The New American University:

Preparation of the M.Ed. Graduate Student for the 21st Century Institution

by

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ABSTRACT

To sustain world preeminence, 21st century university and college leaders in the United States are redesigning their institutions organizationally and culturally to align with the direction of local and global societies and markets. The New American University enterprise model at Arizona State University has become one of the leading organization and cultural redesigns in United States higher education since its inception in 2002. Yet, sustaining a 21st century model such as this one means every individual in the college or university must understand his or her specific role to further progress the new model forward.

Therefore, to advance and sustain a 21st century higher education redesign model at a U.S. college or university, it becomes imperative that every master-level professional who works in the academic/student services field at the institution understand his or her specific role in helping to further progress the new model forward. To this end, there is a need to change the way graduate students in higher education/student affairs masters programs are educated to work in the 21st century institution. This change can prepare new professionals to understand these enterprise models and how to integrate them into their practice in order to meet the needs of the institution, local and global societies and markets.

The purpose of this action research study is to highlight one program, the ASU M.Ed. Higher and Postsecondary program, and show how graduates from 2007 - 2011 understand New American University concepts and integrate them into professional practice within higher education.

Through use of a quantitative approach, this action research study described how the ASU M.Ed. in Higher and Postsecondary program graduate students' understanding of New American University concepts informs their thinking and practice to lead and respond to changes and challenges facing today's 21st century higher education field.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my Papa, Mr. Joseph Castaldi,

who always taught me as long as I believed in myself anything is possible.

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First, I would like to thank my mother and father, Jackie and John Antonucci, who have always encouraged me to follow my dreams and taught me to do so in my own way. I would not be at this milestone in my educational journey without your continued love and support.

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Finally, I would like to thank all those who have cheered me on through this educational journey. From my friends and mentors at Quinnipiac, who provided me the spark to enter higher education, to those at Arizona State, who showed me that I could be successful in this field, I thank you. To Drs. Barclay, McIntyre and Rivers, thank you for being there for me. It is often said that achieving great feats such as this one cannot be done alone. That sentiment is so very true, as I am forever indebted to my best friend in life, Katherine Richter for the love, support, and inspiration you have provided me throughout this journey. I could not have done this without you!

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview and Problem

To sustain world preeminence, 21st century college and university leaders in the United States (U.S.) are redesigning their institutions organizationally and culturally to align with the direction of local and global societies and markets (Armstrong, 2001; Crow, 2002; Collins, 2005; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Menand, 2010). Higher education leadership is working to re-construct their colleges and universities by bringing global stakeholders from industry, government, and science together to develop educational programs to cultivate solution-focused students (Armstrong, 2001; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Menand, 2010). Professionals who are involved in or around the field of higher education are experiencing these changes through new types of funding, curriculum, governance, institutional leadership, and approaches to student support (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009; Armstrong, 2001; Cole, 2008; Menand, 2010; Tierney, 2003). As a result of these compounding changes, researchers are seeing an emergence of new ideas, models, and claims on how these college and university leaders are redesigning U.S. higher education organizationally and culturally into a more competitive position to maintain and grow its reign (Altbach et al., 2005; Bok, 2006; Cole, 2008; Florida, 2006; Menand, 2010).

The New American University (NAU) enterprise model at Arizona State University (ASU) has become one of the leading organizational and cultural redesigns in U.S. higher education since its inception in 2002 (Cole, 2008; Hacker

& Dreifus, 2010; Theil, 2008). The NAU enterprise model is built around eight design aspirations (see Appendix A) that are intended to shift ASU's organization and culture into a more competitive position in the global field of higher education (Crow, 2002). According to the scholarship, this model demonstrates how to successfully position a public, four-year institution of higher learning to undertake the challenges facing the 21st century and align the institution to move with the direction of local and global societies and markets (Cole, 2009; Crow, 2002; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Menand, 2010; Theil, 2008). To this end, enterprise models such as the NAU can actualize and advance when leaders interface with faculty, staff and students on how to integrate the model's concepts into their daily practice (Cole, 2009; Collins, 2001; Collins, 2005; Pritchett & Pound, 2007).

Therefore, to advance and sustain a 21st century higher education redesign model at a U.S. college or university, it becomes imperative that every master-level professional who works in the academic/student services field at the institution understand his or her specific role in helping to further progress the new model forward (Collins, 2001; Pritchett & Pound, 2007). To this end, there is a need to change the way graduate students in higher education/student affairs masters programs are educated to work in the 21st century institution. This change can prepare new professionals to understand these enterprise models and how to integrate them into their practice in order to meet the needs of the institution, local and global societies and markets (Armstrong, 2001; Crow, 2002;

Collins, 2005; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Lovell & Kosten, 2002; Menand, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

There are numerous ways higher education professionals are prepared to be faculty and leaders in universities and colleges. In the academic/student services field of higher education, master's degree programs cultivate entry and mid-level college and university scholar-practitioners and leaders. These positions include entry-level positions such as Academic Advisors or Coordinators who oversee academic or student services programs. Mid-level positions include Managers of auxiliary services (i.e. housing, counseling, health services, etc.) or Assistant Directors who supervise full-time staff and oversee academic programs or student services.

Based on my graduate education, practitioner experience as an entry and mid-level housing professional, and my current research study, I believe it is necessary for master's degree programs that focus on preparing higher education practitioners and leaders to focus on the 21st century college student and the changing organizational culture of higher learning (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Hurtado et al., 1999; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Newton & Richardson, 1976; Rendon, 1994; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005). My assertion germinates from my experience as a graduate student from 2007 to 2009 in the Arizona State University M.Ed. Higher and Postsecondary Education program (ASU M.Ed. HED). During this time, I worked on my degree while serving the university as a live-in professional within

the Department of Residential Life. As I progressed through my graduate experience, I learned more about conceptual framework and vision of the NAU, which taught me the significance of developing internal and external partnerships and to position myself close to prominent leaders within the institution. As a result of this enlightenment I pursued and secured an internship with the Arizona Board of Regents. I was the first higher education master student to serve in this role; prior to my appointment the interns had always been higher education doctoral students. I attended and presented at multiple professional conferences, served as a guest speaker/instructor for graduate higher education classes, volunteered to be on division-wide committees, and sought mentorship from senior leadership in the field of higher education. Throughout my graduate experience, I learned that to become a 21st century academic-leader in higher education I would need a doctoral degree to pursue senior level positions, contribute to new scholarship, understand research and evaluation, and create entrepreneurial and innovative practices which reflect the NAU.

Since the completion of my M.Ed. in HED at ASU in 2009, I have enrolled in an Ed.D. Program, I was promoted twice within the Department of Residential Life, was then hired to develop and lead a unit within an academic college, selected to serve on university-wide committees, and was honored regionally and nationally for my innovative and entrepreneurial leadership skills in the field of Residential Life and Student Affairs/Services. My achievements are a testament on how I worked to develop a thorough understanding and integration of the NAU enterprise model. I am only one example of the ASU M.Ed. HED

graduate, and it is my belief that other ASU M.Ed. HED graduates share similar stories as mine whereby they applied their understanding of the NAU and its concepts from their graduate education into their own practice as 21st century master-level professionals in higher education.

Professionals in the field of higher education/student affairs have an obligation to respond to societal change and institutional maturation. Specifically, higher education/student affairs practitioners and leaders need to have a base understanding and ability to adapt and apply the concepts of these 21st century enterprise models such as the NAU into their professional practice (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Menand, 2010). To this end, aspiring higher education/student affairs professionals require preparation in graduate programs which facilitate solution focused learning and skills to tackle the challenges facing higher education in the 21st century (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Tierney, 2003; Williams et al., 2005).

The purpose of this study is twofold: 1) to understand how graduates from the Arizona State University M.Ed. in Higher and Postsecondary Education (ASU M.Ed. HED) program understand New American University concepts and integrate them into professional practice within higher education, and 2) to learn how to conduct an action research study as I mature in my role as a future scholar and leader.

Significance of the Study

Ten years ago, scholars claimed that if student affairs/higher education masters degree programs did not make significant changes and educated students on how to understand present-day practices, they would begin to be phased out and initiate a subsequent phase-out of the field of student affairs (Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Tierney, 2003). Five years later new research emerged and found that the competencies taught in most higher education/student affairs masters programs still did not align with what senior leaders (Vice Presidents, Deans and Directors) believed were important for the 21st century young master-level professionals in higher education (Burkard et al., 2005).

At ASU, the M.Ed. HED program aligned with the NAU enterprise model in 2006 and transformed the program from a 37 hour student affairs and leadership policy program operated on semester course model with a final Capstone project where all students had to write on the same topic, to a 30 hour hybrid course model (8-week courses and online) which focused on student success and leadership across the entire university. Further, the program sought to align and educate students on the concepts that make up the NAU. In 18 months the program grew from 33 students to 110 with the highest active enrollment at 164 and current enrollment at 134, despite undergoing two college reorganizations, an economic downturn, diminished state support, a reduction in program faculty, university layoffs, furloughs and disestablished programs throughout the university. I contend the vitality and sustainability of the program is in large part due to the realignment of the program goals to the NAU and the

number of graduates who self-report getting professional appointments in higher education. This repositioning of the HED M.Ed. program reflects the focus, knowledge delivery, and learning goals inherent to the 21st century learner and institution (Burkard et al., 2005; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Newton & Richardson, 1976).

The significance of this study is to demonstrate through a descriptive analysis that the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understands four concepts of the NAU--entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, and inclusion--and why they should be integrated into their professional practice. The results of this study will be used to: 1) develop recommendations for the HED M.Ed. program coordinator, and 2) to facilitate my understanding of how to research, translate, and apply NAU concepts as an aspiring 21st century leader in higher education (Collins, 2001; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Menand, 2010; Pritchett & Pound, 2007).

This study is relevant for practitioners, faculty, and leaders in 21st century higher education for two significant reasons. First, as leaders in the field continue to develop redesigns of their higher education institutions, it is imperative to understand how concepts need to be infused organizationally and culturally throughout an institution in order to facilitate their efforts. Second, the goal of any U.S. graduate program is to provide students with the knowledge and skills to impact their community of practice (Menand, 2010). Through the findings of this study, I describe how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understood the NAU concepts and integrated them into practice, and I will demonstrate how

this program provided the graduate with a skill set necessary for 21st century higher education.

Research Question

How do graduates from the Arizona State University M.Ed. Higher and Postsecondary program understand New American University concepts and integrate them into professional practice?

Overview of the Study

Through my alumnae status in ASU M.Ed. HED program and as a current higher education professional in the NAU, I examined my own community of practice for this action research study. As an aspiring 21st century higher education leader, I created this study with the intention of learning how master-level professionals in my community of practice understand and integrate the NAU through four concepts: entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary and inclusion into practice (Collins, 2001; Menand, 2010; Pritchett & Pound, 2007). To that end, I took a constructivist lens and approach when conducting this action research study. I selected constructivism because it holds that with organizational change, leaders must adapt and develop relevant skills to the changing local and global society and market (Collins, 2001; Collins, 2005; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

I designed this action research study with a quantitative approach. I conducted two evaluations of a purposeful sample and collected my data through online surveying. The results from the initial evaluation of my purposeful sample made me shift the study's focus from examining current students and all graduates

of the ASU M.Ed. HED program to just those who graduated from 2007 to 2011. I made this shift because of a small response from current students and because an integral part of action research is that the researcher must be a part of the community being examined (Dick, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

In my second and final evaluation of the sample, I recruited 101 graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program to participate in my study through ASU email and Facebook. I collected 27 full responses, which produced a 27% response rate, above the range scholarship claims is appropriate for an online survey (Deutskens, du Ruyter, Wetzels & Oosterveld, 2004). I conducted a descriptive analysis to uncover how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understood the NAU concepts and integrated them into professional practice. I triangulated my findings with course syllabi from the ASU M.Ed. HED program to verify concepts were transparent in course goals and learning outcomes.

