profound impact on his work ethic. When Abraham described his childhood experience, he recalled a firm, loving, and family-oriented environment where his servant-minded father took great care of his multiple sclerosis-paralyzed wife. Abraham stated:

My biggest mentor is my father; I mean, you just see a lot of people and kids getting divorced and going through that stuff. And you know with my mom being sick, I really looked up to my dad, because literally seven days a week he stays up with her until 2 A.M. in the morning because she likes to get herself ready for bed and she really only has the use of one arm. And so she wants to brush her teeth and take her make-up off and do everything. And rather than him jumping in and doing everything for her and putting her to bed and going to sleep; he stays up with her every night, seven days a week, gets up with her, gets her out of bed, spends the first two hours of his day getting her ready, and then he goes to work. And then you know, works 8-10 hours...and I look up to him a lot.

Abraham also recalled the large impact his older brothers had on him and noted how he tried hard to follow in their footsteps as standout athletes.

As an adolescent and young teen, Abraham experienced two significant events that had a lasting impact on how he approaches leadership and life in general. The first event occurred when Abraham was in the fourth grade; his father’s furniture business was lost to a fire from which the family was not able to financially recover. The second was a traumatic event where his
mother’s heart stopped in the hospital; and it was Abraham who took direct and forceful action to mobilize the nursing staff as well as comfort his younger brother of eight or nine. From both experiences, Abraham recognized that, “every minute counts and that life is a fragile thing” that needs to be appreciated to the fullest.

In high school, Abraham was a self-described vocal leader in sport who was captain for all three of the sports he participated in (i.e., football, basketball, track and field). Other forms of leadership opportunities were mostly informal, but Abraham was at times called upon by his peers to give character speeches, or testimonials of why they would be a good class president or another ASB official.

Abraham is a sophomore student-athlete on the track and field team who described himself as working to reflect his father’s authentic, dependable, family-first, and direct approach to sport, school, and life in general. For Abraham:

A leader is someone who goes out and they get the job done; there are plenty of people who can talk that talk, but you have to be able to do it…someone who gets in and gets it done. No matter what is happening or what is going to happen.

Brandon

Brandon was born and raised in Sacramento, California, and is the middle child of three boys. Both of Brandon’s parents were first generation immigrants from Nigeria, and he credits his mother and father for instilling a never-give-up, hardworking, and humble approach to leadership and life. Brandon recounted that, while growing up, sports became specialized at a very young age, with basketball becoming the sport of choice for him and his brothers. Brandon noted the large impact both his father and his older brother had on him. Brandon’s father’s impact stemmed from his immigration to the United States, becoming a U.S. citizen, and
ultimately making his dreams come true by becoming an attorney at law. Brandon’s older brother had a significant impact on him through mentoring and paving an athletic path for him to follow. Brandon stated:

My dad would always talk to us about how he came from Nigeria and didn’t have much growing up and had to support his family and stuff; but he always knew he would get to the U.S. and make his dreams happen by becoming an attorney and stuff. And then my big brother, because he always made the road easier for me. I would always go to his AAU (e.g., Amateur Athletic Union) teams practices and he would always pick me up to play with him. When we were in elementary school…this is crazy…I remember it was the first day that the elementary school had opened and we had moved to the new district. It was like a brand new school and it was the very first day. Fourth, fifth, and sixth graders had recess together; I’m not knowing anybody…and he’s just over there just kill’n it on the court with everybody…and I’m just on the sideline watching with my friend Victor. And then this one kid left and they needed one more…and they just picked me up because of my brother.

Growing up, Brandon was recruited to play for many different youth basketball teams at many different schools. This process of recruitment would start in middle school and would not end until he ultimately signed with his current collegiate program. The impact of those athletically and academically minded changes is that Brandon would become accustomed to the politics, pressures, and opportunities of sport.

During high school Brandon recalled leading by example, noting that one couldn’t ask someone to do something they were not willing to do themselves. Formal leadership
opportunities for Brandon resided mainly in sport with informal mentorship to family members being the only other exception. Given that Brandon played up (i.e., participated on teams that were grade levels above his own) for the majority of his life, team leadership opportunities would not come until his senior year at a prestigious “basketball” boarding school on the East Coast.

Brandon is currently a sophomore student-athlete on the basketball team working to be a humble, futuristic, dream-inspired, servant-minded leader who always keeps his family in mind. For Brandon, “leadership is a way to get a group of people to achieve a single goal.” And that is achieved through modeling strong work ethics as well as approaching challenges situationally and individually.

Constance

Constance was born and raised in Los Angeles, California and is the middle child of three. She credited her family as playing a major role in her athletic and educational pursuits. Her father was noted as a hardworking, self-made, former collegiate athlete who made a profound impact on Constance’s work ethic, athletic, and leadership development. As Constance recalled, “my dad… he's just like one mentor that I can always go to. Like I said before, he's been through everything I've been through school wise, and basketball.” When Constance described her childhood experience, she remembered a very family-centered, but athletically oriented house. Growing up, Constance specifically recalled her life being surrounded by basketball. It was through the sport of basketball that Constance’s father worked to instill confidence, perseverance, and belief in self; these experiences have had a large impact on her both inside and outside of sport.
In high school, Constance described herself as a self-proclaimed jokester who had tendencies to shy away from leadership roles. Constance acknowledged not wanting to be a part of the leadership role that included things such as; first in basketball drills, earning A’s in the classroom, and being vocal, and aggressive. Constance also noted an individualistic approach to leadership where each person should be accountable for themselves. The formal leadership opportunities that Constance undertook were solely athletic, and those did not materialize until her senior year. Informally, Constance was, and continues to be, a role model or mentor to her younger sister.

Constance is a freshman student-athlete on the women’s basketball team who described herself as striving to be an engaged, driven and consistent leader. For Constance, “a leader is the one who speaks up for everyone, gives everyone an opportunity to have input, and takes the blame if something goes wrong. I mean the leader should work the hardest.”

Dalia

Dalia was born in Lithuania and spent the majority of her youth in the city of Kaunas. She is the youngest sibling to two older brothers, and both her parents are successful entrepreneurs in the food-service and entertainment industry. Dalia described her mother as a hardworking and savvy business woman whose work ethic and confidence has had a significant influence on her understanding of leadership. Dalia said:

My mother for sure, usually in families…the man is the head in the family, but she is like…she is always like…she is so confident about herself; she is so confident in herself; she is so honest. I’m like that with people also…but a lot of people really don’t like that. And like she says things like that; and my dad, he is always like, he supports my mother, but if he doesn’t like something he would say something, but
then my mother would argue with dad and would always win; she does what she wants to.

Dalia is the first one in her family to travel abroad in pursuit of educational and athletic opportunities.

As a young girl of fourteen, Dalia was sought out, recruited, and offered admission to an exclusive sport academy which was part of the Lithuanian Olympic Center Development Program. This event was significant in her development as a leader in that she moved out of her home, received a stipend for her athletic abilities, and ultimately ended up taking care of herself completely. Dalia recalled the transition to the sport institute as a difficult time because she struggled with homesickness. Another major obstacle that Dalia had to endure for many years was being the only female athlete training in the rowing program; her coach and teammates were all males. Managing her own finances and training only with men undoubtedly shaped Dalia’s direct, candid, and honest approach to communication and leadership. During her years at the sport institute, Dalia described herself as an athlete immersed in education and sport; she trained alone a great deal of the time and thus did not have the opportunity to engage in other kinds of leadership opportunities. Sport and competition consumed her day, which ultimately led to her academic and athletic opportunities in the United States.

Dalia is currently a junior student-athlete on the women’s rowing team who described herself as working to be a more confident, emotionally sensitive and respectful leader who continues to be honest and positive, yet realistic. With that in mind, Dalia noted:

I just feel like I started to respect all the people more and more; and just like; like, now when I see a person or a teammate that is trying to get better; I just feel so much respect for all those people and I really want to help them.
Dalia asserted that a leader is, “A servant who maintains a high level of personal integrity as a responsibility to themselves above all others.”

Emily

Emily is the middle child of three who was born in Vancouver, British Columbia and raised in Victoria, British Columbia. Emily described her family as playing an important role in her understanding of leadership. Emily’s father, an accomplished physician, made an impact on her professional aspirations in addition to modeling servant leadership in her life. Emily also noted how her mother, a therapist, influenced her growing up by bringing the family together, facilitating “meaningful” conversation and modeling servant leadership as well. When Emily described her childhood experiences, she recalled a close-knit, loving, and family-oriented environment.

Growing up, Emily explored a variety of outdoor activities as a result of her parents’ desire to spend the majority of their family time enjoying the British Columbia wilderness. Emily had what most would consider a typical youth, dabbling in some individual sport activities as well as some team sports prior to high school.

In high school, Emily described herself as a “fully booked up” individual who had little time for traditional high school leadership opportunities due to her competitive training for the national rowing team. While she acknowledged not having much time for extracurricular activities at school, she did note two impactful leadership experiences. The first was a service leadership opportunity where Emily travelled to Mexico and helped construct houses for those in need; the second was a benefit concert she organized for a therapeutic farming community back in Victoria, British Columbia. Both events were fondly remembered and noted as being special and impactful.
Emily is a sophomore student-athlete on the women’s rowing program who noted:

I tend to lead from behind for sure; I tend to get uncomfortable when I am the focal point. I mean I like to be a lot more behind the scenes. You know, starting and organizing the initiative. I like to hand the talking off to somebody else usually. I can do one-on-one, but groups are just a little bit beyond me at times.

According to Emily, when she is the focal point of a group, consensus, collaboration, and information are critical variables that facilitate and/or impede her comfort in leadership situations.

Helen

Helen is the middle child of three, born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Growing up, Helen described her family as providing lots of support, as well as having the independence and freedom to explore and do many things. Helen’s mother, who swam competitively, encouraged her children not to commit to just one sport, but rather branch out and try different things recreationally. Helen explored a variety of sports (e.g., basketball, field hockey, track and field, cross country, etc.) and enjoyed them at the recreational level. As Helen grew older, her sister, a former NCAA Division I field hockey player, played an important role, modeling a path to the United States as a student-athlete. Her sister’s experiences were influential as Helen considered her post high school educational and sport opportunities. Helen stated, “my sister had an impact on me, because I was just watching her doing what she was doing. And I think a huge part of that was her coming to the states.” Both Helen’s parents, who are in the health care industry, were also impactful and modeled what servant leadership looked like on a day-to-day basis.
In high school, Helen described her leadership opportunities as typically, “sport related.” However, Helen also recalled how a couple of servant-minded leadership courses, an exchange trip to Spain, and taking care of her younger brother were additional leadership opportunities outside of sport.

Helen is a junior student-athlete on the women’s rowing program who described a leader as, “being someone that others can look up to and follow with confidence.” Additionally, Helen described a leader as someone who can make his/her presence known while not micro-managing or being authoritative in practice, but rather being independent minded and a consensus seeking individual. Leadership in many ways according to Helen, is a relational and situational undertaking where freedom, emotions and encouragement play a significant role.

James

James is the oldest of two children born and raised in San Diego, California; when James entered first grade, his family moved to Orange County. His father coached high school football and his mother was a regional operations manager for a bank. James credits his mother and father as playing a major role in his athletic and educational pursuits. His father was described as a driven, self-made, former NCAA Division I collegiate athlete who had an impact on James’ work ethic, and athletic and leadership development.

When James described his childhood experience, he recalled a very family-centered but athletically-minded home. James remembered his life being immersed in football while growing up. According to James, “my dad had the biggest impact because he showed me the way and kept me away from the things he did as a kid where his parents weren’t that involved; like he had to do everything on his own.” Ultimately, it was through football where James’ father worked to
instill persistence, confidence, and drive in James. Those lessons and experiences were impactful on James both in and out of sport.

In high school, James was captain of the two sports he reported participating in (i.e., football and track and field). James described himself as a driven and faith-based leader, in and out of sport, who tried to lead by example. Other leadership opportunities outside of sport were mostly informal during which James sought to guide and help his peers via modeling good decision making.

James is a sophomore student-athlete on the men’s football team who described a leader, as someone who is authentic, open, vocal, persistent, and whose actions speak volumes. For James, “a leader is someone who leaves you with some insight and wisdom regardless of how short or long they have been in your life.” Furthermore, “a leader can be someone who shows you exactly what not to do,” they can model and expose all the pitfalls so that someone can avoid their mistakes. James added, “A leader can be anyone in life; it doesn’t matter if they are a drug dealer or in prison…anyone can offer insight and wisdom to those who wish to recognize it.” For James, a leader shows a person a blueprint how to succeed through their own successes and/or failures.