There were three limitations in my study. The first limitation is that I had a small sample size; therefore, the results of the study cannot be used to generalize or make claims about the entire population of graduate students from higher education/student affairs masters programs (Davies, 2007). The second limitation is that I was unable to reach all alumnae that graduated between 2007 and 2011 from the ASU M.Ed. HED program. The third limitation of this study is that I only selected to evaluate how the participant understood and integrated four NAU (entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, inclusion) concepts within their professional practice.

Key Terms

Higher Education: a field in the U.S. that embodies a culture of developing new knowledge through discovery to create social and economic progress (Cole, 2008).

College/University: a place where knowledge, discovery, and research intersect (Cole, 2009; Crow, 2002).

College Student: an individual who has demonstrated through a set of admission criterion they are eligible to pursue additional learning at a college of university (Cole, 2008; Lovell & Kosten, 2002; Newton & Richardson, 1976).

Student Affairs/Services: a non-academic field within a higher education institution that is responsible for developing a college student's ability on how to leverage their education and experience after college (NASPA, 2010).

Leader/ship: an individual or collection of individuals who are responsible for making sure an organization responds to societal change and maturation (Collins, 2001; Menand, 2010; NASPA, 2010).

New American University: a model for a 21st century institution of U.S. higher learning that is measured not by who it excludes, but rather by who it includes; pursuing research and discovery that benefits the public good; assuming major responsibility for the economic, social, and cultural vitality and health and well-being of the community (Crow, 2002).

Enterprise Model: a 21st century organization and culture that facilitates entrepreneurial innovation by securing research grants that promote interdisciplinary creativity and originality, produces entrepreneurial-minded

graduates, equips students with the skills to tackle local and global challenges, and ensures graduates are recruited into competitive professional positions ("New American University," 2009).

Entrepreneurship: looking for opportunities to make multiple connections to encourage relevant structural change within an institution of higher education ("New American University," 2009).

Entrepreneur: one is who is willing to take a risk to put forward a new idea or platform that is intended to revolutionize systems or structures to positively benefit multiple stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, etc.) within an institution of higher education ("New American University," 2009; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Innovation: the act of integrating a different approach to an existing practice or process within an institution of higher education ("New American University," 2009).

Innovator: one who masters practices or processes and then discovers ways to enhance them to increase the outcome in a more efficient manner ("New American University," 2009).

Interdisciplinary: working beyond silos, departments, and traditional structures (Aaker & Smith, 2010; "New American University," 2009; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Interdisciplinary practitioner: one who sees values in collaboration between departments and disciplines and develops practice and structures to realize genuine collaborations (Aaker & Smith, 2010; "New American University," 2009; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Inclusion: promotion of access to first generation, ethnic, gender, age, and other diverse identity groups by cultivating a campus learning and working culture which provides a range of learning and professional opportunities (Clayton-Pederson & Musil, 2005; "New American University," 2009).

Inclusive: describes an individual who advances intellectual and cultural proficiencies by removing obstacles which hinder the structural (e.g. policies, buildings), cultural (e.g. practices), learning, and work environments (Clayton-Pederson & Musil, 2005; "New American University," 2009).

Summary

This chapter provided the purpose, significance, and an overview of the problem my action research study addressed. Chapter 2 will cover the relevant scholarship, while Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and approach used to describe and contextualize the findings of how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understood NAU concepts and integrated them into professional practice. Finally, Chapter 4 will present the findings of this study to describe what occurred within the collected data, discuss how the findings align with the current scholarship, recommendations for action within the ASU M.Ed. program, the 21st century practitioner, and what takeaways this study provided me.

Chapter 2 – Review of Supporting Scholarship

Overview of 21st Century Higher Education

Most professionals who are involved in or around the field of higher education are experiencing changes in terms of leadership, governance, funding streams, student access, and other hallmarks of today's modern public universities (Altbach et al., 2009; Cole, 2009). As a result of these compounding changes, researchers are seeing an emergence of new ideas, models, and claims on how to shape United States' higher education organizationally and culturally into a more competitive position to maintain its preeminence within the world (Altbach et al., 2005; Bok, 2006; Cole, 2009; Menand, 2010). Much of the scholarship on how to change higher education is currently presented as different pieces needed to succeed, rather than as one encompassing approach to maintain preeminence.

The biggest consistent claim in the scholarship is that institutional leadership (governing boards and Presidents) need to redesign colleges and universities to refocus their central mission to being the drivers again of societal progression through teaching, research, and discovery (Cole, 2009; Crow, 2002). The first step scholars claim is needed in the 21st century higher education institution is an entrepreneurial spirit, because this is what differentiated U.S. higher education originally in comparison to global higher education (Altbach et al., 2005; Altbach et al., 2009; Bok, 2006; Cole, 2009; Crow, 2008; Florida, 2002; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). Throughout the mid-20th century, colleges and universities rose to preeminence due to two major drivers: 1) the G.I. Bill of 1944 and 2) the demand for U.S. higher education to be the nation's leverage point to

becoming the world leader in discovery, design, and development of products, goods, and services (Cole, 2009). These two goals were achieved, and then with the rise of technology and globalization, U.S. higher education seemed to get complacent, allowing companies to drive discovery where they saw fit, which allowed the world to catch and pass the U.S. for globally being first in education and industry (Cole, 2009; Freidman, 2005; Robinson, 2006). Therefore, a key component to preeminent success in the 21st century is to intentionally redesign the institution with an embedded entrepreneurial ideal into the organizational and cultural framework of the college or university, so it can rise back to the top and be the driver of societal solutions (Altbach et al., 2005; Altbach et al., 2009; Bok, 2006; Cole, 2009; Crow, 2008; Florida, 2002; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Secondly, the 21st century college or university must be naturally innovative to sustain success in the globalized marketplace (Aaker & Smith, 2010; Friedman, 2005; Florida, 2002; Florida, 2006; Kirp, 2004). According to Richard Florida (2002, 2006), innovation is a characteristic of creativity, and the emergent generation of college-bound students and entry-level professionals in the world are members of what he terms the "creative class." Thus, Florida (2002, 2006) and others purport that institutions where this creative generation will go for their formal and informal training before entering the workforce, must become a space that permits this innate skill to be understood and developed (Aaker & Smith, 2010; Robinson, 2006). If it does not, he claims, the result will be a society that sputters, because individuals will not have the knowledge needed to progress their immediate societies forward (Florida, 2002). Higher education has always

been a transitory space in American society where one goes to transition into adulthood; therefore, embracing innovation as a key component in the 21st century college or university is required for true advancement of not just the institution, but also society (Aaker & Smith, 2010; Crow, 2010a; Florida, 2002; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Robinson, 2006).

Finally, U.S higher education rose to preeminence because it was the one sector of America that functioned in an interdisciplinary manner (Cole, 2009; Menand, 2010). However, through the increase of political bureaucracy, corporate interests, and the rise of global markets, the academy became tainted and focused more on the money and less on what society needed (Kirp, 2004; Menand, 2010). The result was that the academy once known for working between disciplines and silos to achieve the greater good, grew to be more narrow and discrete (Menand, 2010).

As more U.S. and international corporations took over as interdisciplinary incubators for society, the academy seemingly lost its identity (Menand, 2010). Therefore, the 21st century higher education institution needed to rekindle its roots and reinvigorate a spirit of interdisciplinary discovery and development within colleges and universities as drivers of knowledge, change, and local and global leaders (Capaldi, 2009; Cole, 2009; Menand, 2010). With a re-conceptualized role, the 21st century institution needed to become solution focused, to claim an identity of incubation into inventions (Capaldi, 2009; Cole, 2009; Crow, 2010b; Menand, 2010). However, while important to embed 21st century ideals into colleges or universities, it is yet to be determined beyond anecdotal statements

(Hacker & Dreifus, 2010) or institutional rankings, such as *U.S. News and World Report,* whether these changes are making a substantial and sustainable impact (Cole, 2009; Kirp, 2004; Theil, 2008). Therefore, it is imperative that more studies are conducted through multiple lenses and with diverse intentions on prototypes of how to redesign the U.S. college or university (Bush & Hunt, 2011; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Kezar, 2004; Tierney, 2003).

Arizona State University and the New American University

One U.S. institution that is rapidly changing the modern public university framework is Arizona State University (ASU). Under the leadership of President Michael Crow, ASU, a public four-year university is shifting the paradigm of how to advance an institution to undertake the 21st century U.S. local and global challenges (Cole, 2009; Kirp, 2004; Theil, 2008). Since 2002, Crow has been growing the ASU "New American University" (NAU) enterprise model to redesign, reposition and reconstruct the university to be focused on access (e.g. allowing any student who qualifies for university study to be accepted), excellence (e.g. increasing rankings and research dollars), and impact (e.g. transforming programs and research to be solution focused). Through this framework, the NAU enterprise model embeds many of the ideals discussed above and positions ASU to be organizationally and culturally in a more competitive position to maintain its preeminence within the world (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 2005; Bok, 2006; Cole, 2009; Florida, 2006; Menand, 2010).

Further, the NAU enterprise model is being developed and grounded on multiple concepts: entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary research, collaboration, inclusion, and partnerships (Crow, 2002). The intent of the NAU enterprise model is to transform the institution's organization and culture into one that facilitates entrepreneurial innovation by securing research grants that promote interdisciplinary creativity and originality, producing entrepreneurial-minded graduates, equipping students with the skills to tackle local and global challenges, and ensuring graduates are recruited into competitive professional positions (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2001; Kirp, 2004; Menand, 2010; "New American University," 2009; Theil, 2008).

During the first eight years (2002-2010) of the NAU enterprise model at ASU, the institution has been able to re-invent itself within the U.S. higher education landscape on multiple fronts. For example, ASU has risen in *US News and World Report Rankings* from 'not ranked' in the top 200 in 2002 to a rank of 132 in 2010, experienced a surge in awarded research dollars from 132.9M in 2002 to 332.1M in 2010, and increased six-year graduation rates from 52% in 2003 to currently 56% (Swain, 2010). However, with every success comes a certain level of scrutiny, and ASU has seen its share. Many critics, such as Patrick Callan, President of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education have argued that what ASU is trying to achieve is impossible in the current economic landscape. Further, he claims that Crow is creating policies and practices based on unachievable aspirations (Lewin, 2009). Additionally, scholars like University of Southern California President Mark Yudof, claim that the NAU

model is too business-like and schools like ASU are becoming nothing more than diploma mills where anyone can earn a degree as long as they can pay for it (Lewin, 2009). Nonetheless, the majority of scholarship instead claims that what is happening at Arizona State through the NAU enterprise model is not only working for the institution itself, but also is becoming the redesign prototype for many newly hired college and university leaders in the U.S. (Bush & Hunt, 2011; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Lederman, 2010; Menand, 2010; Theil, 2008; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010; Vaughn, 2011).

Graduate Education in the United States

U.S. higher education has maintained its global preeminent position because of graduate education (Cole, 2009; Menand, 2010; Stewart, 2010). Graduate education has long been the one sector of U.S. universities where a student can be specifically trained in a particular discipline for a specific career (Menand, 2010). However, with the barrage of global competition in the higher education marketplace (Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005) and the re-development of the undergraduate curriculum (Menand, 2010), the relevance of U.S. graduate education and its significance has been highly scrutinized as to where it fits in the re-organized 21st century U.S. institution (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Stewart, 2010).

Breneman (2009) asserts that while the demand for highly skilled individuals will remain steady, the specific skills employers need is changing. In 2011, the Future Skills Report by the Institute for the Future (2011) claimed that educators who are adaptive thinkers, competent across cultures, understand how

to integrate technology into design, and think in an interdisciplinary manner will find the greatest success sustaining competitive employment in the next decade. This 2011 report compiled its data from Fortune 500 leaders who all said with the increase of globalization, tomorrow's workforce is going to be comprised of highly skilled individuals that are proficient in multiple competencies (Florida, 2004; Robinson, 2006). As a result, U.S. undergraduate and graduate education is shifting its pedagogical paradigm to meet these demands with a greater focus on becoming more interdisciplinary (Stewart, 2010). Menand (2010) and Robinson (2006) claim this shift must happen quicker in the U.S. or the marketplace will go elsewhere to find prospective employees.

ASU's Graduate College leads this paradigm shift away from producing a more specialized generalist to committing itself to a more transformative education which now focuses on developing new interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary programs (ASU Graduate College, 2011). Several studies show there is a disconnect in higher education/student affairs graduate programs between the skills needed to be a successful professional and what a student learns in their graduate programs (Burkard et al., 2005; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Newton & Richardson, 1976). Kretovics (2002) purports that higher education faculty need to be more conscious of the trends within the field and develop curriculum that prepares future leaders with skill sets to address the paradigm shift within higher education.

Higher Education Masters Programs

For the past 30 years, higher education/student affairs masters programs have generally focused on student services, student development, and policy to practice development (Burkard et al., 2005; NASPA, 2010; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). Studies have shown that upwards to 20% of the non-academic workforce in higher education are graduates of these programs (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Turrentine & Conley, 2001). According to the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA, 2010), the majority of postsecondary master programs focus on competency areas such as advising, history and values, human resources, governance, personal foundations, and face-to-face student learning.

Ten years ago, Lovell and Kosten (2000) purported that if student affairs masters programs did not make significant changes to their curriculum they would begin to be phased out and initiate a subsequent phase out of the field of student affairs. A study conducted by Burkard et al., (2005) five years later found that these competencies taught in most higher education/student affairs masters programs did not align with what senior university officers (Vice Presidents, Deans and Directors) believed were important for 21st century professionals.

In 2008, Renn and Jessup-Anger conducted a national study that examined how effective graduates of higher education/student affairs masters programs believed they were prepared for 21st century higher education. The findings of their study indicated two critical items relevant to this study. First, participants of their study indicated they did not believe they were prepared enough in

understanding the organization of their institution (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). Specifically, the study found many programs were focusing on preparing students for leadership positions within higher education, but were not sufficiently providing them the knowledge on how to effectively leverage themselves in their current master-level position (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008).

Second, participants indicated they felt underprepared in how to navigate new organizational culture shifts within their institutions (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). To elaborate, the institution for which the individual worked was redesigning themselves to better educate the student with the direction of local and global societies and markets, and the master-level professional was unable to navigate and adapt their practice to this new institutional approach and culture (Armstrong, 2001; Collins, 2005; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Menand, 2010; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008).

Researcher's Community of Practice

As a graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program in 2009, and a current instructor/mentor in the program, I recognize how my graduate experience and now post-master's practitioner experience has shaped my worldview of higher education based on the concepts of the NAU (Crow, 2002). However, from discussions with colleagues who are current and former master students at other institutions, I have learned that their higher education/student affairs graduate program prepared them differently with a greater focus on 20th century higher education/student affairs models (Burkard et al., 2005; Lovell & Kosten, 2002; NASPA, 2010; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). For example, my program focused

on more contemporary challenges in the field, such as learning to see obstacles as opportunities and how to use one's immediate post-graduate experience as a place to discover new ways to educate students (Clayton-Pederson & Musil, 2005; Collins, 2001; Crow, 2002; Crow, 2011; Florida, 2002; Florida, 2006; Kezar, 2004; Hurtado et al., 1998; Hurtado et al., 1998; Tierney, 2003; Williams et al., 2005). Therefore, I believe this study showcased how the graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program, which is framed on the NAU concepts, are prepared differently and how this approach informs their thinking and practice to lead and respond to changes and challenges facing the field. Additionally, I want this study to serve as a call for other program leaders and faculty to evaluate their master's program on how they prepare students to lead through the local and global challenges facing 21st century higher education.

Summary

This chapter covered the relevant scholarship around U.S. higher education, higher/education/student affairs graduate programs, and my community of practice. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and approach used to describe and contextualize the findings of how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understood NAU concepts and integrated them into professional practice. Finally, Chapter 4 will present the findings of this study to describe what occurred within the collected data, discuss how the findings align with the current scholarship, the research findings of the study, and recommendations that can contribute to the researcher, his community of practice, and the ASU HED M.Ed. program.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

The purpose of chapter three is to present the methodological approach I used to collect the data for this action research study. The chapter begins with a brief overview of my journey and experience as a researcher. Next, I describe the purpose of the study, the approach I used, and my theoretical orientation. Then, I will describe the initial evaluation of the sample, how I recruited participants to collect the data, managed it, and my target response rate. Finally, I present how I designed this action research study, the analysis used, the validity and reliability of the data, and the bias and limitations of the study.

Researcher's Journey

Continuous actions and moments that lead up to a culminating breakthrough is a good way to describe my professional journey up to this point as a new higher education professional and doctoral candidate. This dissertation study was a step to assist me achieve my personal goal to become a game-changing leader within the field of higher education. Throughout my personal journey, I have had many opportunities and experiences that have taught me who I am as a researcher, practitioner, and leader within the context of higher education. During my graduate education journey, I realized that for me to become a successful leader within 21st century higher education, I must understand how professionals at all levels in a college or university employ an institution's vision into his or her specific practice (Collins, 2001; Menand, 2010; Pritchett & Pound, 2007). Said differently, if individuals do not understand a leader's vision and are unable to translate it within their personal practice, the

leader will be hard-pressed to progressively move their organization forward (Collins, 2001; Collins, 2005).

Purpose of the Study

There are numerous ways higher education professionals are prepared to be faculty and leaders in universities and colleges. In the academic/student services field of higher education, master's degree programs cultivate entry and mid-level college and university scholar-practitioners and leaders. These positions include entry-level positions such as Academic Advisors or Coordinators who oversee academic or student services programs. Mid-level positions include Managers of auxiliary services (i.e. housing, counseling, health services, etc.) or Assistant Directors who supervise full-time staff and oversee academic programs or student services.

Based on my graduate and professional experience in higher education and through my current research study, I believe it is necessary for master's degree programs that focus on preparing higher education practitioners and leaders be modified to meet the needs of the 21st century college student and the local and global organizational culture of higher learning (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Hurtado et al., 1999; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Newton & Richardson, 1976; Rendon, 1994; Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005). Professionals in the field of higher education/student affairs have an obligation to respond to societal change and maturation and to be prepared to find solutions to challenges facing higher education in the 21st century (Tierney, 2003). Moreover, local and global higher education/student affairs practitioners and leaders need to

have a base understanding and ability to adapt and apply the concepts of these 21st century enterprise models such as the New American University (NAU) into their professional practice (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Menand, 2010).

The purpose of this study is to learn how graduates from the Arizona State University M.Ed. in Higher and Postsecondary Education (ASU M.Ed. HED) program understand New American University concepts and integrate them into professional practice within higher education.

Action Research Approach

McNiff and Whitehead (2006) purport that action research is done by insiders of an organization to find out what is being done to influence "…other's learning, or whether you need to do something different to ensure that it is" (p. 13). As explained by Creswell (2009), action research is a method that allows the researcher to gather information around a particular topic such as student learning, and then through the findings, initiates strategies to improve student learning. Curry (2005) claims action research is a continuous process where the researcher needs to be embedded in the context to find "…generalizable truths…" (p. 2). The end goal of action research is to inform the learning environment and subsequent community of practice of the outcomes and what steps need to be taken next (Coghlan, 2006).

According to Coghlan (2006), the researcher should be positioned in the center of the action research process to best interpret which action is to be taken based on the results of the study's findings. As a graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program and a current practitioner in the NAU, action research was selected as the

methodological approach for this study because it places me in the center of the study. Additionally, having personally evolved throughout my graduate education journey, action research permitted me to continually refresh my perspective on the NAU concepts (Collins, 2001). Further, action research required me to employ an iterative research approach to explore and understand the general phenomenon (Coghlan, 2006; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). This iterative process contrasts with ethnographic, experimental, and case study designs where the focus is immediately on a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

Scholars claim action researchers should approach their study with the goal of understanding a general phenomenon, and then be prepared to refocus the angle in which they will examine the phenomenon as the iterative action research process evolves (Dick, 2002; Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007). This study's original focus was to uncover how the current student and graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program learn, apply, and translate their graduate education and experience into professional practice. However, through critical reflection and greater comfort with the action research process and after I conducted the initial evaluation of the sample or pilot study, I decided to shift the study's focus (Dick, 2002). This reflective process is inherent to action research and provided me with a more transparent and fluid approach to formulate my research.

The result of my reflective process allowed me to shift my focus and purpose of the study on how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understands the NAU concepts and integrates them into professional practice

within higher education. Further explanation on why I made this shift is discussed later in this chapter.

Theoretical Orientation

My theoretical orientation aligns with constructivism, whereby society and organizations will alter and change over time as new information comes forth from research and societal maturation (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Constructivism holds that with organizational change, leaders must adapt and develop relevant skills (Collins, 2001; Collins, 2005; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). History has shown that when organizations and systems do not evolve, over time they will become phased out, specifically when leadership is unwilling to adapt to change (Cole, 2009; Collins, 2001; Florida, 2002; Kirp, 2004; Senge, 2006; Willis, 1981).

Higher education in the 21st century is aligning more with corporate and private organizational models, structures, and processes (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2002; Kirp, 2004). As such, when organizational change is required, leadership must show a willingness to reconstruct themselves or, like corporate and private organizations, they will be pushed out by new competition over time (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2002; Kirp, 2004). To further illustrate this point, in 2000 the World Higher Education Institutional rankings, the United States had over 100 universities ranked in the top 200, whereas in 2010 only 72 universities were represented in the top 200. Nations such as Japan, China, India and Australia have contributed to this shift in the rankings based on their ability to adapt their institutions to meet the needs of the

21st century marketplace, e.g. by preparing graduates for the fields of science, engineering, technology, and medicine (Cole, 2009; Menand, 2010).

U.S. higher education has recognized this new global competition over the past decade and has appointed leaders who can make swift changes to reconstruct the organization of the institution to align with the direction of local and global societies and markets (Collins, 2001; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Menand, 2010; Senge, 2006). This change is becoming omnipresent at the largest research universities in the U.S. (Carlson & Matthews, 2008; Collins, 2001; Cole, 2009).

One example of this change in leadership is at Ohio State University, where E. Gordon Gee was re-hired as the institution's President in 2007 to fundamentally reconstruct the institution's structure to become globally preeminent (Fain, 2007). He has been able to begin to achieve this redesign through the development and implementation of Ohio State's *Excellence to Eminence* model, which calls for a redevelopment of the academic calendar, a 25% increase in international opportunities for students, and for a smaller organizational structure of the institution so it can maneuver with the local and global marketplace (Ohio State University, 2011). Whereas Ohio State is preparing to demonstrate success of its redesign in the next year, Arizona State and President Michael Crow is already showing why institutions need to reconstruct themselves to remain competitive.

Crow was hired in 2002 to reconstruct ASU's culture to be in a more competitive position in the global field of higher education (Crow, 2002). Since

Crow's arrival, he has implemented the NAU enterprise model, which has led ASU to rise in *US News and World Report Rankings* from 'not ranked' in the top 200 in 2002 to being ranked number 132 in 2010. Additionally, ASU experienced a surge in research dollars awarded from 132.9M in 2002 to 332.1M in 2010, and increased student six-year graduation rates from 52% in 2003 to 56% in 2010 (Swain, 2010).

Gee's hiring and vision, along with the demonstrated successes of those like Crow, further elucidates how the successful new American university leader must be able to lead through change and embrace the call from society to reconstruct their organization to remain competitive with the local and global marketplace (Bok, 2006; Carlson & Matthews, 2008; Cole, 2009; Friedman, 2005; Menand, 2010). These examples show how two U.S. university presidents lead their organizations by being adaptable and relevant based on local and global changes. As an aspiring leader in U.S. higher education, my constructivist theoretical lens and professional aspirations positions me to align my professional practice with leaders like Crow and Gee who have reformulated today's public research universities as exemplar models for the 21st century.