**Mateo**

Mateo is the oldest of three boys who were born and raised in Hawaii. He described his family and a number of critical events as playing a vital role in his understanding of leadership. During his early years, Mateo’s biological father was mostly absent, which left his mother to work long hours and multiple jobs to provide for both herself and Mateo. However, that all changed when Mateo’s mother remarried, and his step-father came to be the “dad” of the house. Mateo recalled how his dad brought a straight-forward brand of talk and support that provided
him with the structure, order, and support he needed. Mateo also described his dad as having a huge impact on him; so large that Mateo noted, “there is literally nothing I can do to repay him.” Both of Mateo’s parents were described as hardworking providers for the family who made a profound impact on Mateo’s work ethic. Mateo also remembered the large impact his two younger half-brothers had on him; he recalled wanting to be a good role model and mentor to them in a positive and loving way.

As a young teen, Mateo described three significant events that had a profound impact on how he approaches leadership and life in general. The first event occurred when Mateo was a sophomore in high school where he and several of his friends were accused of sexual harassment. This incident was never fully investigated, but it did result in Mateo being put on probation for nine weeks. While the initial accusation and outcome created a shock wave in Mateo’s life, the second incident shook him to the core. During Mateo’s Junior year, he would again be accused of sexual harassment. Despite all of Mateo’s mother’s and step-father’s efforts, Mateo was dismissed from his high school. These two events greatly impeded Mateo’s outgoing and gregarious nature; Mateo talked about how those events caused him essentially to, “shut down and not trust anybody.” The third impactful memory Mateo shared, was the taking of his stepfather’s last name. According to Mateo, this was a profound event, as it solidified his connection with his dad as well as affirmed who he was. Through both the positive and negative experiences, Mateo noted the importance of forgiveness; with forgiveness comes letting go, which in turn frees a person from the memory or hardship that was holding them down. Finally, Mateo noted that nothing is more important than family.

In high school, Mateo was a self-described quiet leader who wasn’t the football team captain until his senior year. Other kinds of leadership opportunities were mostly informal, but
Mateo did recall organizing a youth football clinic for local kids as part of his senior project. Beyond that, Mateo described himself as trying to be a positive role model for both his younger brothers.

Mateo is a freshman student-athlete on the football team who described himself as working to do more than lead by example. He noted responsibility, belief, Aloha spirit (i.e., a welcoming and positive ”vibe”), inclusion and competition as key factors that influence his approach to sport, school and life. For Mateo, a leader is somebody who brings energy or tenacity in an effort to help achieve a specific goal or task; leadership then requires taking initiative, being consistent, and not being afraid when the odds are against you.

Milton

Milton is the third youngest of four who were born and raised in Sierra Leone, West Africa. In 2006, he moved to Virginia with his father, but quickly thereafter moved to western Washington to live with his mother and younger brother. Milton’s father was a community health education administrator who eventually returned to Sierra Leone. Milton’s mother was as a health care professional and remained in western Washington with Milton and his younger brother.

While growing up, a servant-minded, community-based, or democratic approach to leadership was modeled to Milton by both his parents. Milton recalled, “my parents were the kind of people in our community that, like, everybody just kind of looked up to. They really didn't do anything out of the ordinary, but people had a lot of respect for them because they're just nice people.” Milton noted how the previous experiences were important because they inspired him to help others just as his parents did. When Milton described his family or childhood experience, he recalled his close relationship with his mother and younger brother.
Growing up, Milton described two major experiences that significantly impacted him; the first was his coming to America and moving to the West Coast, the second was his refusal to accept placement into English Language Learning (ELL) courses when he first arrived. Both experiences influenced Milton’s educational perspective, general assertiveness, and his overall belief in himself. Throughout his adolescent and early teen years, Milton would hold a number of school leadership positions ranging from, “Class Prefect” in grade school, to a member of ASB (Associated Student Body), to team captain for the various athletic teams he participated on. Those leadership experiences would continue on throughout Milton’s high school years.

In high school, he participated in a variety of sports such as football, basketball, and track and field. Milton recalled settling on track and field as his sport of choice because it provided the best opportunity for him in the future. Milton described himself as a “group-first,” respectful, and understanding leader.

Milton is a sophomore student-athlete on the track and field team who described himself as working to reflect a democratic and inclusive approach to athletics, academics, and life.

According to Milton, “leadership is pretty much whatever the group needs the most and whoever is able to give that to the group.” Milton asserted that leadership is built upon inclusion, forgiveness, empathy, and prioritizing the needs of the group.

Patrick

Patrick was born in Calcutta, India, and was adopted when he was approximately one year old. While he had no recollection of his biological mother, he clearly recalled how he was raised in New York and later grew up in the Greater Seattle area. Patrick is the older brother to his partially deaf, autistic sister. Specifically, Patrick credits his father and a number of significant events as playing an important role in his understanding of leadership. He described
his father as a hardworking entrepreneur for the family who had a profound impact on his understanding of persistence, being unique, and learning-by-doing. Patrick recalled a learning-by-doing moment growing up:

It’s about learning for him (dad). And we would do dumb things…and he would be happy for what we did. Like me and my friend were making concrete, but it wasn’t working, so we put in gasoline; and then he could smell it, cause he was roofing with a friend. And his friend looks over and says, “Hey, are they playing with the gas tank?” “Yep, yes they are, damn it; come over and wash your hands.” He would just tell us what we did wrong; of course it was funny, because we were trying to make something or create something.

Growing up, Patrick described his childhood experience as nontraditional as his father stayed home and raised both him and his sister while his mother, a prominent lawyer, worked diligently providing for the family. During his adolescent and early teen years, Patrick recalled two significant events that had an impact on him; the first one involved him speaking in public about a leadership project, while the second surrounded an incident where he stood up for and defended his sister. The first event involved Patrick’s selection as the spokesman to talk about a leadership project to the entire high school. The second experience was much different and involved Patrick literally kicking another young boy off the playground set because the young boy was teasing and pushing his younger sister. Both events reflect the source of his public speaking confidence as well as the importance of family to him.

Before and during high school, Patrick played a variety of sports such as baseball, soccer, lacrosse, and hockey. In each sport, Patrick took a leadership role as team captain; and had a keen ability to take in, follow, and communicate the coach’s instructions. Patrick’s participation
in track and field, which is his current sport, was the only sport where there was little involvement from his father. Other forms of leadership opportunities for Patrick came from leadership courses that he took from middle school through high school.

Patrick is currently a sophomore student-athlete on the men’s track and field team and describes himself as continuing to develop his own unique, creative, and playful leadership style; a style that is grounded in direct communication, honest support, and overall competency.

For Patrick, a leader is a servant who is, “someone you can come to, someone you can trust,” someone who helps others, and someone who stands up for those who need it the most. “A leader doesn’t just do something because someone told them to, they do it because they enjoy it and they feel doing it that particular way is going to make them successful.”

**Patton**

Patton is the youngest of three children who were born and raised in California. Growing up in a military family, Patton recalled the importance of consistently demonstrating respect through good manners. Respect was the backbone of Patton’s firm, but nurturing and supportive, upbringing. Patton’s family, particularly his father and mother, played a critical role in his development, consistently demonstrating a candid and direct approach to leadership. During his adolescent and young teen years, Patton remembered always wanting to be like his father, a military pilot and officer. Specifically, Patton recalled his father providing direction and support regarding leadership, “there is a way you go about doing things, and this is how you do it.” Patton’s mother also instilled a never quit work ethic that basically meant “you always finish what you start.” These experiences provided the foundation for how he would model his behaviors as a teenager.
In high school, Patton was captain of the two sports he participated in (i.e., baseball and basketball). Patton described himself as a “confident and vocal” leader, in and out of sport, who tried to lead by example. While Patton acknowledged not having a great deal of time for extracurricular activities at school, he did recall two impactful leadership experiences. The first was a self-initiated servant outreach leadership opportunity where Patton worked with the special education program at school; the second was a wounded veteran’s dove hunting project. Both events reflected Patton’s commitment to helping others through servant leadership.

Patton is a freshman student-athlete on the baseball team who describes himself as striving to become a confident and competitive, yet respectful, leader in athletics, academics, and life in general. According to Patton, “A leader is someone you can rally behind,” or “someone who is going to be down. When you’re down and he is down; he is someone who is going to rise up and take it to the top.” To Patton, leadership is grounded in authenticity, trust, and an unwavering belief in yourself.

Roy

Roy is the youngest of three boys who were born and raised in Denver, Colorado. Growing up, Roy recalled a stable, loving, and close-knit family where he and his brothers were raised to be servant minded individuals. Roy described his family as having a “large impact” on his core values was well as an understanding of leadership. While Roy’s father and mother were both hard working professionals who had a profound impact on him, it was Roy’s next oldest brother who had the greatest impact on him. Roy remembered “looking up to him” and trying to emulate his work ethic and competitive nature. Like many younger siblings, Roy noted his desire to, “follow in the footsteps” of his older brother.
In high school, Roy was a self-described, confident leader in and out of sport who others came to for advice and opinions. Socially, peers came to Roy to get his thoughts and inquire how they might “go about things.” According to Roy, this leadership role was partially due to the way he was raised, but it also had to do with his competitive nature and his desire to be in charge. Other leadership opportunities were mostly informal (e.g., positive role modeling and sport mentorship); in addition, Roy described his participation in a freshman transition program which helped incoming freshman adjust to life in high school.

After high school, Roy planned to attend the naval academy, but circumstances prevented that academic path. Roy described his academic and career goals as major priorities in his life, but now Roy is working to balance his physical therapist aspirations with his athletic goals.

Roy is a freshman student-athlete on the baseball team who described himself as working to reflect a family-first, competitive and persistent approach to sport, school, and life in general. For Roy, leadership is “just being able; being approachable for people to come to; stick to your morals; your core values is a big part of leadership. Sticking to who you are even when the outcome or times gets tough. Because it’s easy to do when it’s something you’re against, it’s harder to do the right thing in tough times. And that’s a big role in leadership; you don’t get swayed by the crowd. Stick to who you are.” For Roy, leadership should be situationally approached and servant-minded.

**Informed Consent**

Berg and Lune (2012) state that, “informed consent means the knowing consent of individuals to participate as an exercise of their choice, free from any element of fraud, deceit, duress, or similar unfair inducement or manipulation” (p. 90). Creswell (2014, p. 96) and
Sarantakos, (2005) recommend having participants sign informed consent forms agreeing to the provisions of a study before they provide data; those forms should include the following:

- Identification of the researcher
- Identification of the sponsoring institution
- Identification of the purpose of the study
- Identification of the benefits of participating
- Identification of the level and type of participant involvement
- Notation of risks to the participant
- Guarantee of confidentiality to the participant
- Assurance that the participant can withdraw at any time
- Provision of names of person to contact if questions arise

The informed consent form for this study was crafted with the aforementioned recommendations in mind. Additionally, approval of the study was sought and secured from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The researcher meticulously followed IRB requirements regarding approval for interview protocol questions (see Appendix A), consent form, and invitation to participate in the research study (see Appendix B).

**Confidentiality**

The Ethical Research Act of 1974, which commissioned the Belmont Report, mandated that researchers treat their human subjects with the ”respect of persons, beneficence, and justice.” Furthermore, the 1974 Buckley Amendment makes certain that legal safeguards be in place to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity when possible (Suter, 2012, p. 97). Berg and Lune (2012) add that
Confidentiality can be defined as an active attempt to remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subjects’ identities. It is the role of the investigator to assure subjects that anything shared between them will be kept in strict confidence; this is normally realized via the establishment of a pseudonym or case number when reporting data (p. 93).

In practice, confidentiality means that the researcher knows who completed each interview and/or survey, but promises not to make known that information. The benefits of unrecognizability and/or confidentiality are that an increase of truthfulness of responses can ideally be anticipated (Gay and Airasian, 2000). In the study, each participant was given an informed consent form to sign before they engaged in the research. The form outlined the participants’ rights and safeguards prior to, during, and after the data gathering process (Creswell, 2014; Berg & Lune, 2012). As part of the consent and transparency process, participants were also informed that they would be recorded during their interviews. Finally, to ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were developed and maintained throughout the entire study.

Simulations

For purposes of the study, the course, “Introduction to Models of Leadership Seminar” served as the “active” environment through which the leadership simulations were experienced by the participants (see Appendix D). Once a week, for 12 weeks, student-athletes participated in experientially based, problem solving leadership simulations. To understand how the simulations were delivered, see Appendix E. “King’s Ring” and “TP Shuffle” are examples of actual simulations in the course.