The Pilot Study

The structure of an action research study calls for a pilot study or initial evaluation of the sample to be conducted so that the researcher can become more comfortable with the phenomenon, the action research process, data collection, and emergent solutions (Dick, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The intent of the pilot study otherwise referred to in this study as the initial evaluation of the

sample, was to provide me with a greater familiarity with the survey tool, the QuestionPro software, and to test language through a convenience sample to help develop better questions for the main study.

The initial evaluation allowed me to also identify and understand the phenomenon within a convenience sample of current students and graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program to uncover if there were any significant commonalities and/or differences between or amongst participants (Dick, 2002; Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007). After receiving minimal responses and little significant data from current ASU M.Ed. HED students during the initial evaluation (3 respondents), I decided, based on the guidance of action research scholarship, to narrow my study to a purposeful convenience sample. As such, I chose to examine those who had graduated from the ASU M.Ed. HED program from 2007 to 2011 (Dick, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007). I selected this timeframe because I was at ASU working as a higher education professional, the research was readily available validating the NAU enterprise model, and artifacts were accessible to show how the NAU concepts were embedded into the ASU M.Ed. HED program (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2008; Vaughn, 2011).

Sample

From the results of the initial evaluation, this action research study shifted and called for participants who came from within the population of students who graduated between 2007 and 2011 from the ASU M.Ed. HED program and currently work in the field of higher education. The specific timeframe was

selected because I arrived at ASU as a student and practitioner in 2007, which is integral to the action research model (Dick, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). Additionally, research was not readily available to validate the NAU enterprise model until 2007 (Dick, 2002; Dillman et al., 2008; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Vaughn, 2011). Finally, I wanted to examine artifacts (e.g. course syllabi) in this time period to demonstrate how NAU concepts were embedded into the framework of the ASU M.Ed. HED program.

Purposeful convenience sampling was used to select the sample for this study because I met the requirements set forth by scholarship (Creswell, 2009; Davies, 2007). First, I had a specific timeframe, which was bounded from 2007 through 2011 to recruit my sample for my study. Second I did not have contact information for the entire random sample, and third, the prospective participants were already in formed groups by graduation year (Creswell, 2009). Having met all qualifiers needed to use a purposeful convenience sample, I proceeded to recruit participants.

Participant recruitment. I simultaneously contacted prospective participants through a Facebook message and/or ASU email. Participants were selected to be a part of the sample based on a personal (e.g. not an official list provided by the university registrar) list provided by the director of the ASU M.Ed. HED program. The sample included 101 prospective participants, who were all graduates of the program from 2007 to spring 2011. I acknowledge there were limitation biases for this study, and further discuss them in the final section of this chapter.

Each prospective participant received a recruitment message with a link directing him or her to the survey which was hosted by QuestionPro, an online survey tool that is discussed in more detail in 'Data Management.' The participant learned when they reached QuestionPro, that the study was voluntary, they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and they had the option to not answer questions. All participants in this study had to acknowledge a message approved by the ASU Institutional Review Board (see Appendix B) outlining the study, any unforeseeable risks of participating, and how to access the survey.

Data collection. Dillman et al. (2008), assert online surveys based on the population being assessed can reach multiple individuals within the target sample, and can be sent directly to the participant through an established electronic communication medium, which provides a sense of social validation, and can be administered in a short timeframe. This is in contrast to individual face-to-face interviews, which are often constrained to a narrower population, require longer periods of time to administer the questions, and often incur challenges in the participant recruitment (Anderson & Kanuka, 2003; Creswell, 2009). Anderson and Kanuka (2003) purport online surveys allow the researcher to receive results exponentially faster than a qualitative approach or hard-copy survey delivered by ground mail. Additionally, online surveys have higher response rates because the sample can participate in the study in a location of their choice and at a time that works for their schedule (Anderson & Kanuka, 2003; Dillman et al., 2008; Truell, 2003).

Dillman et al. (2008) claim one drawback to online surveys is a lot of inference is placed on the researcher to construct the recommendations from the study, as the voice of the respondent is confined to data points. Dick (2002) counters by arguing in action research, the researcher makes the decisions and employs changes as they arise in the iterative data analysis process. Finally, McNiff and Whitehead (2006) purport the intent of online surveys in action research is to reach as many participants in the purposeful sample as possible to address the phenomenon.

The online survey also made transparent to the researcher the questions that were stronger than others after initial evaluation and analysis. For example, some questions showed no statistical significance or variance amongst participant responses (Anderson & Kanuka 2003). Therefore, as the researcher, I inferred the question may have been poorly framed and made changes to the survey scheme for the final evaluation of the sample.

The final evaluation's survey question scheme sought demographic information and then provided the participants with a short vignette on each of the NAU concepts--entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, and inclusion--as an example of how they can be placed into action. The participants were then asked how they understood each concept and whether or not they have they applied the concept into practice. See Appendix C for the survey.

Data management. QuestionPro is an online survey development site that assists in the development, distribution and analysis of surveys and was used to host the online surveys in this study (QuestionPro, 2010). QuestionPro is one of

the few online host services which allow the researcher to employ features such as branching without additional fees attached (QuestionPro, 2010). Branching was important for this study because it enabled me to screen out participants who did not currently work in the field of higher education. Moreover, the program allowed me to conduct a basic analysis of collected data while the instrument was live (QuestionPro, 2010).

The survey launched on June 23, 2011 to 101 participants. It was kept open for a total of 14 days, into early July. By the fifth day it was live, the survey had already produced a response rate of 20%. After the fifth day it was live, a follow-up Facebook message or email was sent to non-respondents. I wanted to increase the response rate and sent a follow-up on June 28th, prior to a holiday weekend. The final reminder to non-respondents on day twelve (July 4th) reminded them that it would close on July 6th.

Studies have shown with online/web-based surveys that after five days prospective participants should be solicited one final time for participation (Creswell, 2009; Deutskens et al., 2004; Truell, 2003). Creswell (2009) claims that the length of time an online survey should be live is between 10 and 20 days. Deutskens et al., (2004) argue that if a survey is launched during a period of time where internet traffic maybe low (i.e. Independence Day weekend), the survey's field life should be extended to ensure as much of the population has the opportunity to participate, which is why I solicited prospective participants for a third time on July 4th. This strategy worked, as I collected three more responses to arrive at a final response rate of 27% and an N of 27.

Response rate. Online web surveys that are initiated via email were used for this study because online surveys have the highest participant response for a purposeful sample such as this one used in this study (Dillman et al., 2008). I was provided a list of students who graduated between 2007 and 2011 from the ASU M.Ed. HED program director. The initial list encompassed over 110 names of graduates from spring 2007 to spring 2011. That list was scaled down from 110 to 101 prospective participants, based on non-probability convenience sampling and a common characteristic, that the prospective participant was reachable via ASU email and/or Facebook (Davies, 2007). I also sought to obtain a 25 to 30% response rate from the 101 participants contacted to ensure the survey returned a significant proportion of the purposeful sample. Deutskens et al., (2004) claim that an appropriate response rate for an online survey should range between 17.5% and 25%, this study produced at 27% response rate. I wanted to achieve a high enough response rate in order to first become familiar with how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understands the NAU concepts as a result of their graduate education and experience in the NAU and second, to be able to formulate recommendations about how the program can better prepare new scholar/practitioners in the field of higher education (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Jiao, 2007).

Action Research Design Process

My worldview is embedded in this action research study based on my HED M.Ed. alumnae status and as a current higher education professional in the NAU. My constructivist disposition permitted me to design a study, which

utilized spiral methodology. Said differently, I permitted the study design to evolve as data was collected, reviewed, and managed (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Dick, 2002; Hodder, 2000; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The spiral methodological approach allowed me to examine the phenomenon, compare the initial evaluation of the sample's data through multiple analytical iterations, then to the literature, and finally identify and frame significant points needed to be understood (Dick, 2002; Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007).

Descriptive Analysis

The initial step in a descriptive analysis is a simplified statistical summary, which includes the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation of what is happening within the sample, and was the prelude to any additional analysis done on the collected data (Smith & Glass, 1978; Trochim, 2006). The initial analysis of collected data informed me if respondents understood the NAU, the concepts, and what needed to be changed in the study to better collect data so a prescriptive set of actions could made for change to occur within the ASU M.Ed. HED program (Erickson, 1986). Therefore, every subsequent step in my descriptive analysis focused the study and revealed data often referred to as 'specific problems' within the phenomenon (Dick, 2002; Creswell, 2009; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher, 2007).

In this study, I conducted my descriptive analysis to identify trends within the phenomenon and to uncover any statistically significant results (Pearson, 2010). Once I completed a descriptive analysis, I was able to determine if inferential statistics were needed to construct recommendations for the general

population (Smith & Glass, 1978; Trochim, 2006). In this study, I did not need to conduct inferential statistics for two reasons. First, I understood that the findings of this study are not generalizable. Second, the descriptive analysis provided me the sufficient data to understand and explain the findings and make recommendations.

QuestionPro and Excel. QuestionPro and Microsoft Excel are two programs that allow researchers to understand collected data in multiple ways. QuestionPro was developed in early 2000 to assist in the development, distribution, and analysis of surveys (2010). Microsoft Excel was developed in 1993 to assist individuals in the management and manipulation of data. Both programs were used to manage and conduct analysis of the collected data; QuestionPro specifically allowed me to build the survey, conduct the analysis, and store the data within its password-protected portal.

Once the survey data was loaded into the analysis tool within QuestionPro and Excel, I was able to eliminate any incomplete responses and analyze the 27 full responses collected. With QuestionPro and Excel, the data was viewed through cross tabulation tables, charts, and other ways to better assist me in understanding what was happening within the study (Trochim, 2006). QuestionPro provided a cross-tabulation tool that would demonstrate the significance of a particular demographic for each question. Through these cross-tabulations, I was able to determine which questions showed to be statistically significant (> 0.05) when analyzed against demographics and other concepts.

The survey was launched to 101 participants: 83 viewed the survey within QuestionPro and 57 started the survey. However, of those 57 who started the survey, only 33 were registered as actual completions. Four of those completions were participants who were terminated via branching when they did not pass the screener question two, "Are you currently employed at a higher education institution?" Additionally, two participants did not complete all the questions within the survey and were removed from the final analyzable sample of 27 based on the guidance provided by Dillman et al. (2008), who claims that if a participant does not complete every question within the survey, they should not be considered as a respondent.

Reliability and Validity

Creswell (2009) describes reliability in action research as measures that would produce the same result over and over again if repeated in studies. If the measures used to understand how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED understands and integrates the NAU concepts into professional practice were repeated in another study, the results would be consistent with the results of this study. This level or reliability was demonstrated when examining the results from the initial evaluation of the sample and the final evaluation of the sample, as repeated questions produced the same results.

This action research study produced an original instrument to understand how graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understand and integrate the NAU concepts into professional practice; as a result, there is an external threat to validity in this action research study (Creswell, 2009). I acknowledge this threat,

and in response, understand that claims from this study's findings cannot be generalized or used to describe the effect of the phenomenon in other settings. Additionally, I triangulated the data collected in this study against program artifacts (M.Ed. HED course syllabi from 2007-2011) to verify and subsequently increase the validity of my findings and demonstrate that these four NAU concepts were embedded into the ASU M.Ed. HED program's courses.

Researcher Bias

All research has bias based on the nature of the researcher's decisions on a topic, when to conduct the research, and how to determine the sample of participants to recruit (Smith, 2006). I addressed bias in this action research by making clear from the onset my own assumptions and how they influence my research. For example, I discussed these assumptions with critical peers who did not participate in the study in order to reflect and recalibrate my thinking (Tierney, 1998). The first observance of bias was in the development of the study and how to approach the sample. I contacted, discussed, and reviewed multiple methods to conduct this study with faculty who currently are affiliated and/or teach within the ASU M.Ed. HED program. The purpose of this process was to understand how to most appropriately collect functional data to better understand how the graduate of this program understands and integrates the four NAU concepts.

The second observance of bias was when I spoke with faculty, staff, and students who I knew understood the NAU due to their roles within ASU. The purpose of this exercise was to make sense of the phenomenon that is the NAU.