Prior to each simulation, a team leader was designated for the day; that student-athlete was then responsible for the final decisions his/her group made. To ensure that a positive
environment was created, an emphasis was put on the process of decision making rather than completion of the task. This allowed the leader, who was typically apprehensive, to relax a bit and make strides to practice different aspects of leadership (e.g., group communication, input strategies, strategic planning, group collaboration, etc.).

Prior to the simulation, limited information was provided, thus requiring the leader and the group to ask for clarification of rules and expectations. The designated leader for the day was required to circle-up the group, construct and solidify a plan with the group, inform the facilitators what the plan was, and then engage in the simulation. If the group failed to achieve its goal, it was required to physically step out of the simulation space, reevaluate what went wrong, discuss alternate options, craft an alternate plan, agree upon the plan, inform the instructor, and then proceed again.

Once the objective or goal had been achieved, the group circled-up again for a debrief with the instructors as well as facilitators. Upon completion of the group debrief, the leader for the day debriefed again with one of his peer observers (whose sole job was to evaluate the leader for the day) and the instructor. This approach allowed for multiple perspectives and concrete feedback for the leader that day. At the end of the class period, each student reflected upon the simulation in his/her journal, and efforts were made in the following class to connect the lived experiences to the designated models of leadership.

**Interview Questions**

According to Patton (2002), the interview question is a stimulus aimed at drawing out a response from the individual being interviewed. How the question is framed and asked directly impacts how the participant will respond. It stands to reason, then, that asking the right questions artfully is critical to eliciting an accurate account of the interviewees’ lived experience (Phillips-
Pula & Pickler, 2011). In designing research questions, attention must be given to the questions themselves to ensure that the researcher’s positionality or intentions do not guide the interviewee in a particular direction (Creswell, 2007).

Interview questions were framed to address how experiential leadership simulations and models of leadership curriculum influenced the participants’ leadership efficacy development (see Appendix A). Initial questions and inquiry explored the participants’ general backgrounds and experiences with sport and leadership. Later questions were asked regarding the simulations, the reflection process, and finally confidence in self as an emergent leader. Upon completion of the interview questions, a questionnaire protocol was constructed and adhered to.

Data Collection

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) note, “the qualitative researcher has numerous techniques for collecting empirical materials, ranging from the interview to direct observation; to the analysis of artifacts, documents, and cultural records; to the use of visual materials or personal experience” (p. 14). In this study, the researcher collected data from 12 participants who provided invaluable data regarding their perspectives on leadership. Again, the researcher asked to what extent, if at all, do leadership simulations and teaching about leadership models enhance students’ perceived self-efficacy regarding their potential for future leadership? In this phenomenological study, the researcher conducted interviews with each participant to develop themes and did not stop until any further data or new perspectives could be fleshed out. It was important through the data collection process that the researcher abstained from making assumptions and focused freshly and objectively so as to capture the rich descriptions of the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994).

Through semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviewing, the researcher sought to capture the essence of the student-athlete experience and experiential leadership simulations as
they influenced leadership efficacy. In order to be in line with the phenomenological methodology, interviews incorporated an informal, interactive process and utilized open-ended comments and questions. While some questions were developed prior to the interview, others were changed, or not used at all depending on the interaction with the participant (Creswell, 2014). To achieve a climate of trust, comfort, and honesty, the researcher actively showed an attitude that signaled to the participants that their vantage point and lived experiences were extremely valuable and helpful (Patton, 2002).

While the primary method of collecting data was the interview, class and lab observations, and video journaling were incorporated as well. By collecting data through providing participants interview, the investigator afforded each participant the platform to reconstruct their lived experience and articulate what was important and relevant to them. To aid in the data collection process, the researcher implemented memoing to capture critical expressions and gestures demonstrated by the participants (Creswell, 2007).

To best capture the participants experience in both the classroom as well as lab, field notes were utilized as secondary data. Patton (2002) asserts that, “field notes contain the description of what has been observed; they should contain everything that the observer believes to be worth noting” (p. 302). With that, notes were written up immediately following each interview. By reviewing and reflecting on the interview experience quickly, errors by the researcher are less likely to occur (Creswell, 2014; Moustakas, 1994).

According to Merriam (2009), Creswell (2007), and Patton (2002), all semi-structured and unstructured interviews should be recorded. To comprehensively capture the participants’ voice as well as follow best practices, the researcher audio-recorded in all the interviews. The verbatim transcripts which came from the audio-recordings, provided the raw data which was
analyzed to ascertain subtle data distinctions and context (Merriam, 2009). To ensure consistency and precision, each interview session was captured on a digital recorder, saved to a USB flash drive, and labeled for transcription.

**Epoche/Bracketing**

In phenomenological research, the investigator should engage in the epoche or bracketing process as a way of stepping away from one’s bias (Bernard and Ryan, 2010). The process of bracketing (epoche) requires a position of openness and honesty to the phenomenon in its intrinsic meaning (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). Zahavi (2003) further suggests that researchers maintain an attitude, which is needed to be able to investigate the phenomenon, but bracket its validity. The focus of the bracketing process then is to take an attitude of openness to whatever meanings manifest (Dahlberg, Drew, and Nystrom, 2001).

The researcher returns to the self to discover the nature and meaning of things as they appear (Moustakas, 1994). Upon completing the bracketing process, the researcher listened to all the interviews many times as well as re-read the transcripts to gain a stronger sense of the participants’ lived experiences (Van Maanen, 1990).

**Researcher’s Epoche**

The aforementioned bracketing process is vital in that it requires the researcher to lock in on the issue, person, or situation and set aside his/her suppositions in order to return and see things fresh and new (Moustakas, 1994). Pragmatically, the process provides a socio-historical reference point which can help the researcher in understanding both the phenomenon and well as the lived experiences of the participants. To the researcher, this process acted as a contextual locator which aided in the epoche process.
Through the epoche process, the researcher in this study aimed to flesh out any presuppositions based on previous life experiences with student-athletes. The researcher worked to bracket his personal assumptions so that he could accurately capture the phenomenon from the interviewees’ perspective. While this approach was difficult, every effort was be made to minimize questions that were grounded in personal preconceptions.

To address the researcher’s positionality, the researcher began the epoche process by reflecting and writing down any biases and presuppositions he held about student-athletes, leadership simulations, leadership efficacy, and experiential pedagogical models. The information and awareness that came out of the epoche process was further reflected on as well as committed to memory so that those positions could be addressed, managed, and minimized. Like many researchers before, great effort was made by the researcher to consider his own positionality and assumptions. This was done so that he could locate himself and his experiences in the phenomenon before he attempted to understand the lived experience of the participants. Only after the assumptions had been fleshed out, could the interview and analysis process begin with new eyes to the meanings that ultimately emerged.

This study conducted in-depth interviews from December 2014 through March 2015. The study participants were initially offered an invitation to participate in the study in the Introduction to Models of Leadership seminar in the fall of 2014. For those who agreed to be a part of the study, a follow-up email and phone call was made to schedule their initial in-depth interview. Participants signed the Informed Consent form when they read and reviewed the Invitation to Participate Letter. The researcher reviewed the consent form and obtained the required signatures from all participants prior to the interview process. Given the nature and
context of the study, participant signatures were gathered before class during the initial two weeks of the semester.

**In-person and Telephone Interviews, Observations, and Audio Journaling**

In qualitative research,

Unstandardized interviews are loosely structured and are the exact opposite of the structured interview; while certain topics may be necessary and planned, the actual flow of the conversation will vary considerably according to the responses of each informant. The researcher prepares a loose set of topics or issues that one plans on discussing, possibly with a preferred order in which to address them; a set of guidelines if you will. The assumption with that approach is that is that the researcher does not know in advance what all the necessary questions are (Berg and Lune, 2012, p. 111).

The phenomenological researcher must be clear in describing the purpose of the study prior to all interviews and express a genuine appreciation of the participants’ willingness to share. In the study, gratitude was genuinely communicated to each participant as well as the assurance that all audio-recorded interviews would be maintained in a secure location. Assuring protection of the participants’ voice was critical because, “the raw data of the interviews are the actual quotations spoken by the interviewee. Nothing can substitute for the data: that actual thing said by real people is the actual prize sought by the qualitative researcher” (Patton, 2002, p. 380). The collected data was, in fact, the true essence of the interviewees’ intentions (Given, 2008).

The researcher conducted in-person interviews in numerous conference rooms throughout the athletic facility; none of the participants accepted invitations to move the interviews to alternate locations outside the athletic department, noting scheduling challenges and general
comfort with the topic as their reasons. When the participants arrived for their scheduled interview, the researcher reviewed the consent form again to ensure full disclosure and transparency. After addressing any questions surrounding the consent form, the researcher then asked if there were any other concerns, questions, or anxieties from the interviewees. At that juncture, several of the participants asked again for clarification regarding the purpose of the study as well as confidentiality protocols. Once the above-mentioned questions were satisfied, the interviews commenced.

The interview questions were asked in a sequential order and interviewees were given ample time to answer and consider their responses. Each interview lasted between 35-73 minutes. While the researcher conducted all primary interviews in one session with each participant, a second session was arranged with each student-athlete to ensure that all the participants were comfortable with the interview transcripts as well as their profiles. As part of the qualitative analysis, a summative account of the total number of words, total transcribed pages, and interview lengths has been included; this diagnostic process is called participant interview data (see Table 3) which includes the physically present and countable data (Berg, 1995; Davis, 2012).

Table 3: Data on Participant Interview:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Interview Duration</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Total Transcription Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>39 minutes</td>
<td>4,649</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>38 minutes</td>
<td>3,951</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constance</td>
<td>39 minutes</td>
<td>4,437</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalia</td>
<td>49 minutes</td>
<td>5.077</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
<td>4,783</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>47 minutes</td>
<td>3,663</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>72 minutes</td>
<td>9,612</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mateo</td>
<td>73 minutes</td>
<td>8,847</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
<td>4,379</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>61 minutes</td>
<td>8,260</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patton</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
<td>4,768</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy</td>
<td>36 minutes</td>
<td>3,294</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After each interview was completed, the researcher transcribed the interviews from the digital recorder into a Microsoft Office Word document. The researcher employed much effort to ensure that the transcripts accurately represented the exact words of the participants.

**Trustworthiness/Reliability**

All quality research is an outcome of creating valid and reliable knowledge; as such, being able to trust research results is especially vital to professionals in applied fields as the practitioners insert themselves into others’ lives (Merriam, 2009). According to McMillan (2004), “reliability is the extent to which what is recorded as data is what actually occurred in the setting that was studied” (p. 278). In other words, reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach to measurement is consistent across different researchers and even different projects (Wheeldon and Ahlberg, 2012, p. 5).
While reliability in quantitative research is grounded in replication and results, the notion of a verifiable and observable truth is problematic to qualitative inquiry (Lather, 2006). Understanding that data provided by individuals may not be truthful, and if truthful, said data may be misinterpreted by the researcher (Davis, 2012). The focal point of this study was on data that captured the student-athletes’ perspectives on simulations and leadership development. To ensure reliability, the researcher took copious field notes throughout the data collection process in an effort to best capture the voices observed during interviews.

**Validation Strategies**

Creswell (2014) suggests validation in qualitative research to mean that the researcher checks for accuracy of results by implementing specific procedures. Reliability in qualitative research is then connected to the researcher’s reflexivity, the identification and acceptance of pertinent limitations, and a thoughtfulness of how and why corresponding data support or contradict the findings (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2012). Validation then becomes not an outcome but rather a goal; it is never something that can be proven or assumed, as it is assessed in relationship to the situation and context of the study (Maxwell, 2005). To unearth and present data that are deemed credible, dependable, and trustworthy, is to achieve validation (Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2014).

Creswell (2014) further suggests that qualitative researchers implement the following eight strategies to best capture the accuracy of their inquiry. These validation strategies include: 1) triangulation of varying data sources; 2) use of member checking; 3) use of rich, thick description to convey findings; 4) clarification of bias the researcher brings to the study; 5) presentation of negative or discrepant information that runs counter to the changes; 6) spending a
prolonged amount of time in the field; 7) use of peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of the 
account; 8) use of an external auditor to review the entire project (p. 201-202).

To ensure validity, the researcher incorporated most of the abovementioned eight 
strategies (i.e., triangulation, member checking, use of rich description, clarification of bias, 
discrepant and counter theme data, prolonged time in the field, peer debriefing, and external 
auditor). Furthermore, the transcripts were revisited many times as a way of validating the 
richness of the conversation, which according to Mustakas (1994), is where data validity resides.

**Member Checking**

In an effort to execute best practices, facilitate trustworthiness, validity and reliability, 
member checking was incorporated and utilized throughout the study. Member checking 
according to McMillan (2004), “is when the researcher gives his or her notes to the participant so 
that the participant can verify that the recording was accurate” (p. 278). Through the member 
checking process, participants ideally will be able to recognize their positions as well as offer 
some critical feedback which allows for richer and deeper understanding (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 
2002). Ultimately, member checking played an important role in the analysis process as it 
empowered those involved to confirm the merit in the data and to evaluate the accuracy and 
trustworthiness of their report.

To ensure validation of the participants’ responses in the study, once the transcripts were 
completed, every student-athlete received a copy of the transcript and participant profile via 
email by the researcher. By providing all the participants with transcripts and profiles, it 
facilitated the validation of the lived experiences and shared voices. Once the participants 
obtained their verbatim transcripts and profiles, they were given two to three weeks to review 
their statements and make any changes or offer any additional statements. Once the participants
had reviewed and verified the verbatim transcripts and profiles, the researcher specifically confirmed during the follow-up interviews that what was written was in fact an accurate representation of participants’ views. With that, completion of the follow-up meetings signaled the end of the data checking process.

Data Analysis

Upon completion of the data collection phase of the study, the researcher began to analyze and mine the data. Patton (2002) asserts there are four characteristics associated with qualitative analysis strategies that should be considered. Those characteristics include: 1.) The importance of treating each case as unique, 2.) relying on inductive approaches to discover patterns and changes, 3.) the need to remain context sensitive, and 4.) focusing on the voice, perspective, and role of the researcher.

The researcher utilized the Moustakas (1994) modified Van Kamm method of analysis of phenomenological data. That particular approach required a period of reflection to occur at the onset of the phenomenological analysis in order to construct a preliminary or initial phenomenological description (Moustakas, 1994). Through the analysis phase, the researcher revisited the interviewees’ digitally recorded transcriptions numerous times in an effort to better understand and capture the meanings of the participants’ lived experiences. Through the implementation of the Moustakas (1994) modified Van Kamm methodology, the researcher analyzed, clustered, and described the information that ultimately aided in capturing the essence of the participants’ lived experiences. The seven-step, Moustakas (1994) modified Van Kaam method is outlined below.
Step 1 – Horizontalization

The initial phase in the data analysis progression is horizontalization which is defined as “the process of laying out all the data for examination and treating the data as having equal weight; that is, all pieces of data have equal value at the initial data analysis stage” (Merriam, 2009. P. 26). Later, data are organized into clusters or changes (Moustakas, 1994). The horizontalization progression is pivotal to the researcher as he/she attempts to build on the data from the primary and secondary research questions; data analyzers mine the data (i.e., interview transcriptions) and note important accounts, sentences, or quotes that offer insight to how the individuals experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, Creswell, 2007).

Throughout the horizontalization process, it was critical to remain open to all accounts of the participants’ experience as well as give identical worth to all statements (Wheeldon and Ahlberg, 2012). By remaining receptive through the analysis process, the researcher developed non-repetitive constituents of experiences, which were then linked thematically, and ultimately yielded a full description (Merriam, 2009). In the study, the researcher deliberately viewed all data and information from a host of perspectives while applying equal value to each account to find the best possible full description of the phenomenon.

Step 2 – Phenomenological Reduction and Elimination

The second phase of the data analysis progression involved the reduction and elimination of unrelated statements. This was challenging for the researcher, as there was often an inclination to resist the impulse to delete from, add to, change, or distort anything originally offered by participants (Wheeldon and Ahlberg, 2012). Moustakas (1994) asserts that overlapping, repetitive, and vague expressions must be removed or boiled down to more exacting terms as part of the reduction process. The researcher at this phase of analysis starts the arduous task of
reviewing every word, phrase, sentence, and paragraph as well as accounting for important non-verbal communication (Hycner, 1985).

Moustaka’s (1994) summarizes the reduction process in the following.

In phenomenological reduction, the task is that of describing in textual language just what one sees, not only in terms of the external object but also the internal act of consciousness, the experience as such, the rhythm and relationship between the phenomenon and self. This requires the researcher to look and describe; look again and describe; look again and describe; always with a reference to textual qualities—rough and smooth; small and large; quiet and noisy; colorful and bland; hot and cold; stationary and moving; high and low; squeezed in and expansive; fearful and courageous; angry and calm—descriptions that present varying intensities; ranges of shapes, sizes, and special qualities; time references, and colors all within and experiential context (p. 90).

For this study, the researcher relied on both the literal statements as well as the number of times the statements surfaced. Once the researcher was able to tease out and categorize the general meanings, those statements that lacked significance were eliminated, and those that carried weight were further evaluated.

**Step 3 – Clustering of units of meaning to form changes**

Upon completion of reduction phase, the researcher organized the data into naturally occurring meaningful clusters and changes. Creswell (2007) and Merriam (2009) state that clusters of meanings are weighty statements that present the essence of the phenomenon which in turn allows the researcher to write a description of what the participants experienced (i.e., textural description). Through the clustering and theme formation process, the researcher
worked to identify the units of relevant meaning critical to the essence of the experience. After careful review and analysis of the transcripts, the researcher clustered participants’ accounts into core changes. Per Moustakas (1994), only after the units of general meaning have been determined will the researcher be ready to apply them to the research question.

To aid in the analysis process for the research study, the researcher employed NVivo 10 qualitative software. NVivo 10 is a platform for analyzing all forms of unstructured data. NVivo facilitated efficient data mining using powerful search, query, and visualization tools (NVivo Inc., 2014). The software was ideal, as it allowed the researcher to uncover subtle connections as well as rigorously explore the essence, or lived experiences, of the participants.

**Step 4 – Validation**

The researcher aimed to cluster the pertinent and unchanging elements of each experience in an effort to identify core changes. An ongoing review of the interview recordings aided in the identification of rich text which in turn helped form the foundational clusters and changes. Per Moustakas (1994), the validation process requires the researcher to check the invariant constituents and their accompanying theme against the complete record of the research participants. To achieve that end, the researcher examined all the clusters of meaning to determine the number of changes which reflected the essence of the lived experience (Patton, 2002).

Through the examination and review of the invariant constituents, the researcher was able to identify if the clusters were expressed explicitly in the complete transcript and thus determine if they were compatible and relevant to the participants’ experience. Those invariant constituents which were not compatible and relevant were deleted (Moustakas, 1994; Davis, 2013). To
achieve that end, the researcher utilized the NVivo10 qualitative analysis software to aid in the classification and management of the data.

**Step 5 – Textural Description**

Upon completing the difficult task of reduction, elimination, clustering (i.e., core change identification), and validation, the researcher used “the data to construct an Individual Textural Description of the experience for each participant or co-researcher” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 121). Per Patton (2002), the enhanced or expanded version of the invariant changes allows the researcher to craft a description of each core change that doesn’t contain the essence of the experience. At the crux of the textural portrayal is an abstraction of the experience that provides content and illustration, yet no essence (p. 486). Moustakas (1994) explains, “it is this ‘what’ of the appearing phenomenon that must be explicated texturally in order to arrive at the noematic phases and the full noema as it is given” (p. 78). Every dimension or phase of the lived experience is afforded identical consideration and nothing is omitted (Patton, 2002).

By constructing extensive individual textural descriptions of what the participants noted, per the previous comment, a study cannot hope to do anything; instead, the researcher hopes to articulate the participants’ lived experiences and narratives. This process yielded a complex description of meanings that student-athletes’ experienced.

**Step 6 – Composite Structural Description**

Step 6 of the phenomenological analysis involves, “the structural description that contains the bones of the experience for the whole group of people being studied; it is a way of understanding how the co-researchers as a group experience what they experience” (Moustakas, 1994 as cited in Patton, 2002, p. 486). The mindful acts of thinking, evaluating, visualizing, and recalling are all a function of the structural analysis process which are pre-requisites to arrive at a
core structural meaning (Davis, 2013). During the structural analysis, the researcher came to better understand the significant meanings that had been both visible and invisible to the participants. Upon completion of the structural analysis, the researcher synthesized the meanings that reflected accurate and comprehensive accounts.

One key way to understand the phenomenon is to apply imaginative variation. That process allows the researcher to identify the structural changes from the textural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). Through imaginative variation, the researcher cultivates heightened or expanded variations of the invariant changes (Patton, 2002). During the analysis process, the researcher adhered to Moustaka’s (1994) 4 steps of imaginative variation:

1. Systematically vary the possible structural meanings that underlie the textural meanings.
2. Recognize the underlying changes or contexts that account for the emergence of the phenomenon.
3. Consider the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts with reference to the phenomenon, such as the structure of time, space, bodily concerns, materiality, causality, relation to self, or relation to others.
4. Search for exemplifications that vividly illustrate the invariant structural changes and facilitate the development of a structural description of the phenomenon (p. 99).

By following the Moustaka’s (1994) procedures, the researcher looked to identify the affect inherent in the experience to deeper meanings for the individuals as well as the group (Patton, 2002).

**Step 7 – Synthesis of Meanings and Essences**

The final step in the transcendental phenomenological research process is “an integration of the composite textual and composite structural descriptions, thus providing a synthesis of the
meanings and essences of the experiences” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 144). To achieve that end, the researcher must work through a textural and structural reduction process that captures the experiences of everyone studied (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2012). More specifically, through examination of the changes, clusters, and noted invariant constituents, a comprehensive view of the lived experience should materialize (Patton, 2002). To achieve that end, the researcher sought to epitomize the structure of the experience being studied by increasing consciousness and expanding meaning while bringing new clarity to what was known (Patton, 2002).

In conclusion, the aim of the research was to weave texture and structure together and to organize the qualities and changes into groups or universal essences of student-athletes’ leadership emergence.

**Chapter Summary**

Chapter Three provided a summary of the philosophy and methodology of phenomenological research. The researcher provided a detailed framework of methodology that was utilized in the study. Key phenomenological methods were explained to best summarize the approach taken. Additionally, brief participant profiles were included so that a deeper understanding of the participants’ positionality regarding leadership could be made explicit. In the following chapter, the findings that emerged from study will be presented.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The aim of this qualitative phenomenological study was to investigate the influence of experiential learning (i.e., leadership simulations) and models of leadership on student-athletes’ lived experiences regarding their perceived development as leaders. The goal of the study was to understand how NCAA Division I student-athletes made meaning out of their simulation experiences and to what degree those experiences enhanced their self-perceived potential as future leaders. The exploration of factors that the participants considered important to the phenomenon yielded rich data for the study. A phenomenological research method was most suitable for determining how experiential leadership simulations influenced their potential for leadership.

The results of the study were based on the analysis of interviews with the twelve student-athlete participants. The student-athletes confirmed that leadership simulations affected their perspectives of their own development as leaders. Throughout the interviews, the participants made statements that described how the experientially-based leadership simulations played a positive role in their future outlook as leaders. The participants’ identity and confidential responses were protected by identifying and changing information that might identify participants.

The following sections explain the findings that emerged from the analysis of data. Figure 4 presents a graphic representation of how participants’ self-efficacy regarding leadership potential changed as a result of their experiences in the leadership simulations. The analysis revealed enhanced self-efficacy in the following three areas: Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership; Finding a Voice; and Increasing Knowledge and Skills.
Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership

One change that was identified through the analysis of interview data was the student-athletes’ Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership as a result of the leadership simulations. Throughout the leadership course, participants were exposed to leadership simulations that allowed them to practice and to apply authentic leadership, situational leadership, and followership. This exposure shaped their perspectives on leadership. The participants also reported an Expanding Awareness of how their strengths and weaknesses,
different leadership models, emotional awareness, and authentic self influenced their self-efficacy regarding leadership potential. As a result of the leadership simulations, participants felt confident clarifying behaviors and core values they already held, while also recognizing there were elements of themselves they had not fully explored.

The following excerpts from the participants’ narratives provide examples of how Expanding Awareness influenced their self-efficacy regarding leadership potential. Specifically, four dimensions of Expanding Awareness were noted: understanding strengths and weaknesses, increased self-confidence, clarification of core values, and leaders and leadership redefined.

**Understanding Strengths and Weaknesses**

Nine of the twelve participants reported a heightened awareness of their strengths and weaknesses related their growth as leaders. For example, Emily explains in the following how participating in the leadership simulations led to greater understanding of her strengths and weaknesses as a leader.