Moreover, the process helped to verify that the intent of the study was not off course. The final observance of bias was with the narrowing down of the sample to 101 from 110. I determined the sample had to be reachable by these two mediums (ASU email & Facebook) in order to be recruited for this study. I selected these two mediums because of my prior experience in corporate market research, where I had successfully and effectively used these two mediums to recruit individuals for online surveys.

Limitations

There were three primary limitations of this study. The first limitation involves using a small purposeful convenience sample. With a small sample, the results of this study cannot be used to generalize or make claims about the entire population of graduate students from higher education/student affairs masters programs (Davies, 2007). A second limitation is that the entire sample of those who graduated between 2007 and 2011 from the ASU M.Ed. HED was not provided an opportunity to participate in this study. Through scaling the available sample down to 101 based on a common characteristic that the prospective participant was reachable via ASU email and/or Facebook, I acknowledge that this study did not provide an opportunity to the entire available sample (Davies, 2007).

The third limitation of this study is that I only selected to evaluate how the participant understood and integrated the four NAU concepts within their professional practice. If given more time, I would have framed this study to examine in greater depth how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program

applies the Eight Designs Aspirations of the NAU into professional practice, to understand why they use the concepts in practice, and to compare the graduates from other higher education/student affairs programs. I acknowledge these limitations and intend to use this study to advance my research skills in order to conduct research on the 21st century college student, institutional leadership, and the concepts of entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary and inclusion within the local and global context of higher education.

Summary

An action research design was conducted using an online survey. Data was collected from 27 participants who are graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program from 2007 to 2011. Descriptive analysis was used to discern how the participants understood the New American University concepts and how they integrated them into professional practice within higher education. Chapter 4 will present the findings of this study to describe what occurred within the collected data and to discuss how the findings align with the current scholarship, and how the research findings of the study, and recommendations can contribute to the researcher, his community of practice, and the ASU HED M.Ed. program.

Chapter 4 – Findings and Discussion

The purpose of chapter four is to present and discuss the research findings. The first section of the chapter is an overview of the survey and participant demographics followed by section two, which focuses on how the participants' understand the New American University (NAU) enterprise model and what concepts they identified as necessary for their success in 21st century higher education. The third section presents an overview of how participants understand and integrated the four (NAU) concepts (entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, innovation) into professional practice. At the conclusion of each section, I offer a discussion in how the findings relate to the scholarship and my leadership aspirations in higher education. Then, I will present the reflective practices I used to understand the phenomenon and summarize the findings. Finally, I will provide a summation and discussion of what this study means for my leadership aspirations, the resulted actions that should be taken, and a call for future research.

Online Survey and Participant Demographics

The findings involve data collected from an online web survey because this tool has the highest potential to achieve a significant participant response rate which was needed for the study's purposeful sample (Dillman et al., 2008). The online survey had a total of forty-six questions, with four required screener questions, twelve demographic questions, and eleven open-ended response questions designed to uncover how the graduate of the Arizona State University M.Ed. in Higher and Postsecondary Education (ASU M.Ed. HED) program

understands and integrates the NAU concepts into professional practice within higher education.

The web survey used open-ended questions, which allowed me to understand exactly how the NAU concept was integrated into practice, and what results were produced from the action. The full survey used in the study can be found in Appendix C.

It was required that the participant be a graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program between the years 2007 and 2011 and be currently working at a four-year, two-year, or online/for profit higher education institution: thus, if the participant met these two qualifiers, they were eligible for the online survey. I selected this timeframe because I was at ASU working as a higher education professional, the research was readily available validating the NAU enterprise model, and course syllabi were accessible to verify the NAU concepts were embedded in the ASU M.Ed. HED program (Dillman et al., 2008; Vaughn, 2011).

The online survey reached out to 101 prospective participants, of which 83 individuals viewed the survey, 57 individuals started the survey, and 27 individuals completed the entire survey, thus producing a response rate of 27%, on which the findings and results of this study are based. There were 29 participants who actually started and finished the survey. However, when I examined the data, two participants did not complete every question and were removed from the final N. This decision was made because the scholarship indicates that with online surveying if the participant does not complete each question, they should be removed from the final N before findings and analysis

are presented (Anderson & Kanuka, 2003; Dillman et al., 2008). The findings presented in this study are all based on the final N of 27.

The participant demographics were the first categories examined from the 27 participants. When I examined the gender of my 27 participants, I found they aligned with the makeup of more women than men in the education field, with 21 (78%) participants identifying as female and 6 (22%) participants identifying as male (Farkas & Duffett, 2010). The second demographic I examined was the race/ethnic diversity breakdown of the 27 participants, as shown in Table 1. With 81% of the participants identifying as White, I still found the race/ethnic diversity of my participants was higher than ASU's graduate student profile, as 7% identified as Black compared to ASU's 3.4%, and 11% identifying as Hispanic compared to ASU's 9.5% (ASU, 2011). In addition, I found that my participant profile closely aligned with the makeup of professionals in U.S. education, as 63% (17) of the participants identified as White females compared to 65%, and 19% (5) of the participants identified as White males (Rivers, 2011). The purpose of describing these demographics is to illustrate that even with a small sample, the sample was consistent with the data on gender and race/ethnicity at ASU and in U.S. education.

Table 1

Gender and Race/Ethnic Diversity

	White	Black	Hispanic
Male	5	1	0
Female	17	1	3

Note: Source: Survey. N=27.

The majority of the participants, 26 of the 27 (96%), said they currently worked in a 4-year public institution, and have been employed at their current institution on average 2.07 years. A breakdown of gender and length of time of those who responded is found in Table 2.

Table 2

Gender and Length of Time Employed at Current Institution

	3+ yrs	2-3 yrs	1 yr	6 month - 1 yr	Less than 6 months
Male	2	2	1	0	1
Female	10	5	4	0	2

Note. Source: Survey. N = 27.

My survey asked participants to input their current job title and supervisor's title within higher education. I found more than half, 15 of the 27 participants, used the word 'coordinator' or 'advisor' in their job title, and that they were supervised by someone with the title of 'director' or 'dean.' This

finding was revealed through an analysis program within QuestionPro that creates a word cloud for open-ended questions. A word cloud is a visual representation of the frequency of a word used within a particular context, whereas a word count is how many times the word appears (QuestionPro, 2010). I also asked participants in which area of the institution they worked and found the majority (25) worked for either an 'academic college' or 'student affairs/services.' As shown in Table 3, 13(48%) participants worked in student affairs/services, while 12 (44%) participants worked in an academic college, 1 (4%) participant worked in a university business office, and 1 (4%) participant worked in intercollegiate athletics.

Table 3

Participant Work Area Within Institution by Graduation Year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Academic College	0	2	4	5	1	12
Intercollegiate Athletics	0	0	0	0	1	1
Univ. Business Office	0	0	0	1	0	1
Student Affairs/Service	4	2	3	2	2	13
Total	4	4	7	8	4	27

Note. Source: Survey. N = 27.

Discussion. The demographical findings described align with enrollment management composition with U.S. graduates of a higher education/student affairs master program in the southwest (Burkard et al., 2005; NASPA, 2010; Stewart, 2010; Turrentine & Conley, 2001). To further illustrate the similarity, Turrentine & Conley (2001) found 77% of those who graduated from similar programs were female and 13% were Hispanic, while my study found 78% to be White and 11% to be Hispanic. Recognizing this study is not generalizable, it should be noted that even with a small sample size, my study found a similar dispersion in the demographical makeup of participants when compared to larger studies.

Conversely, 44% of the participants who graduated from the ASU M.Ed. HED program identified that they worked in an academic college within their university. This data differs with findings presented by Renn & Jessup-Anger (2008), where 76% of their participants who graduated from a higher education/student affairs master's programs identified that they worked in a traditional student affairs/services unit (residential life, judicial affairs, LGBTQ centers, student union), and only 20% identified to be working for an academic college within their university. Further, Menand (2010) and Tierney (2003) both purport that 21st century higher education is becoming more school/college-centric versus university-centric with the onset of new organizational structures (i.e. ASU's New American University). While not exclusive, demographic data indicates participants are nearly split (48% student affairs/services / 44% academic college) in the area of their institutional appointment. This specific

finding suggests that as a graduate of an institution with a new organizational structure which is intentionally designed to be school/college centric, many of the new entry-level professionals are prepared to work in academic colleges (Crow, 2008).

In addition, more graduates from 2009 and 2010 are working for an academic college rather than student affairs/services. This finding aligns with Crow's(2011) comments that "… actualizing the school/college centric approach within the NAU has only begun to take shape in the second half of my tenure at ASU," and the NAU M.Ed. graduates also reflect the new definition of 21st century U.S. higher education non-academic master-level professional reported by Menand (2010) and Tierney (2003).

Understanding the New American University

To become an effective leader in higher education, I must understand how professionals at all levels in a college or university employ an institution's vision into his or her specific practice (Collins, 2001; Menand, 2010; Pritchett & Pound, 2007). The intent of this study was to provide me, as an aspiring leader, with an understanding of how graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understand NAU concepts and integrate them into professional practice in higher education. Before I could learn how the graduate understands the concepts of the NAU and how they integrate them, I first needed to uncover: 1) how graduates understand the NAU overall, 2) what concepts graduates define as part of the NAU, and 3) what concepts graduates believe professionals in higher education need to understand to be successful in 21st century higher education. I conclude this

section with a discussion on what these findings describe in conjunction with the scholarship to help me become an effective leader in 21st century higher education.

The NAU enterprise model overall. In the beginning of the survey, participants were asked to indicate if they generally understand the NAU enterprise model and to then select from a list comprised of NAU and other related redesign concepts. The intent of the question and subsequent findings were to show if and how the participant understands the NAU, and to describe what concepts they believe professionals in the field need to understand to be successful in 21st century higher education.

To be a successful leader in higher education, it is essential that the members (e.g. entry, mid-level, and seasoned professionals) inside the organization understand the organization's vision and how to integrate their understanding of it into practice (Collin, 2001; Pritchett & Pound, 2007). I first looked to uncover if the participant understands the NAU (e.g. vision, mission, culture, etc.), and found 23 of the 27 participants (85%) indicated directly 'yes' they understand the NAU model. I then asked how well did they understand the NAU, and found 26 (96%) respondents identified 'thoroughly' or 'somewhat' understanding (Table 4). With each question, I ran a demographic cross-tabulation to uncover if one group demonstrated a greater understanding than another. For this question, I found no significant difference between those who work in an 'academic college' or 'student affairs/services' in their understanding of the NAU. Again, this finding aligns with the ASU M.Ed. HED program's goal to

prepare entry and midlevel professionals for every area of the undergraduate learning experience for 21st century higher education parallel to the vision and approach of the NAU (Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, n.d.).

Table 4

Responses to "How Well Do You Believe You Understand What is the New American University Model?"

	Thoroughly understand	Somewhat understand	Understand	Somewhat do not understand
Academic College	7	3	1	1
Intercollegiate Athletics	0	1	0	0
Univ. Business Office	0	1	0	0
Student Affairs/Service	8	2	3	0

Note. Source: Survey. N = 27.

Further, when I cross-tabulated responses by gender, I found a difference between the responses of males and females in their understanding of the NAU. As shown in Table 5, 83% (5) males identified as 'thoroughly understanding' the NAU, whereas 47% (10) females identified as 'thoroughly understanding' the NAU.

Table 5

Understanding of NAU by Gender

	Thoroughly understand	Somewhat understand	Understand	Somewhat do not understand
Male (6)	5	0	1	0
Female (21)	10	7	3	1

Note. Source: Survey.

This finding, even with a small sample did not surprise me, as research claims that males tend to be more macro focused within the context of organizational and system structures compared to females because of existing societal influences and constructs (Ewing, 1999; Senge, 2006). Moreover, this difference, even with only 6 males responding compared to 15 females, is still one to note when messaging a vision to an organization; the communicative approach should be inclusive of all groups within the organization (Collins, 2001; Welch & Byrne, 2001).

Once it was determined the participants understood the NAU, I sought to uncover what the participant would identify/define as major concepts: 1) of the NAU enterprise model and 2) they believe professionals in the field need to understand to be successful in 21st century higher education. For these two questions, the participant was provided the opportunity to select from a list of eleven concepts, but was never provided any prompt to which concepts were a part of the NAU. The list consisted of the four main concepts used in this study

(entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, inclusion), two other NAU concepts (collaboration, partnerships) that were identified as important during the initial evaluation of the sample, as well as six other concepts used by institutions that employ a similar 21st century approach to redesigning its organizational structure (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010).

The first question, displayed in Table 6, asked the participant to select all the concepts they understand to be a part of the NAU. Every participant (27) selected 'innovation' as a NAU concept, while all but one participant (26) selected 'entrepreneurship' as a NAU concept.

Table 6

Responses to "Which Concepts Do You Understand to Be Part of the New American University? (select all that apply)"

Concept	#	% of N
Innovation*	27	100%
Entrepreneurship*	26	96%
Sustainable outcomes	25	92%
Community engagement	24	89%
Globalized	23	85%
Partnerships*	21	78%
Transdisciplinary research	21	78%
Collaboration*	20	74%
Inclusion*	20	74%
Transformation	20	74%
Interdisciplinary*	19	70%

Note. *=NAU concept. Source: Survey.

When I cross-tabulated the data to disaggregate responses by gender, race/ethnicity and academic college and student affairs/services, I uncovered there were no differences between any of the groups. I expected that the area in which the participant worked within the institution would have shown some difference, however as displayed in Table 7, this was not the case.

Table 7

NAU Concepts and Area of Institution Employed

	Academic College	% of N=12	Student Affairs/Services	% of N=13
Innovation*	12	100%	13	100%
Entrepreneurship*	12	100%	12	92%
Community engagement	11	92%	11	85%
Transdisciplinary research	11	92%	9	69%
Sustainable outcomes	11	92%	12	92%
Collaboration*	10	83%	8	62%
Partnerships*	10	83%	10	77%
Interdisciplinary*	10	83%	9	69%
Social inquiry	10	83%	8	62%
Inclusion*	10	83%	10	77%
Globalized	10	83%	11	85%
Transformation	10	83%	9	69%
Idea fusion	9	75%	4	31%
Revolutionary change	8	67%	4	31%
Borderless	8	67%	3	23%
Holistic	6	50%	4	31%

Note. *=NAU concept. Source: Survey.

The second question in this series, shown in Table 8, asked the participant to select the three concepts they believed higher education needed to embrace as part of their core values to remain competitive in the 21st century. Collins (2005) purports that in non-profit organizations, if the organizational model is truly effective, the members of it will personally embrace its core values as their own. Thus, I had two intentions to uncover with this question: 1) to see the concepts participants believed professionals in the field needed to understand to be successful in 21st century higher education, and 2) to determine if any of the top concepts selected NAU concepts.

The results showed that two NAU concepts came through in the top five, as 70% (19) of the participants selected 'innovation' as the most critical concept, and 41% (11) of the participants selected 'entrepreneurship' as the fourth critical concept.

Table 8

Responses to "Please Select the Three Most Important Concepts a Higher Education Institution Should Embrace as Core Values to Remain Competitive in the 21st Century?"

Concept	#	% of N
Innovation*	19	70%
Idea fusion	13	48%
Revolutionary change	12	44%
Entrepreneurship*	11	41%
Holistic	10	37%
Sustainable outcomes	8	30%
Transdisciplinary research	7	26%
Inclusion*	7	26%
Globalized	7	26%
Collaboration*	6	22%
Community engagement	6	22%
Interdisciplinary*	3	11%
Social inquiry	3	11%
Partnerships*	2	7%
Revolutionary change	2	7%
Transformation	1	4%

Note. *=NAU concept. Source: Survey.

Again I cross-tabulated the data to disaggregate responses by gender, race/ethnicity and academic college and student affairs/services, I uncovered there

were no differences between any of the groups. I again expected that the participants' workplace would have shown some difference; however as displayed in Table 9, this was not the case.

Table 9

Responses to "What are the Three Most Important Concepts a Higher Education Institution Should Embrace as Core Values to Remain Competitive in the 21st Century?" by Area of Institution Employed

	Academic college	% of N=12	Student Affairs/Services	% of N=13
Innovation*	8	67%	9	69%
Entrepreneurship*	5	42%	5	38%
Collaboration*	3	25%	2	15%
Transdisciplinary research	3	25%	3	23%
Sustainable outcomes	3	25%	4	31%
Globalized	3	25%	4	31%
Community engagement	2	17%	4	31%
Partnerships*	2	17%	0	0%
Social inquiry	2	17%	1	8%
Revolutionary change	2	17%	0	0%
Inclusion*	2	17%	5	38%
Interdisciplinary*	1	8%	2	15%
Transformation	1	8%	0	0%
Holistic	0	0%	0	0%
Borderless	0	0%	0	0%
Idea fusion	0	0%	0	0%

Note. *=NAU concept. Source: Survey.

Discussion. The findings in this section describe 96% of the graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program to have understood the NAU enterprise model. Collins (2001) claims that a successful component of what makes companies go from good to great was that their organizational vision was understood by entry, mid and seasoned-level employees within the organization. This is a critical finding to note as an aspiring leader, because if no one understands the leader's vision and approach, the likelihood of institutional success diminishes (Collins, 2001; Pritchett & Pound, 2007). Additionally, males understand the NAU more than females; this difference draws attention to the importance of crafting an inclusive approach to communicate a vision in education, especially when 65% of the professionals in the field are female (Hurtado et al., 1998; Hurtado et al., 1999; Rendon, 1994; Rivers, 2011; Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005).

The findings in this section also describe the graduates as identifying two NAU concepts (innovation and entrepreneurship) as critical components of the NAU and for professionals to put into practice in order to be successful in 21st century higher education. This finding also verifies the claims set forth by President Crow (2008, 2010a) that the two foundational concepts within the NAU enterprise model are innovation and entrepreneurship. Several scholars have supported Crow's assertion that innovation and entrepreneurship are the critical concepts of the NAU, and the primary concepts needed when an institution is redesigned to align with the direction of local and global societies and markets (Armstrong, 2001; Bok, 2006; Cole, 2009 Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Menand, 2010; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Collins (2001) purports finding that if an individual in an organization can identify the key concepts of the mission and embrace them as part of their own outlook necessary to succeed in the field, then this is a positive indicator of organizations that are going from good to great. However, these findings are not the only sign within the NAU that correlates to the metrics espoused by Collins for achieving greatness (2001). Three other indicators of what Collins (2001) would define as necessary for greatness within the NAU are observable.

These three aspects are likely significant drivers to how the NAU culture has been infused into the HED M.Ed. program allowing graduates to demonstrate a high understanding of the enterprise model. First, the NAU is designed around concepts which are vertically and horizontally infused throughout the university (Crow, 2002; Crow, 2011). Collins (2001, 2005) would describe the NAU concepts as small metrics to achieve greatness and is the first critical component towards achieving organizational greatness. For example, it can be difficult for individuals within an organization to fully realize the macro-vision; however, when the vision is divided up into smaller metrics (i.e. concepts), the individual is more likely to understand it because they can adapt parts of it to their specific role (Aaker & Smith, 2010; Collins, 2001; Kirp, 2004). Second, the NAU is comprised of senior leadership that was selected to lead and grow specific entities (e.g. colleges, divisions, departments, research centers, etc.) within ASU due to having a distinct background in one or more of the concept areas of the NAU (i.e. Honors College Dean formerly of a premiere liberal arts college where he was

distinguished for his interdisciplinary approach, Business College Dean formerly of the Wharton, where he became globally recognized for developing entrepreneurial ventures, etc., Capaldi, 2009; Crow, 2007; Crow, 2010a; Crow, 2011). This growth process is what Collins describes as the hardest challenge a college president can face due to mature complicated systems in education and when the leader gets "the right people on the bus, and get them into the right seats…" (2001, p. 41), the organization can move in ways never thought possible (Pritchett & Pound, 2007). One example of this movement within the NAU redesign is how ASU has been able to quickly garner national recognition in categories (e.g. *U.S. News and World Report* ranking of number 132) never seen prior to the implementation of the NAU (Bush & Hunt, 2011; Swain, 2008; Theil, 2008).

Finally, the NAU enterprise model focuses on leveraging and designing ASU to be an engine that gives students, faculty, and staff the intellectual horsepower and resources (e.g. BioDesign Institute, Skysong, Mayo partnership, Innovation Challenge, etc.) to solve local and global challenges in order to progress society forward (Crow, 2011). This purposeful organizational leverage is what Collins would call the "hedgehog" concept within education. The hedgehog concept focuses on the organization to develop their own resources in order to drive solutions and sustain themselves over time, even when the movement is not economically or politically popular at the time (Collins, 2001; Collins, 2005). These correlations between Collins' metrics and the NAU verify the U.S. institution of higher learning is in need of a new type of leader, organization

structure and culture, and a workforce who can realize how concepts in the macro-vision can be employed into one's specific practice. As a result of my findings, I assert this type of movement (e.g. understanding and application of the NAU concepts) is taking place with recent graduates of the HED M.Ed. program.

Understanding the Concepts of the New American University

Based on my graduate and professional experience in higher education and through this research study, I assert it is necessary for master's degree programs that focus on preparing higher education practitioners and leaders be modified to meet the needs of the 21st century college student and the local and global organizational culture of higher learning (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Hurtado et al., 1999; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Newton & Richardson, 1976; Rendon, 1994; Williams et al., 2005). I make this claim based on my understanding of the research which argues that the competencies (e.g. counseling, advising, mediation) taught in most higher education/student affairs masters programs do not align with what senior leaders such as Vice Presidents, Deans and Directors at Research 1 universities believe are important for the new 21st century master-level professional in higher education (Burkard et al., 2005; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; NASPA, 2010; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). The ASU M.Ed. HED program is aligned with what senior leadership and scholarship views as important in 21st century higher education based on: 1) its vision and goal is to educate students parallel to the trajectory of the NAU, 2) its approach is to prepare students to practice in every area of the undergraduate learning experience and, 3) that students will be able to critically integrate established and

emerging theories, concepts, and models into their own practice after completion of the course. These points are stated in the program mission and articulated in HED M.Ed. course syllabi learning outcomes (Ewing, Syllabus, Fall 2009, p. 1; McIntyre, Syllabus, Spring 2009, p. 1). The HED courses embed NAU concepts into the program (e.g. HED691: Entrepreneurial Educators course), course curriculum (e.g. entrepreneurship and innovation readings), course projects (e.g. ASU Innovation Challenge, 10,000 Solutions), and course delivery (e.g. hybrid courses, multiple technology platforms, social media, etc.) to ensure the graduate understands the rapid growth and demands of the 21st century institutions and learners.

The following section will describe: 1) how participants understood four NAU concepts (entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, innovation), 2) how they integrated the four NAU concepts into professional practice, and 3) discuss what the findings mean in relation to the scholarship and my aspirations as leader in higher education.

The participant was initially asked how well (e.g. very well, well, somewhat well, etc.) they believed they understood the concept as it relates to higher education. The participant was then provided a brief vignette to refresh them on how the NAU conceptualizes the concept (see Appendix C for full survey). Then, the participant was asked: 1) how they identify within their work to embrace the concept (i.e. how often do you see yourself as an innovator), and 2) how often they integrated the concept into their practice. Finally, the participant was asked two open-ended questions; 1) how much action, if any, they

have taken in their workplace to use the concept, and 2) what results, if any, have they been able to show due to using the concept. The open-end questions were used in the survey to collect additional findings to better illuminate the collected data and allow for the participant's voice to better describe what specifically they meant when making a selection.

Concept 1: Entrepreneurship. The first of the four NAU concepts in the set was entrepreneurship. Participants were first asked how they believed to understand the concept of entrepreneurship, 86% (23) indicated they understand the concept well or very well. Figure 1 provides a visual of the responses.