I don’t think my own definition of leadership [has changed] as much as my perception of what my own leadership abilities are. The weekly activities really help reinforce, okay, this is where my strengths lie, and this is where I’m not so good. Like where I struggle a little bit. Like with leading an actual group. When somebody tells me, “okay you are the leader.” That day was harder for me…I wanted to take more of a backseat approach to it, but I couldn’t because people were looking at me for the final word…they would be talking and then they would look at me. So that was harder for me and really… I always knew I like being behind the scenes, but this class really helps reinforce that for me; and showing me where my strengths lie.
Similarly, James explains how the simulations enhanced his understanding of his leadership strengths.

I felt like it was good, the simulations gave me an idea of what my strengths are. I felt I tried to do a good job on it…I was like, oh, that one is good because it reminded me of what my strengths are and what I can bring to the table.

Additionally, James reported an increased appreciation of how approaches to leadership should vary according to the situation.

It [the leadership simulations] just kind of opened my eyes to different ways to be a leader. Like servant or situational, and being an action and vocal leader. I feel like I can’t pick just one leadership style.

Another participant, Dalia, noted an increased understanding that one of her strengths is the ability to maintain relationships with others and to restore relationships that have been strained.

But you know you try always to find a solution…One of my strengths is [the ability to restore relationships]. So I felt like once I found out about it; I started to think about it some more and I was like, oh yeah…. because I am always trying to find solutions [for improving relationships].

Helen explains in the following how participating in simulations helped her become more aware of the role emotions play in leadership.

Yeah, I think the whole emotional side of leadership…I was kind of unaware of it I guess until the Thursday labs. I guess I started to see how encouraging others can help them. I think that may come from [my] individual sport background. I don’t know, I never really thought to cheer people on all the time. Like while they are
working, say something [supportive or encouraging] to them. That view of leadership has changed.

Likewise, Patrick noted how his exposure to leadership models and the simulations helped him become more aware of his strengths as a leader.

Yeah, more awareness…what kind of leadership was out there. Like you know there is leadership, but I never knew about servant leadership, emotional leadership, situational leadership…I didn’t know any of those.

**Increased Self-Confidence**

Beyond an Expanded Awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, all twelve student-athletes noted how exposure to the leadership simulations and different leadership models added to their self-confidence as leaders.

Brandon reported how his participation in the simulations helped him become more confident and patient in group settings. Brandon explains in the following how his enhanced awareness of emotions improved his confidence as a leader.

Yeah, I feel like I am more confident; I feel like I know what to do in certain situations. Because not everything is going to be the same; some situations are going to be harder than others…but I feel like that taught me to be really patient with the group and stuff. You can’t really…I don’t want to say not show your emotions, because you can show your emotions, but I would say showing emotions in a negative way.

Abraham noted improved self-confidence as a result of an introduction to, and practice of, leadership simulations and leadership models.
Yeah, I think I am more self-confident, I wasn't really aware of the leadership models. I knew what a leader looked like to me but not necessarily what the different models of leadership looked like. I guess that I found followership in all of that because there were times when I just wanted to listen and learn.

In describing their *Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership*, the participants revealed how their exposure to leadership simulations, leadership models, emotional intelligence, and core values contributed to their improved confidence as leaders. These experiences and viewpoints provided an opportunity to broaden the participants’ self-confidence and their approach to leadership.

**Clarification of Core Values**

The participants also revealed that clarification and exploration of their core values led to a better understanding and awareness of their authentic self.

Roy explained that while he was familiar with the different models of leadership, he had not fully explored or defined his core values.

I had a good idea of what you guys were teaching and what leadership should look like and be [Researcher: Was it affirming to what you knew about yourself?] Yeah, I have not taken the time to think about my strengths or core values.

Similarly, Constance stated how her core value of authenticity influenced her awareness and role as a leader.

Being authentic; because I feel I can't tell somebody to do something if I am not willing to do it myself.

Dalia reported how listening and suspending judgement during the simulations improved her awareness of her core value (i.e., respect).
I feel like in general…I felt so much more respect for all people. I mean when you see a person you think one thing about that person, then you hear their story and then it is so different. I also feel like you cannot judge people on how they look.

James explained how the leadership simulations provided him the opportunity to show his authentic self to others and practice remaining true to his core values.

I’m just being who I am, showing everyone my core values and who I want to be. Ultimately, I’m not trying to be anybody else, and I’m not trying let anybody else make me something other than what I am.

**Leaders and Leadership Redefined**

Some of the participants reported how their definition of a leader and leadership was changing, and how that change positively influenced their leadership efficacy. This change was different from *Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Leadership Contexts* in that the participants had moved beyond awareness and were integrating multiple leadership models with their world view and perspective on leadership. The concept of leaders and leadership were effectively being redefined based on the participants’ amalgamation of leadership theories.

For example, Milton explains in the following how his view of leadership was redefined as he became more aware of and sensitive to personal and group emotions, power, and contexts.

I feel like I view leadership different, or see myself as a different kind of leader now that I understand it's not always about the people that you're leading when you’re the leader, it's also about yourself and how you manage your own emotions; because we had some leaders who showed frustration and stuff like that, and I think that was different. Usually in situations where the leader is showing frustration, everybody in the group is not thinking about the leader and whatever they're going through. We
are all just thinking about what we're seeing from them, so, that puts me in a position where I feel like when I'm a leader, I always have to monitor my own emotions as I'm monitoring the group’s emotions. Not just throwing stuff at them as I'm feeling it.

For Patrick, his exposure to the varying types of leadership models allowed for an evolving perspective regarding how leadership was defined. Below, Patrick discusses how his view of himself as a leader was expanded and redefined as a result of the leadership simulations.

Like you know there is leadership, but I never knew about servant leadership, emotional leadership, situational leadership…I just would look at someone and be like, he is just being a leader…or like you have to follow this person…he is the leader, he is the teacher. But like, breaking it down, then I understood it more…I could see that barrier between you and that person…you’re the same person, but he has this job.

Dalia initially identified herself as a poor leader as a result of her language barriers. However, as the leadership simulations progressed, Dalia’s understanding of leadership was redefined. Specifically, Daila’s willingness to assert herself increased her understanding of self in relationship to leadership. Below, Dalia shares her initial view of her leadership abilities,

I was a bad leader, because, when I had an opportunity to be the leader, I didn’t lead at all. When I was a leader during those Thursday classes [leadership simulations]; I didn’t know what to say, people were waiting for whatever I would say, but I really didn’t say anything very good. I felt like it was hard to be a leader sometimes.

Later, Dalia noted how areas of knowledge and competence enabled her to redefine and further practice her leadership skills outside of class.
It’s so easy leading when you know what you have to do. For example…for me to lead in rowing is so much easier. And even my coach said a couple of weeks ago, that I am getting so much better as a leader. I was so surprised; our coach was like…today we will do a relay in the rowing machines. They put all the rowers with the novice rowers; and I had three people on my team; and we had six teams total. And I was so competitive; we have to win this! I was yelling straight to that girl’s face….just like go harder. My coach was so surprised. Because that girl was, “Oh, thank you so much for helping me; if you wouldn’t have said anything…or were not yelling at me…I wouldn’t have been going so hard.” And then my coach came up to me and said he was so proud of me….he said “You are getting so much better as a leader;” and this was a surprise…because this is kind of related to this class, you know.

Mateo explained how the leadership simulations redefined his outlook on what leadership was and how the simulations expanded his awareness of self.

Doing those activities definitely changed my outlook on leadership; I used to think leadership was just being able to communicate with people; take charge and stuff. It’s not that really, it’s on a personal level…getting to have that person trust you, because trust is definitely a big thing. Especially in a group; you need to trust your group members. Other things, just knowing them on a personal level I think they will feel more comfortable with you. Especially if the activity calls for more physicality with one another; you definitely have to be comfortable with each other. Trust is another thing, knowing people have your back. Leaders are not only people that lead the group either, it could be people who assist the group; they could be people that
some other people feel comfortable with. Like how we have those people who help; the supporters could be leaders as well. “Hey, you should stand here” (e.g., safety spotters during leadership simulations), just making sure she doesn’t fall...Leadership, I thought was just basically…”Hey, you stand there…go over there; you toss the ball to her, or you toss the ball to him. Go.” That is what I thought it was at first.

In conclusion, the student-athletes reported how their exposure to experiential leadership simulations helped them redefine what leaders and leadership meant to them.

**Finding a Voice**

The second set of excerpts from the participants provides examples of how *Finding a Voice* influenced their self-efficacy regarding leadership potential. Specifically, three dimensions of *Finding a Voice* were noted: speaking with authority, maintaining power, and confidence in personal leadership style.

**Speaking with Authority**

The following quotes reflect the changed views of the twelve participants regarding speaking with authority. Below, Mateo explains how “speaking up with authority” helped him develop as a leader.

I actually feel more confident in myself; just being able to not have that fear of talking to people. Not being scared of what their reactions are going to be….Talking has been a big thing for me. I’m really not much of a talker, but now I am more vocal and make my presence known.
Similarly, Constance pointed out that the leadership simulations enabled her to speak with greater authority, standing up and saying what she felt was important.

Yeah, it [leadership simulations] taught me to speak up and say what I have to say some times; not just lay’n back, if I feel some way towards something, I feel better about speaking up and saying what I have to say.

Dalia reported how the support she received during the simulations ultimately helped her become better at speaking with authority when she held a position of leadership.

I feel more [in charge]; because, before those [leadership simulations] I would be not confident because I was too scared people would not understand me; but since I tried to be a leader, they were really supportive, and I was like, maybe it’s not so bad.

**Maintaining Power**

In addition to the positive effects of speaking with authority, the participants explained how they were able to maintain power with greater conviction and assertiveness.

Milton explained that, as a result of his participation in the leadership simulations, he had improved his ability to maintain power, control, and direction of the group decision making process.

Yeah, I’m a little bit more [in control] because now I’ve learned there are times that I don't necessarily need to hand power over to the group, there are times when I need to lead as a leader…and not just follow along with what the group is saying. If I know myself or I'm very sure of an idea, then I know I need to go with that and not just let somebody from the group necessarily persuade me or something like that.

Constance further explained how her experiences with simulations helped her become more adept in maintaining power as a leader.
I felt like I did a better job of being more assertive [during the leadership simulations]. You know how the guys are; they like to go among themselves talk and then go to the girls and say, were going to go with this. And then the girls would be like, okay; so I felt like I did a good job speaking up.

**Confidence in Personal Leadership Style**

Beyond participants’ speaking with authority and maintaining power, other participants noted greater confidence in their personal leadership style. Confidence in personal leadership style is different from increased self-confidence as discussed in the section on *Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership* in that there was an action or implementation element which was distinct from becoming aware. In the following, for example, Roy explains how his participation in the leadership simulations helped him better understand and implement his leadership style.

I’m more confident [in my style of leadership]. I always thought of myself a leader, but I am even more confident now. I should take responsibility when we are in a group; when we are brainstorming, don’t hesitate, and be more assertive.

Similarly, Emily reported more confidence in her leadership style as a result of the simulations.

I’m more confident in my own style of leadership for sure. And just knowing how to work when I am the focal point; like when I am leading from the front as opposed to behind.

Helen explained how her confidence in her personal leadership style was developing.

Below, Helen notes how confidence in her leadership style is currently based on how well she knows those whom she intends to lead.
For me, my confidence [in my leadership style] really depends on how well I know the people that I am leading. So for me, I would say I’m a better leader with the people that are in the class...I think the confidence [in my leadership style] is based on my relationship with the people in the group. I think a lot just has to do with how comfortable I am with a group of people.

As a result of the simulations, Dalia commented that she was more likely to take action and employ her personal leadership style to help those she respected.

I just feel like I started to respect all the people more and more; and now when I see a person or a teammate that is trying to get better; I just feel so much respect for all those people and I really want to help them….

In sum, the student-athlete participants explained how their exposure to, and practice of, leadership models via leadership simulations contributed to an improved confidence in their personal leadership style, speaking with authority, and maintaining power.

**Increasing Knowledge and Skills**

The third change that emerged from the interviews was the realization by the participants that their knowledge and skills as young leaders had increased as a result of their experiences with the leadership simulations. Participants noted that, through their experiences, they felt more knowledgeable and skilled as a result of the opportunities they had to practice specific leadership strategies and concepts (e.g., problem solving, communications, emotion management, instructions, giving and receiving feedback, and followership). Through the aforementioned experiences, participants revealed a richer more nuanced understanding of the leadership models as well as techniques and strategies of leadership. The participants made remarks about how their improved technical and strategic skills enhanced their overall competency as leaders.
The second set of excerpts from the participants provides insights regarding their perspectives on strategic skill set development and leadership concepts as pragmatic tools to understand and employ. Specifically, two dimensions of *Increasing Knowledge and Skills* were noted: improved techniques and strategies and greater understanding of leadership models.