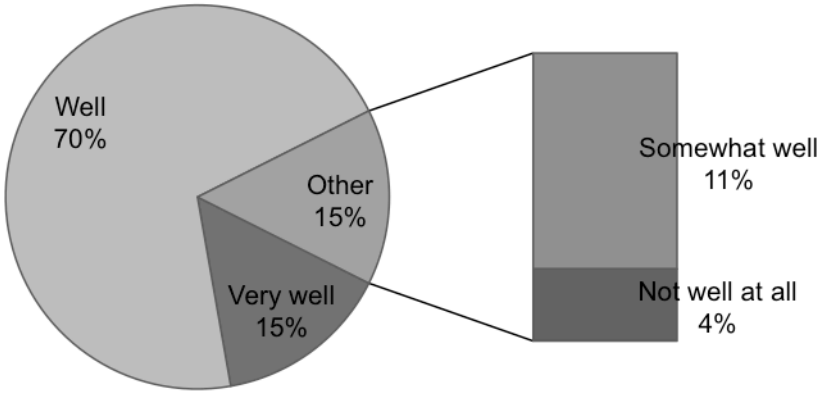

Figure 1. Responses to *"*How well do you believe you understand the concept of entrepreneurship as it relates to higher education?" N=27.

When I cross-tabulated the data to disaggregate responses by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, I uncovered there were no differences between any of the groups except for area of employment; 92% percent (11) of the participants who worked in an academic college understand the concept very well or well, compared to 78% (10) of those who worked in student affairs/services who understand it very well and well.

The NAU defines entrepreneurship as opportunities to make multiple connections to encourage relevant structural change within an institution of higher education ("New American University," 2009). When the participant was provided how the NAU conceptualizes the concept and from the vignette of an entrepreneurial action, *hybrid courses*, 74% were able to indicate they took entrepreneurial action within their workplace, as shown in Figure 2.

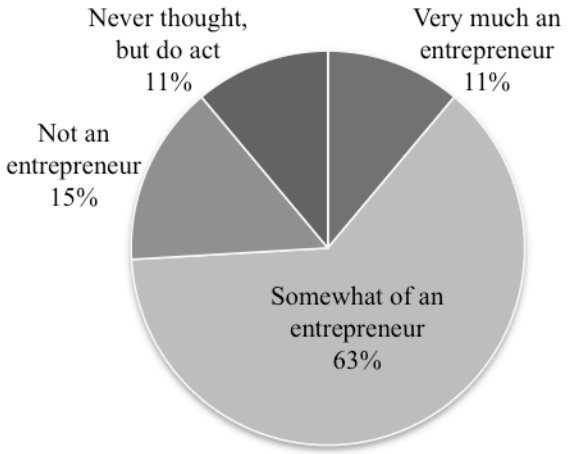

Figure 2. Responses to *"*Based on what you have learned during the M.Ed. program and the above definition of how the New American University model frames the concept of entrepreneurship, how much of an entrepreneur do you perceive yourself to be within your work in higher education?" N=27.

When I cross-tabulated the data to disaggregate responses by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, I uncovered there were no differences between any of the groups except for graduation year. As shown in Table 10, 7 of the 8 participants in the class of 2010 selected 'somewhat of an entrepreneur.' This aligns with the increased messaging to students (ASU

homepage, new courses, campus advertisements, etc.) the past years, 2009 to 2011 with more entrepreneurial opportunities promoted such as the ASU Innovation Challenge, Changemaker Central, and Edson Entrepreneurship Initiative, to ASU for students, faculty and staff.

Table 10

Responses to "How Much of an Entrepreneur Do You Perceive Yourself to be Within Your Work in Higher Education?" by Class Year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Very much an entrepreneur	1	1	1	0	1
Somewhat of an entrepreneur	2	2	5	7	3
Not an entrepreneur	0	1	0	1	0
Never thought of myself as an entrepreneur, but do act entrepreneurially	1	0	1	0	0

Note. Source: Survey.

The last question shown in Figure 3, asked for the participants to identify and then comment through an open-end question, how often they attempted to integrate entrepreneurship into their workplace; Fifty-two percent (14) of the participants indicated they always or often took an entrepreneurial approach within their workplace.

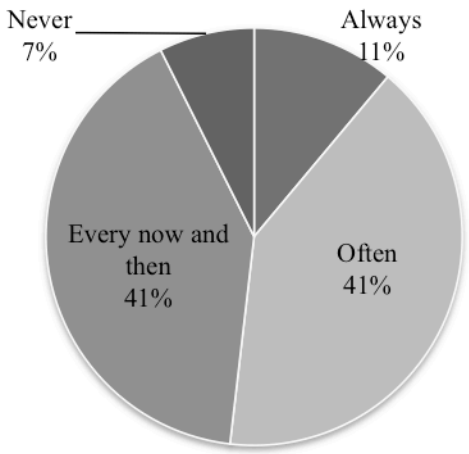

*Figure 3. R*esponses to *"*How often do you try to integrate an entrepreneurial approach to your work within higher education?" N=27.

The open-end responses found participants who worked in student affairs/services claiming, "…my job lacks in potential to be entrepreneurial, though I still do act it." This sentiment describes the 53% (7) of the participants who worked in student affairs/services that 'always' or 'often' take an entrepreneurial approach to their work. Contrast this to the 41% of those who worked in an academic college identifying similarly by saying, "due to rigid departmental structures, it is difficult to propose entrepreneurial ideas…yet, I look for opportunities to be entrepreneurial."

Table 11

Responses to "How Often Do You Integrate an Entrepreneurial Approach to Your Work?" By Area of Work

	Academic college	% of N = 12	Student Affairs/Services	% of N = 13
Always	1	8%	2	15%
Often	4	33%	5	38%
Every now and then	5	42%	6	46%
Never	2	17%	0	0%

Note. Source: Survey.

Discussion. Thorpe and Goldstein (2010) assert that entrepreneurship has become a larger dialogue on U.S. campuses the past two years and needs to become a larger part of an institutions framework in the next decade. My findings indicate the graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understand the NAU concept of entrepreneurship and as a result, identified they do indeed have a propensity to integrate the concept into their professional practice. Crow (2007, 2008) asserts that a foundational concept in the NAU enterprise model is entrepreneurship, and believes that if ASU culturally shifts to embrace more of an entrepreneurial posture, the institution will be able to rise and sustain preeminence nationally, similar to Stanford and MIT in the 20th century (Cole, 2009). In addition, he purports that 21st century institutions that embody a level of risk, create an atmosphere of being a differentiator, will evolve and excel at a greater

pace with graduates who will be able to undertake the 21st century U.S. local and global challenges as entrepreneurs (Cole, 2009; Crow, 2008; Kirp, 2004; Theil, 2008). These intentional actions taken by Crow to infuse entrepreneurship into the culture of ASU support why the findings described showed strong inclinations towards entrepreneurial adaptation by the graduate.

In addition, these findings are further supported by the actuality that students in the ASU M.Ed. HED program from 2009 to present were exposed to specific opportunities in their graduate experience to act entrepreneurial. Opportunities included participating and competing in the ASU Innovation Challenge and Edson Entrepreneurship Initiative, which allowed the graduate to learn and experience first-hand about entrepreneurship in higher education. In fact, two ASU M.Ed. HED students (now graduates) competed in the 2010 university-wide ASU Innovation Challenge. The ASU Innovation Challenge is an opportunity for students to practice their skills in teamwork, leadership, project development, business plan creation, public speaking, and network creation to present their entrepreneurial and innovative ideas to earn funding to further their venture to make a greater impact on local and global communities (Tapia, 2011). The pair qualified for the final round of 30 teams. Further, they were the only finalists across the entire competition that were not from the College of Business or Engineering. The pair did not win, however; they did present their project at Ignite-Phoenix (a community-wide think-tank partnered with ASU), where they were able to build a network with venture capitalists to bring their project to fruition (Tapia, 2011).

Concept 2: Innovation. The second NAU concept examined was innovation. While all 27 participants selected innovation as the top concept to be a part of the NAU, it did not receive the highest score for understanding as compared to the other concepts examined in this study. Shown in Figure 4, 92% (25) of the participants indicated to understand the concept well or very well.

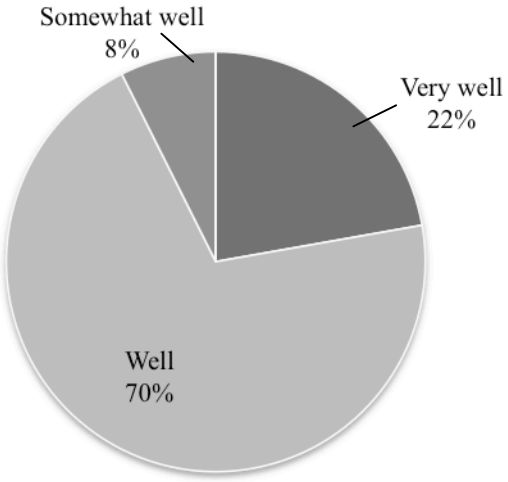

Figure 4. Responses to "How well do you believe you understand the concept of innovation as it relates to higher education?" N=27.

When I cross-tabulated the data to disaggregate responses by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, I uncovered there were no differences between any of the groups.

The NAU defines the concept of innovation as integrating a different approach to an existing practice or process to enhance it a more efficient manner ("New American University," 2009). When the participant was provided this definition and the example from the vignette of an innovative action *electronic*

instructor evaluations, 97% (26) of participants were able to indicate they took innovative action within their workplace, as displayed in Figure 5.

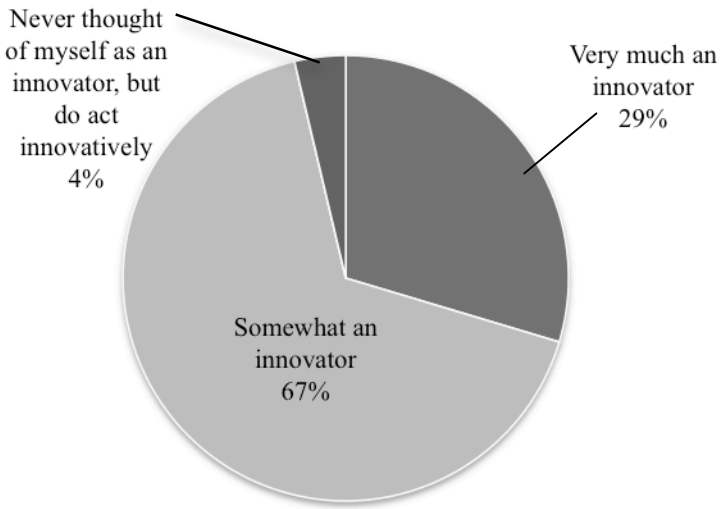

Figure 5. Responses to *"*Based on what you have learned during the M.Ed. program and the above definition of how the New American University model frames the concept of innovation, how much of an innovator do you perceive yourself to be within your work in higher education?" N=27.

I cross-tabulated the data to disaggregate responses by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience. I uncovered there were no differences between any of the groups except for area of employment. As 63% (5) of the participants in student affairs/services saw themselves as 'very much an innovator,' whereas only 38% (3) of those in an academic college saw themselves as 'very much an innovator.' This finding was not significant or a surprise to me, as I knew from professional experience working in student affairs/services the work culture is more innovative because an individual's approach to their responsibilities often changes with the makeup of the students with whom they directly work and from year-to-year (Lovell & Kosten, 2002; NASPA, 2010).

When I reviewed the open-ended responses regarding how the participant actually integrated the concept of innovation into their practice, 11(44%) participants used the word 'technology' in their description of an innovative action. To better elucidate this finding, one participant said they were able to, "partner with an on-line web company to provide students a site that will allow them to have all necessary resources in one place," and as a result of this action perceived themselves as 'very much an innovator.' As higher education becomes more wired, the idea of integrating technology into a practice or process is a common approach (Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

When respondents were asked how often they integrated an 'innovative' approach to their practice, 30% (8) of the participants said 'always,' while 37% (10) said 'often'. I cross-tabulated the data to disaggregate responses by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience to uncover no differences between any of the groups except for gender. Females showed a statistical influence (p-value = 0.59) compared to males in how often they took an innovative approach to their practice. This finding is displayed in Table 12.