**Improved Techniques and Strategies**

Participants’ revealed an increased understanding of the following techniques and strategies included in leadership: problem solving, emotional awareness management, communication, distractions, and moving beyond leadership by example. For example, Emily reports in the following how the simulations helped her strategically address feelings of anxiety and fear.

> Again, seeing where my strengths and weaknesses lie. What I am comfortable with, what pushes my buttons a little bit more. Those are things that I have become more aware of how I think; and strategies to combat them when I start to feel very anxious. Like what do I need to do to make the decision or get the job done.

Brandon noted that his group communication techniques improved as a result of his participation in the leadership simulations.

> I saw things that I can improve on; learned how to talk to people and how to give out instructions…like one by one, on things to do; and make sure that everyone is okay, instead of singling people out, just making sure and bringing the group together. And just making sure everyone is good.

Abraham explained how his participation in the leadership simulations helped him slow down, consider others’ emotions, and strategically seek input from the group.
There are definitely things that I picked up throughout this course that I felt were positive. For example, when you are going through [the leadership simulations as a leader] and we just want to get something done; this course has helped me slow down and consider what this other person is thinking…more thinking about other people’s feelings and trying to get their input too. I think that’s the biggest thing I’ve picked up from this course; rather than just getting it [the task] done and moving on. There could be a better way.

Milton reported that, because of the leadership simulations, he had become more technical and strategic at managing group distractions.

An example I can think of is when we first started at the Rec [student recreation center] we did activities where we would pull one person out and tell them to say certain things to provide distractions and stuff like that… and I really didn't pay too much attention to that…that aspect of it [during the leadership simulations]…but you always have that one person in your group who's just throwing random stuff at you…you know; so that's one of the things that I learned to deal with. You know, just tend to one person at a time instead of trying to group everybody together when you're in a leadership role and trying to get ideas

Patton explained how his observations during the simulations helped him strategically identify what he considered best and worst practices in leadership.

Sometimes…you would be in the group and you would have someone quiet like Abraham or Milton; really quiet guys…Dalia because of her English; her English is fine, but she probably tells herself that her English is not that good. To her it’s not good, but to us it’s perfectly fine. So you know her voice gets kind of dimmer, and I
always thought that you have to have a loud voice, project, it shows confidence no matter what you do. So I just took the different styles that people had, I tried to take what people didn’t do right…and I kind of took it like…that is something I shouldn’t do. To make sure; keep that in the back of my mind so people will see that I am a leader more so.

Abraham and Mateo described their personal challenges and perspectives regarding their, “lead-by-example” style of leadership. Additionally, Abraham reported how the required collaboration during the simulations was strategically challenging for him.

You are a leader just by showing and doing that. Stopping you on a 4th down….it was definitely tougher in this class because….I’m in a class full of leaders that all want to do this and all want to pitch in. But it’s not like you can just go do it. I mean you have work together, and yeah, it was definitely tougher.

Greater Understanding of Leadership Models

Other evidence of Increased Knowledge and Skills was related to the participants’ greater understanding of leadership models. In other words, student-athletes viewed leadership as a conceptual framework and formula through which to provide leadership. Emily, Patrick, and Patton pointed out the value they saw in the various models of leadership. Below, Emily explains how the situational leadership model was conceptually helpful during the leadership simulations.

Yeah, that really helps; kind of being able to apply a formula to a situation when you are dealing with somebody who has got a high level of skill but maybe low level of motivation (e.g., situational leadership). What do you do? So, there is a formula; there is something that can usually work.
As a result of the leadership simulations, Patrick noted how certain models of leadership provided a concrete plan through which greater success could be achieved. For example, he had this to say about situational leadership:

I always felt like [situational leadership] was a big one [model] that helped the most.

I like situational leadership because it is four concrete points that you are going to have to do to make something successful.

For the participants, a greater understanding of leadership models and improved techniques and strategies was reported. As a result of the leadership simulations, the student-athletes had the opportunity to practice specific leadership concepts, techniques, and strategies which resulted in greater leadership efficacy.

Chapter Summary

This chapter reported the changes which emerged from the interviews with twelve student-athletes who were active NCAA Division I student-athletes enrolled in an introductory models of leadership course. This qualitative, phenomenological research study employed interview questions to gain a deeper understanding of how leadership simulations influenced the leadership development of student-athletes. The exploration of lived experiences of participants resulted in descriptions of how experiential learning pedagogy (i.e., leadership simulations) influenced their development as leaders. Based on the data obtained from the interviews, three changes emerged (see Figure 4).

The following chapter provides a summary of the findings, including conclusions based on the results of the study. The chapter ends with implications for policy, implications for practice, and suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to investigate the influence of experiential learning (i.e., leadership simulations) and models of leadership on student-athletes’ lived experiences regarding their perceived development as leaders. This chapter discusses the relationship between the findings and the theoretical framework, and links the results to policy and practice implications, and future research. Lastly, this final chapter offers a summary and interpretation of the findings, and focuses on the key emergent changes and their relationship to the primary research question, “To what extent, if at all, did teaching leadership models enhance students’ leadership efficacy regarding their perceived potential for future leadership?”

Data analysis through this study revealed three major changes experienced by the twelve research participants. The three core changes that emerged from the data revealed that collectively, the participants studied had: (1) **Expanded their Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership**, (2) **Increased their Knowledge and Skills**, and, (3) **Found a Voice**. The three changes reported in the study reflected an understanding of how leadership simulations influenced the leadership development of student-athletes.

**Summary of Findings**

**Change 1: Expanding Awareness Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership.**

The importance of awareness resonated with many of the participants in this study. Most of the student-athletes noted that feelings of self-assurance and empowerment emerged from an **Expanded Awareness of Self, Others and Contexts for Leadership**. As a result of their exposure to the leadership simulations, the student-athletes in the study commonly acknowledged how an
expanded understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, greater clarity of their core values, and a new definition of what leadership is influenced their development as leaders. Kolb and Kolb (2009) noted that simulations help students to think about what questions they should be asking as opposed to what answers they should give. With that, it became apparent throughout the study that student-athletes were reconsidering the construct of leadership as they became aware of and practiced different leadership styles through simulations. Many of the student-athletes expressed that their overall confidence as leaders had improved as a result of a deeper awareness of themselves, others, and contexts for leadership.

Through their leadership simulation experiences, the participants reported that their personal strengths and weaknesses became more apparent when they were formally placed into a leadership position. When the student-athletes were put into their formal leadership roles, they were forced to acknowledge the good and bad regarding their skills, awareness, comfort and anxiety. Additionally, participants noted that individual debriefs and journals added to the reflection, growth, and awareness process. There was something emerging in the minds of these student-athletes which ultimately informed their positions as leaders. The student-athletes more clearly explored and articulated how their foundational core values framed their personal leadership style, which in turn improved their confidence and guided their day-to-day behaviors. Even when participants were faced with adversity, their improved Awareness of Self, Others and Contexts for Leadership bolstered their confidence to take action and to exercise their leadership skills. By providing models of leadership and requiring student-athletes to experientially engage in formal positions of leadership, an overall awareness emerged which had positive self-efficacious characteristics.
Change 2: Finding a Voice

Hannah et al. (2008) proposed that, “leadership efficacy is an explicit form of efficacy associated with the level of self-assurance in the knowledge, attributes and capacities associated with leading others (p. 669).” For the student-athletes in the study, almost all of them described a sense of empowerment and agency with respect to their leadership development. The combination of leadership models and leadership simulations supported the emergence of “voice” among the participants.

The student-athletes’ “voice” was developed as a result of speaking with authority, maintaining power, and confidence in their personal style of leadership. The emergent data revealed that non-Caucasian males and all the female participants’ self-confidence was even more enhanced than the Caucasian males from the leadership simulations. These enhancements were manifested during the simulations when hegemonic power and gender dynamics were confronted. Specifically, historically marginalized participants demonstrated a willingness to take action by speaking with authority, maintaining power within the group, and having confidence in their personal leadership styles.

Participants reported that speaking with authority was a catalyst for empowerment. Some participants noted how their ability to overcome their fear of others’ reactions and/or comments was a catalyst for their development and growth. Other participants explained that the simulations provided them with an opportunity to express their opinions and to retain power in a positive but assertive and agentic way. For the aforementioned student-athletes, race, gender, and power were social constructs and norms that were reconsidered and challenged during the leadership simulations.
The reported understanding of “voice” reflects a developing leadership efficacy that includes a greater intentionality and ownership of leadership. According to Jarvis (2004), “simulations encourage active participation, which in turn allows problems of human behavior and relationships to be presented and extend the cognitive into the emotional.” The previous point has relevance in that the unstructured problems required, to some degree, that action to be taken at differing levels. For some of the participants, that level of action came in the form of expression and assertiveness (i.e., speaking with authority, maintaining power, and self-confidence in their personal leadership style). The strength, fortitude, and determination that defined these student-athletes demonstrated their growing leadership efficacy as well as willingness to engage publically in matters they deemed important.

**Change 3: Increasing Knowledge and Skills.**

The research participants acknowledged that newly discovered leadership skills contributed to their personal growth as leaders. Specifically, participants reported a greater understanding of leadership models and/or their leadership strategies and skills had improved; in both cases, the reported vantage points resulted in stronger self-efficacy towards their perception as a leader. Many of the student-athletes explained that their improved strategic abilities or competencies allowed them to better problem solve, communicate, and generally work more effectively. Other participants noted how the leadership models had provided them with a general formula they could apply to a multitude of situations.

Rosch and Anthony (2012) assert that leadership development programs should focus on leadership as a multifaceted concept, where students see their own leadership practice as their traits, knowledge, and skills implemented within organizations and systems of other people. The participants noted that their newly acquired or improved leadership knowledge incorporated
personal traits and knowledge and skills that operated in conjunction with others and changing contexts. The student-athletes expressed that their leadership knowledge and skills often provided a conceptual model as well as tactical skills through which they could rely on in uncertain leadership situations. Ultimately, the reported *Increase in Knowledge and Skills* was heralded as a key element in the personal growth of the participants.

**Implications for Policy and Practice**

Understanding the leadership development experiences of student-athletes is necessary to improve leadership development pedagogy and opportunities for emerging student-athlete leaders in academia as well as in the community. Studies on the impact of leadership development pedagogy, simulations, and student-athletes are under researched. Therefore, this study could provide a framework for colleges and universities that aspire to create and deliver leadership development programs.

As a result of this research, institutions and athletic departments could develop initiatives and programs that improve student-athlete leadership development and engagement on campus. On a larger scale, instructors and practitioners at institutions of higher learning need to continue to integrate experiential learning models via simulations as a pedagogical methodology to improve student learning outcomes, engagement, and efficacy. The outcomes of this study might also provide an understanding of the experience of the student-athlete and the contributions this collective group is capable of and eager to make.

From an instructional best practices standpoint, the researcher recommends that student-athletes be afforded access to leadership development education that applies the three major changes discussed in the study. These programs should target student-athletes who are in the early stages of their academic careers and ensure that programming includes the following:
• Models of leadership, core values, emotional awareness, and experiential learning models 
  (*Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership*).

• Instructional approaches and simulations which allow participants to practice newly 
  discovered leadership skills and perspectives (*Increased Knowledge and Skills, 
  Leadership*).

• Safe, yet unstructured environments through which historically marginalized groups can 
  explore and practice assertiveness (*Finding a Voice*, empowerment and leadership 
  agency).

• Critical synthesis coursework which requires that participants reconsider their 
  positionality via a personal leadership action plan (e.g., goals, mentors, mentees, and 
  leadership style) (*Expanding Awareness of Self, Others, and Contexts for Leadership*).

Next, based on the findings of this study, NCAA Division I intercollegiate athletics and 
academia need to partner more effectively with one another to create an efficacious culture – a 
culture that facilitates broader leadership opportunities where student-athletes do not have to 
choose among their athletic, academic, and personal goals. On a broader level, educational 
administrators must make a concerted effort to create experiential leadership programming for 
incoming freshman and other historically underserved students, so that further data can be 
gathered regarding the influence of leadership development on student retention. Athletic 
departments need to go beyond viewing student-athletes as a means to more wins than losses. 
Holistic programming continues to emerge within athletic departments, but a greater emphasis 
should be placed on leadership development.

Finally, through this study, the experiences of student-athletes were explored in an 
attempt to understand what inspires and empowers these individuals to develop as leaders. This
research could also be replicated for other student-athletes to explore how experiential learning and leadership simulations inform leadership development in young adults.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

To understand how individuals constructed and interpreted their own personal leadership experiences, this study focused on participants’ inquiry process related to leadership. This research study adds to the body of literature on the leadership development experiences of student-athletes who participate in NCAA Division I intercollegiate athletics. Through a phenomenological approach, this research examined participants’ leadership development experiences through learning about models of leadership and participating in leadership simulations. While much knowledge was obtained from the student-athletes’ interviews, there remains a great deal more to be explored.

Since this study only focused broadly on NCAA Division I student-athletes and leadership simulations, other research specifically exploring the student-athlete population in greater detail would provide rich data and compelling information regarding the nuances of leadership development and student-athletes. Such research might focus on:

- The positive and empowering impact of leadership simulations on female student-athletes.
- The positive and empowering impact of leadership simulations on historically marginalized populations.
- The negative impact on youth leadership development as a result of “playing up” in youth sports.
- The significant role family plays in core values and leadership paradigm development.
• The influence and challenges of the father/coach figure on sport identity and leadership development.

• Different perspectives on leadership development for participants in individual and team sports.

• The negative impact of sport specialization in youth sports.

In conclusion, this dissertation has implications for educational institutions that wish to retain, empower, and provide the best possible leadership development experience for their student-athlete populations.

Conclusion

Institutions, researchers, scholars and educational practioners may use the findings of the study by focusing on an experiential pedagogy that informs how models of leadership and self-efficacy operate in support of one another regarding the leadership development of student-athletes. The study of student-athletes’ experience in leadership simulations is important because it allows researchers to go beyond traditional leadership theory and employ scholarship and science in a practical and impactful fashion. In essence, experiential theory and leadership simulations can contribute to the development of a model of educational “balance” and positivity for student-athletes.

All of the student-athletes in the study believed that exposure to leadership simulations in the models of leadership course positively influenced their perspectives as developing leaders. Each of the participants noted an improved confidence and optimistic perspective regarding future leadership roles and opportunities. Research that shows how student-athletes experience leadership development programming can be helpful in developing more effective approaches for all students in higher education, regardless of their participation in athletics.
Researcher’s Reflection on the Study

This research sought to explore the leadership development experiences of student-athletes as they negotiated an experientially-based models of leadership course. The need for this study emerged from paucity of literature addressing the role leadership simulations play in informing student-athletes’ self-efficacy regarding leadership potential. From my perspective, the goal of the study was twofold. First, my objective was to understand the degree to which leadership development experiences helped participants explore and develop their ideas about leadership. Second, I hoped to better understand what they learned from these experiences in order to replicate them for future student-athlete leaders as well as myself.

These student-athletes had to examine, clarify, and align their core values and ideas about leadership with their day-to-day behaviors. The student-athletes I interviewed demonstrated much grit and determination to become NCAA Division I athletes; there stories were truly more than I anticipated. They talked about their successes and victories as well as their pain and suffering. I truly felt as though I had connected with the 12 student-athletes. Each of them was candid and authentic regarding their background as well as their experience in the course. Together, we laughed and felt sorrow and regret as they shared their powerful and moving stories with me. They described their personal reflective journeys prior to, during, and after the course. They shared their personal sacrifices that made them the strong student-athletes they are.

The revelations and insights that I have had the privilege to experience is something I will always relish; and the journey of writing this dissertation is an experience I will not soon forget. My personal journey to better understand and improve the college experience for student-athletes is one I continue to cherish and enjoy. Empowerment, agency and praxis are the threads that inspire my work and life. The William Stafford (1998) poem noted below aptly summarizes

124
both the participants’ and my passion regarding the convictions we hold paramount throughout our lives.

The Way It Is:

There’s a thread you follow,  
It goes among things that change.  
But it doesn’t change.  
People wonder about what you are pursuing.  
You have to explain about the thread.  
But it is hard for others to see. 
While you hold it you can’t get lost.  
Tragedies happen; people get hurt and/or die; and you suffer and get old.  
Nothing you do can stop time’s unfolding.  
You don’t ever let go of the thread.
REFERENCES:


Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. (2001). *A call to action: Reconnecting college sport and higher education.* Miami, FL: Author


Washington State University, (2014). Retrieved from [http://ir.wsu.edu/Student%20Data](http://ir.wsu.edu/Student%20Data)


Appendix A: Interview Protocol Questions

1. Tell me generally about your childhood growing up?
   a. Where are you from?
   b. Do you have any brothers and/or sisters?
   c. Who had the biggest impact on you growing up? Why?
   d. Who played a leadership role in your family? What did that leadership style look like?
   e. What kind of leadership opportunities have you had outside sport? In sport?
      i. Did you have a preference? Why?

2. Can you tell me why you decided to take this leadership course?
   a. Was it what you expected? Why or why not?

3. How would you define leadership?
   a. What would you say your leadership style is?

4. During the leadership simulations in class, did you see yourself more of a leader or a follower? Explain?
   a. Was it situationally based?

5. Did your view of leadership change during the course as a result of your participation in the leadership simulations?
   a. If so, how?

6. Do you think your view of yourself as a leader has changed as a result of your participation in the leadership simulations?
   a. Explain

7. Do you feel you are more or less confident as a leader now that you have participated in the leadership simulations?
   a. Explain?

8. Is there anything I should have asked you but didn’t?

9. Is there anything else you would like to add?
Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Land Grant, Research I, NCAA Division I University
College of Education

Research Study Consent Form

Study Title: "Student-Athletes' Self-Efficacy regarding Leadership Potential: A Phenomenological Inquiry into the Perceived Effects of Leadership Simulations."

Researchers:
Forrest W. Parkay, Professor, College of Education; Educational Leadership, Sport Studies, and Educational/Counseling Psychology; Washington State University, 509.335.9570, fwparkay@wsu.edu
Christopher Cook, Doctoral Candidate, College of Education, Education Leadership, Washington State University, 509.335.0222, chrisco@wsu.edu

You are being asked to take part in a research study carried out by Forrest W. Parkay and Christopher Cook. This form explains the research study and your part in it if you decide to join the study. Please read the form carefully, taking as much time as you need. Ask the researcher to explain anything you don’t understand. You can decide not to join the study. If you join the study, you can change your mind later or quit at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of services or benefits if you decide to not take part in the study or quit later. This study has been approved for human subject participation by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board.

What is this study about?

This research study is being done to explore to what extent, if at all, teaching models of leadership influence student-athletes potential for future leadership. You are being asked to take part because you currently are a “roster” active NCAA Division I Student-Athlete enrolled in an experientially based leadership course at the University. Taking part in the study will require about 45-60 minutes of your time initially, and later another 15-25 minutes will be needed as follow-up. You cannot take part in this study if you are no longer an active NCAA Division I Student-Athlete. Furthermore, you must also agree to audio recordings of the interview and use of your video journals to participate in this study.
What will I be asked to do if I am in this study?

If you take part in the study, you will be asked to:

- Meet for a 45-60 minute interview and 15-25 minute follow up phone call.
- Fourteen questions about leadership development will be asked, and
- You as a participant may refuse to answer any question in the interview
- Voice recordings will be taken during the interviews.
- Class observations and your video journals will also be incorporated into the study
- You, the interviewee, will be offered the opportunity to make clarifying alterations regarding your statements prior to the study being completed or published.
- You will also be asked if you would like to receive a copy of the final study if so desired.

Are there any benefits to me if I am in this study?

There is no direct benefit to you from being in this study other than a potentially better self-understanding regarding how leadership development operates and manifests in your personal life. Your participation will lead to better understanding of leadership development as it relates student-athletes, and your participation will help to inform future leadership curriculum design and pedagogical approaches.

Are there any risks to me if I am in this study?

The potential risks from taking part in this study are loss of confidentiality of interview responses. Notes from the study will be compiled along with transcripts of the interviews. Precautions to prevent loss of confidentiality include the use of pseudonyms for actual names and university, secure storage of all research materials, and destruction of all research materials following completion after writing the academic papers that are required to fulfill graduate course requirements.

Will my information be kept private?

The data for this study will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by federal and state law. No published results will identify you, and your name will not be associated with the findings.
Participant identities and district names will be replaced with pseudonyms. This information will remain with the interviewer, and will be disposed of following the project.

Private conversations will take place between you and the interviewer to maintain confidentiality.

These conversations will be audio recorded. This is a required component of the study.

Data from this project will be stored in a locked cabinet by the researcher, and securely disposed of at the completion of the project timeline.

Access to the data will be limited to the primary investigators. No data from this study will be analyzed by outside entities.

The results of this study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but the identities of all research participants will remain anonymous.

The data for this study will be kept for 3 years.

Are there any costs or payments for being in this study?

There are no costs associated with your participation in the study; and as a small token of appreciation for your time, input and perspective, you will receive a $25 iTunes card.

Who can I talk to if I have questions?

If you have questions about this study or the information in this form, please contact the researcher Chris Cook, 509.335.0222 (work) or chrisco@wsu.edu. You may also contact the primary investigator, Forrest W. Parkay, 509.335.9570 or fwparkay@wsu.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or would like to report a concern or complaint about this study, please contact the Washington State University Institutional Review Board at (509) 335-3668, or e-mail irb@wsu.edu, or regular mail at: Albrook 205, PO Box 643005, Pullman, WA 99164-3005.

What are my rights as a research study volunteer?

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to be a part of this study. There will be no penalty to you if you choose not to take part. You may choose not to answer specific questions or to stop participating at any time.
What does my signature on this consent form mean?

Your signature on this form means that:

- You understand the information given to you in this form
- You have been able to ask the researcher questions and state any concerns
- The researcher has responded to your questions and concerns
- You believe you understand the research study and the potential benefits and risks that are involved.

Statement of Consent

I give my voluntary consent to take part in this study. I will be given a copy of this consent document for my records.

__________________________________
Signature of Participant

__________________________________
Date

__________________________________
Printed Name of Participant

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect.

I certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he or she understands the purpose, procedures, potential benefits, and potential risks of participation.

I also certify that he or she:
• Speaks the language used to explain this research
• Reads well enough to understand this form or, if not, this person is able to hear and understand when the form is read to him or her
• Does not have any problems that could make it hard to understand what it means to take part in this research.

__________________________________  ________________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent  Date

__________________________________  ________________________
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent  Role in the Research Study

Note: For lower risk studies or studies with a large number of participants (mass administered questionnaires, etc.) it may be permissible for the PI to sign and date one copy and make copies of the informed consent document for participants.
Appendix C: Experiential Leadership Course syllabus

Introduction to Models of Leadership Seminar  
UNIV 295 Section: 1  
Location: Bohler Addition 186 & Student Rec. Center  
Time: Tuesday, 10:35-11:25 a.m., Thursday 10:35-11:50 a.m.  
Term: Spring 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructors:</th>
<th>Natalie Nakic</th>
<th>Chris Cook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offices:</td>
<td>Bohler 182B</td>
<td>Bohler Addition 285D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>509-335-3988</td>
<td>509-335-0222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:natalie.nakic@wsu.edu">natalie.nakic@wsu.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:chrisco@wsu.edu">chrisco@wsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours:</td>
<td>Individually scheduled</td>
<td>Individually scheduled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The leaders who work most effectively, it seems to me, never say “I.” And that’s not because they have trained themselves not to say “I.” They don’t think “I.” They think “we”; they think “team.” They understand their job is to make the team function. They accept responsibility and don’t sidestep it, but “we” gets the credit…. This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done.” -Peter Drucker

COURSE TEXTS:


ADDITIONAL READINGS:

- Pitron, Dr John. 2008. Followership is Leadership: The Leadership-Exemplary Followership Exchange Model [Internet]. Taken from: http://knol.google.com/k/dr-john-pitron/followership-is-leadership/12nb17zejmb1w/2.

ABOUT THIS COURSE:

Leadership seminar is structured to facilitate and augment the collegiate experience and aid in a student’s personal development and growth; to that end, the leadership seminar will provide participants with the opportunity to develop their leadership style and practice leadership strategies via experiential learning with their peers, faculty, athletic staff and administrators.

This course also fulfills two of fifteen credits required to earn a Cougar Leadership Certificate. Participating in this course does not obligate you to pursue the Certificate; however, it might spark a student’s interest to do so!
COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLO):

This course has six main objectives centered on student learning and development. At the end of the course, each student will be able to:

- CLO 1: Students will demonstrate critical and creative reasoning behaviors via “in-class” and “out-of-class” practical or experiential assignments.
- CLO 2: Students will explain what their core values, leadership style and personal strengths are as they relate to leadership, wellbeing and intellectual development.
- CLO 3: Students will understand the basics of group roles and dynamics, debriefing and reflection skills, and decision-making for the purposes of functioning successfully in group settings.
- CLO 4: Students will demonstrate knowledge of self in diverse cultural contexts and understand the relationship of one’s own society to other societies and groups.
- CLO 5: Students will be able to identify the varying leadership styles.
- CLO 6: Students will connect self-exploration of core values with modeled leadership styles and experiential activities in the development of their personal leadership plan.

COUGAR ATHLETICS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (CALDPLO):

For students in the Cougar Athletics Leadership Development Program, this course addresses the following program objectives (cited in quotes):

- CALDPLO 1: Critically think about the one’s role in today’s world through the exploration of values, beliefs, and identity
- CALDPLO 2: Effectively collaborate and communicate in diverse group settings.
- CALDPLO 3: Apply leadership strategies to interactions in everyday life within diverse contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>At the end of this course students should be able to:</th>
<th>Course weeks that address learning outcomes</th>
<th>Outcome will be evaluated primarily by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLO1</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate critical and creative reasoning behaviors via “in-class” and “out-of-class” practical or experiential assignments.</td>
<td>1-9, 11-14</td>
<td>Participation in experiential learning component (rec center) Reflection journals Midterm exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLO2</td>
<td>Students will explain what their core values, leadership style and personal strengths are as they relate to leadership, wellbeing and intellectual development.</td>
<td>3, 5, 8, 9, 16</td>
<td>Core values feedback form Midterm exam Reading critique Personal leadership plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLO3  Students will understand the basics of group roles and dynamics, debriefing and reflection skills, and decision-making for the purposes of functioning successfully in group settings.  2-9, 11-14  Participation in experiential learning component (rec center)  Reflection journals

CLO4  Students will demonstrate knowledge of self in diverse cultural contexts and understand the relationship of one’s own society to other societies and groups.  3, 5, 11, 12, 15  Core values feedback form  Personal leadership plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>At the end of this course students should be able to:</th>
<th>Course weeks that address learning outcomes</th>
<th>Outcome will be evaluated primarily by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLO5</td>
<td>Students will be able to identify the varying leadership styles.</td>
<td>2, 4, 6, 11, 12, 13</td>
<td>Midterm exam  Personal leadership plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLO6</td>
<td>Students will connect self-exploration of core values with modeled leadership styles and experiential activities in the development of their personal leadership plan.</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>Personal leadership plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALDPLO 1</td>
<td>Critically think about one’s role in today’s world through the exploration of values, beliefs, and identity</td>
<td>All weeks address this outcome</td>
<td>Personal leadership plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALDPLO 2</td>
<td>Effectively collaborate and communicate in diverse group settings.</td>
<td>1-9, 11-14</td>
<td>Discussion &amp; Experiential participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALDPLO 3</td>
<td>Apply leadership strategies to interactions in everyday life within diverse contexts</td>
<td>All weeks address this outcome</td>
<td>All graded coursework &amp; course participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Participation in and complete all in-class activities:** Learning to be an interconnected leader is a process which requires attendance. To that end, UNIV 295 will be a space in which to critically explore, experience, and reflect upon an array of introductory leadership skills. Participation ranges from 5 to 10 points per class meeting and experiential lab. “Showing up” is worth 2 points. Active participation—contributing to class discussions, bringing the reflection journals on Tuesdays and completing in-class activities—is worth up to an additional 3 to 8 points.

   All (experiential) leadership simulations will take place at the Student Recreation Center (SRC)

2. **Reflection Journal:** Reflection journals will consist of a minimum eight entries—one for about half the lecture or lab class periods. The purpose of the journal is to reflect upon
and record what the student experienced in class in a semi-structured way. Each reflection entry has three components:

- **What** – a description of what the student experienced in class
- **So what** – the student’s reflection on that experience – What was learned? Was it insightful? Did it take the student out of their “comfort zone?” Did it expand their “comfort zone?”
- **Now what** – the student’s insights on the consequences or implications of their reflections – How will this influence their interactions with others? How will this impact their role as a student, a professional, a community member, a citizen? How will this challenge them to ……?

To get the most out of keeping a reflection journal, students should write each entry within an hour after the conclusion of class. Journal entries can be handwritten or recorded electronically. Each entry must include the time of day the entry was made, the date, and have the three components clearly marked. If entries are hand written, students will keep all entries in a notebook; if typed, students will save all entries in one folder. Written journals must be 1-2 pages typed. If the journal is recorded electronically, students will email the video or provide the correct link to access it online. Electronic journals should be no more than four minutes.

Journals will be collected in weeks 4, 8, 12, 15. Two journal entries are required to be submitted by Friday at 5:00 p.m. of said weeks. Written journals must be dropped off to Natalie’s office; electronic submissions must be emailed to Natalie (refer to instructor info above). Journals will be evaluated on content, critical analysis of the activity, and application of learned information.

3. **Reading Critiques:** This semester students will write three, two page (double-spaced) critical essays on the assigned readings and the StrengthsFinder 2.0 report. Each analysis will require the student to respond to the SF2.0 text as well as the student’s individual StrengthsFinder 2.0 report information. The first essay should address what the students’ Top 5 strengths mean to them. Do they agree with the characteristics, descriptions, and examples? How do students see these strengths playing out in their everyday life? The second essay should address how students plan to apply their strengths and ideas for action.

4. **Examination:** There will be one required examination which is designed to help students better understand the introductory leadership principles of the course. The exam will be taken during the Tuesday lecture time and will be closed book and notes.

5. **Personal Leadership Action Plan:** Students will be required at the end of the semester to submit (4-5 double spaced pages) and present (5-7 min.) their personal leadership plan. Said plan should include students core values, SF2.0 personal information as well as other relevant leadership concepts. More information and examples will be provided as the term progresses.
GRADING/EVALUATION FOR THE COURSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation Discussion (Classroom Lecture – 13 Tuesdays and 3 Thursdays)</td>
<td>5pts/16days = 80 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Experiential (Rec Center – 12 Thursdays)</td>
<td>10 pts/12days = 120 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Journals</td>
<td>10 pts/entry X 8 entries = 80 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Critiques:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1 - Awareness: What my top 5 changes mean?</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 - Application &amp; Achievement: Ideas for action</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Leadership Plan</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>530 POINTS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A grading rubric will be provided with each assignment when introduced in class.

Grading Scale:

| 503-530pts/95-100% = A | 402-423pts/76-79% = C+ |
| 477-502pts/90-94% = A- | 386-401pts/73-75% = C |
| 455-476pts/86-89% = B+ | 371-385pts/70-72% = C- |
| 439-454pts/83-85% = B  | 349-370pts/66-69% = D+ |
| 424-438pts/80-82% = B- | 318-348/pts60-65% = D |

Note: In addition to points being deducted for lateness/absence per scheduled meeting time, ten additional points will be deducted from a student’s overall participation points earned for every three tardies.

COURSE POLICIES

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is the cornerstone of the university. Any student, who attempts to gain an unfair advantage over other students by cheating, will fail the assignment and be reported to the Office Student Standards and Accountability. Cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010(3): [http://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=504-26-010](http://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=504-26-010)

**Late Work:** Students should please mark their calendars now with all due dates and make every effort to get their work in on time. All due dates are listed on the course calendar. Coursework
submitted after the deadline may be considered for full or partial credit with proper documentation. Undocumented late work will not be accepted.

**Special Needs:** We are committed to providing assistance to help all students be successful in this course. If a student has special needs that may affect their performance in this course, please let me know.

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If students have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Access Center. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with an Access Advisor.

**Campus Safety:** Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the Pullman campus. As part of this commitment, the university has prepared this Campus Safety Plan, containing a listing of university policies, procedures, statistics and information relating to campus safety, emergency management and the health and welfare of the campus community. For more information go to http://safetyplan.wsu.edu, http://alert.wsu.edu/, http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies

### CLASS SCHEDULE/DUE DATES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/13/15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
<td>(classroom) Leadership Overview (definition, intro to Experiential Ed., Experiential Learning Model)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/10/15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Review Experiential Learning Model, Video Journals</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rac Center</td>
<td>Experiential Learning Model worksheet (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/17/15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PVC, Core Values</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Read: Fellowship is Leadership (Pitren, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/1/15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Introduction to Leadership/Followership, Servant Leadership</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Read Chp 11 (Blackboard), Reflection Journal DUE: 2/6 @ 5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/8/15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Review Core Values / Feedback, Personal Brand</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>CV Feedback Forms DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/15/15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Situational Leadership</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Read Chp 5 (Blackboard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/22/15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/5/15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Strengths Finder 2.0: Assessment</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Read: SF 2.0 p.1-30, Reading Critique #1, DUE, Reflection Journal DUE: 3/6 @ 5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/12/15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Strengths Finder 2.0: Awareness, Application &amp; Achievement</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Road SF 2.0: p.37-172 &amp; Personal Strengths Report, Reading Critique #2 DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/19/15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/16/15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Emotional Intelligence: Consciousness of Context &amp; Self</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Read EIL Text: Part 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/6/15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Leadership and Change</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Reflection Journal DUE: 4/10 @ 5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/13/15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Introduce Personal Leadership Plan Presentations, Exam #2</td>
<td>Experiential Learning - Rec Center</td>
<td>Reflection Journal DUE: 4/10 @ 5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/20/15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Introduce Final Case Study, Leadership Presentations (in classroom)</td>
<td>Personal Leadership Plan Presentations</td>
<td>Reflection Journal DUE: 5/1 @ 5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/27/15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Personal Leadership Plan Presentations</td>
<td>Personal Leadership Plan Presentations</td>
<td>Reflection Journal DUE: 5/1 @ 5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/4/15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Sample Leadership Simulation

Sample Leadership Simulation

Tuesday: Lecture: EIL Tools and Core Values (Lecture course)

Thursday: Experiential: King’s Ring / TP Shuffle

DLO: Core Values Identification & use of EQ Tools

Reading: In class assigned reading

Activity I: Kings Ring (Giant’s Thumb)

The class was separated into two groups where each group was given 25 minutes to complete and discuss each initiative. One group started with Kings Ring and the other with TP Shuffle, and then they switched. Facilitators can chose to station themselves at one initiative and work with both groups, or switch initiatives and move with their group.

King’ Ring Image

Equipment: None.

Objective: Remove the tire from the pole and/or place it back on without touching the pole.

Description: An 12’ pole was buried vertically in the ground. The groups both removed the tire that was on the pole and replaced it back on the pole. Proper spotting and lifting techniques were
covered before beginning of the simulation. The group was informed of their objective. Once the group was inside of the circle, the group was not allowed to talk. The only time the group could talk was for proper spotting commands and in the event of an emergency.

**Debrief:** What were ways that you all communicated? What are situations in which verbal communication is not always the best option? How did knowing that you were spotted help those of you that were in the air? Course instructors took the transference (now what?) aspect and worked to connect the in class material.

Activity II: TP Shuffle

**TP Shuffle Image**

Equipment: None.

**Objective:** To get everyone on the log into a specific order, without stepping off.

**Description:** First, the group was instructed to step onto the log. Once everyone was on the log they were no longer allowed to come off the log. If anyone stepped off the log, they were issued some sort of bug (e.g. cannot talk, pirate accent, speak in opposites). The group was reminded that this was a self-spotted activity. The group was instructed to rearrange themselves alphabetically by name or last name, or by the size of their high school mascot. The facilitator chose how the group rearranged themselves.
Debrief: What did the group think they would be doing when on the log? How did the group approach the objective? What were some of the methods used in figuring out the problem? What effect did the leader’s role have on the group: both positive and negative? Instructors took the transference (now what?) piece and worked to connect the experience back to the class material.

Activity 2: Alternate activities with each group - See above.

Large Group Debrief

After each group had attempted and/or completed both the scheduled simulations, the entire class came back together. Students were asked to report out from their small group debriefs. What is something that stood out to them from the activity or from the discussion? Students were encouraged to share what they learned from their small groups.

Feedback for Leader

Upon completion of the small and large group debriefs, the assigned leaders for the day met with their observers, instructors, and/or facilitators, who all gave concrete feedback to the leader.