Table 12

Responses to "How Often Do You Try to Integrate an Innovative Approach to Your Work Within Higher Education?"By Gender

	Male	% of N = 6	Female	% of N = 21
Always	3	50%	5	24%
Often			10	48%
Every now and then	3	50%	6	29%

Note. Source: Survey.

Through an examination of the open-end responses, one participant discussed how she was able to align her department with the "university's missions and goal through talking about innovative approaches to assist students in meetings," which led to "an increase in student satisfaction." Another participant was able to "decrease staff stress and improve the TA, student, and faculty experiences," through fusing technology into the workplace. These responses describe the graduate leveraging the NAU concept of innovation within their workplace. I expected innovation to have the most definitive comments since this term is visibly everywhere in higher education and easier to understand than entrepreneurship, which is less an education term and more a business one (Florida, 2006; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010).

Discussion. The findings presented for innovation indicate the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understands the NAU concept and as a result, demonstrates they have the base knowledge to integrate it into their professional practice. Based on Florida's (2002, 2006) description of today's generation of

professionals as the "creative class," it is imperative new professionals in sectors like education have a more creative or innovative worldview in order to make a greater impact. Aaker and Smith (2010) purport individuals who pursue positions where they are able to make a social impact (i.e. higher education) are more likely to act innovative because they are personally invested in calling for change to foster success.

To further confirm the importance of how a graduate understands and integrates innovation into professional practice, it should be noted that a foundational concept of the NAU enterprise model is based on innovation (Crow, 2007; 2008; 2010a). Crow (2008) claims innovation is completely embedded throughout the NAU enterprise model with the intended purpose to redesign the organizational structure and simplify core processes by placing the decision making powers on how innovation will be actualized into the hands of university leadership that are closest to the students [Deans and Directors] (Crow, 2008). This type of school/college-centric organizational structure is one that allows leaders and managers the authority to redefine processes and practices, whereby innovation is an embedded part of the culture and way of thinking by happenstance (Crow, 2008; Crow, 2010a). The findings presented in this section, and the findings discussed earlier that innovation was the highest identified concept of the NAU, verify his intentional design of this enterprise model.

Concept 3: Interdisciplinary. The third NAU concept examined was interdisciplinary. This concept shared the highest score for understanding in this survey with inclusion; with 26 (96%) of the 27 participants claiming they 'very

well' or 'well' understand the NAU concept of interdisciplinary. When I cross-tabulated this question with gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, differences were found with gender and length of employment. With gender, a statistical difference was found (p-value = 0.97) between males' and females' understanding of the interdisciplinary, as 67% of those who identified as male said they understand the concept 'very well' compared to 33% of those who identified as females.

In reference to length of employment, I found a gradation between understanding and the longer the participant was in the field. As shown in Table 13, 70% of the participants who had two or more years of professional higher education work experience understand the concept of interdisciplinary 'very well' or 'well.' This finding may be a result of more professional time in the field, or within the context of the NAU, 2007 to 2009 was when ASU actualized its school/college-centric structure redesign, which merged colleges, schools, and disciplines to structurally become more interdisciplinary focused (Capaldi, 2009).

Table 13

Responses to "How Well Do You Believe You Understand the Concept of Interdisciplinary?" By Length of Employment

	3+ years	2-3 years	1 year	6 months – 1 year	Less than 6 months
Very well	3	4	3	0	1
Well	8	3	2	0	2
Somewhat well	0	0	0	0	0
Not that well	1	0	0	0	0

Note. Source: Survey.

The NAU defines the concept of interdisciplinary as faculty, leaders, staff, and students working beyond their own academic silos, departments, and traditional structures ("New American University," 2009). When the participant was provided this definition and from the vignette of an example of an interdisciplinary collaboration within higher education being *residential colleges*, 89% were able to indicate to taking an interdisciplinary approach within their workplace. This finding is displayed in Figure 6.

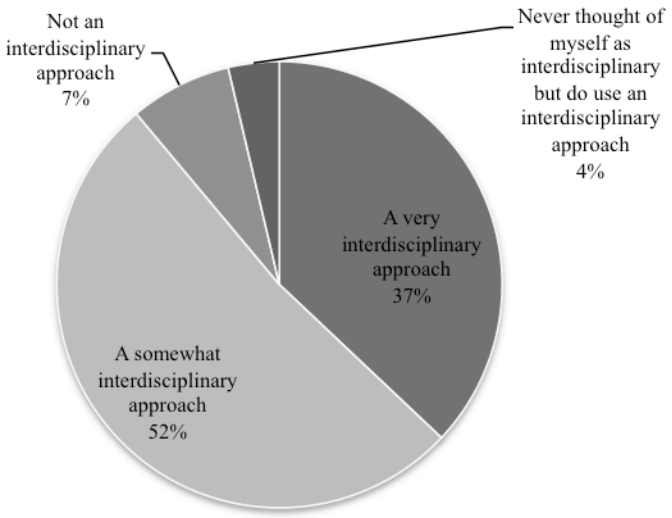

Figure 6. Responses to "Based on what you have learned during the M.Ed. program and the above definition of how the New American University model frames the concept of taking an interdisciplinary approach, how much do you perceive yourself to be an individual who takes an interdisciplinary approach to your work in higher education?" N=27.

When findings on interdisciplinary work were cross-tabulated between gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, differences between area of employment and gender were discovered. For example, where the participant worked in the university impacted how they integrated an interdisciplinary approach to their practice. All of the participants (100%) who worked for an academic college took an interdisciplinary approach to their professional practice, which is higher than the 84% who worked in student affairs/services. The idea or concept of interdisciplinary originated within academia in the mid-1950s; thus this culture may influence the participants who work in an academic college as compared to the participants who work outside the academic college (Kezar, 2004). When the findings on an interdisciplinary

approach were cross-tabulated between males and females (p-value = 0.97), 80% of the females took a 'very' interdisciplinary approach to their work in higher education, whereas only 20% (2) of males indicated to be similar, as shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Responses to "How Much Do You Perceive yourself to be an Individual Who Takes an Interdisciplinary Approach to Your Work in Higher Education?" By Gender

	Male	Female
A very interdisciplinary approach	2	8
A somewhat interdisciplinary approach	4	10
Not an interdisciplinary approach	0	2
Never thought of myself as interdisciplinary, but do use an interdisciplinary approach	0	1

Note. Source: Survey.

Finally, when participants were asked to identify how frequently they attempted to take an interdisciplinary approach within their practice and workplace, more than a third (81%) of the sample indicated they did, as shown in Figure 7. To better elucidate this finding one female participant who worked for an academic college with two or more years experience said they "collaborated with other departments and colleges to provide the best programs and opportunities for the student," while another female participant who worked student affairs/services with two or more years experience described they were

looking to "…find ways to bridge the gap between academic units and student affairs to increase innovation and funding for initiatives."

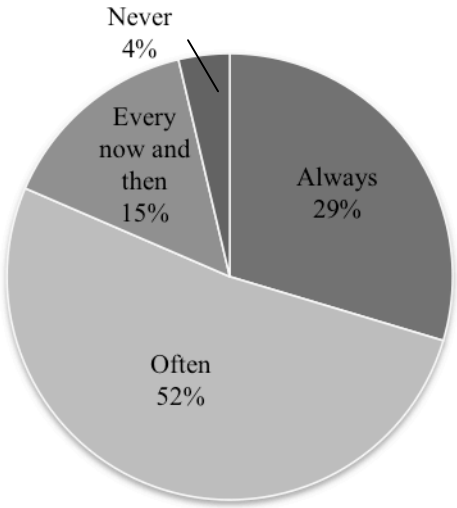

Figure 7. Responses to "How often do you try to integrate an interdisciplinary approach to your work within higher education?" N=27.

I cross-tabulated the findings on how often participants took an interdisciplinary approach by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, and found significance (p-value = 0.65) with the area of employment. This finding, displayed in Table 15, shows 92% of the participants who worked for an academic college either 'always' or 'often' integrated an interdisciplinary approach into their work, which is higher than the 77% of the participants who worked in student affairs/services. This finding aligns with the significance found in the previous question, and is more often the action of an individual within an

academic college than a support unit (e.g. health services, student engagement) within higher education (Kuh, 2005).

Table 15

Responses to "How Often Do You Try to Integrate an Interdisciplinary Approach to Your Work Within Higher Education?" by Area of Work

	Academic college	% of N = 12	Student Affairs/Services	% of N = 13
Always	2	17%	6	46%
Often	9	75%	4	31%
Every now and then	1	8%	2	15%
Never	0	0%	1	8%

Note. Source: Survey.

Discussion. Interdisciplinary is not a new concept to higher education; however, it has faded out of the organizational makeup of U.S. colleges and universities the past twenty-years (Cole, 2009; Kezar, 2004; Kuh, 2005; Menand, 2010; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). Menand (2010) defines interdisciplinary in the traditional sense, as two academic disciplines working together. Yet many scholars align with how the NAU defines it, as working within, between, and externally to the silos, departments, and traditional structures in higher education (Crow, 2002; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Kezar, 2004; Kuh, 2005; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). My findings indicate that the graduate of this program understands the NAU definition, as one female participant who worked in an academic college with two or more years experience put, "my ability to act

interdisciplinary between units has increased community college and out-of-state transfer enrollment, as well as new programs developed to increase matriculation." This response, along with the findings described above, shows the graduate of this program understands the NAU concept of interdisciplinary, and as a result has the propensity to take this approach to their professional practice in higher education.

The NAU enterprise model asserts interdisciplinary is a significant characteristic of a 21st century higher education institution; it permits greater institutional flexibility to maneuver with the direction of local and global societies and markets (Capaldi, 2009; Crow, 2010b). The NAU is interdisciplinary; it does not assign faculty to a discipline, but rather a field, and strives to create infrastructure that makes everyone habitual in the institution to work across silos, departments, and traditional structures (Capaldi, 2009; Crow, 2010a; Crow, 2010b).

Concept 4: Inclusion

The final NAU concept examined was inclusion. This concept shared for the highest score of understanding in this survey with interdisciplinary; with 26 of the 27 participants (96%) claiming that they either 'very well' or 'well' understand the NAU concept of 'inclusion.'

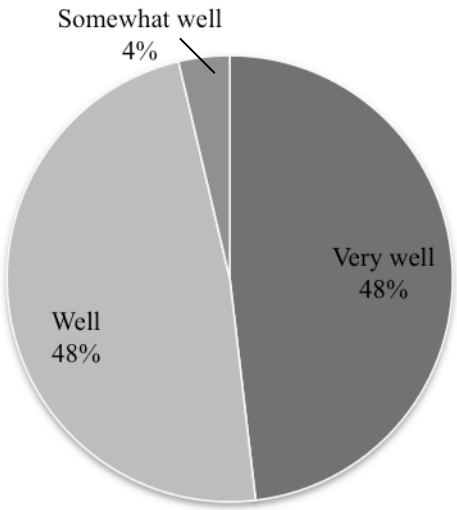

Figure 8. Responses to "How well do you believe you understand the concept of inclusion as it relates to higher education?" N=27.

I cross-tabulated the findings on how participants understand inclusion by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, and found no differences.

The NAU defines the concept of 'inclusion' as promoting access to first generation, ethnic, gender, age and other diverse identity groups to higher education ("New American University," 2009). When the participant was provided this definition and a vignette with an example of inclusion within higher education being the *ASU Office of Transfer Partnership*, which is an office that provides high performing community college students' clear access towards four-year degree attainment, all participants were all able to indicate (100%) they either 'always' or 'often' take an inclusive approach within their workplace. I cross-tabulated these findings by gender, area of employment, class year, and

length of work experience, and found significance (p-value = 0.98) between females and males. As shown in Table 16, 71% (15) of the participants who identified as female claimed to 'always' take an inclusive approach to their work in higher education, with 50% (3) of the male participants indicating similarly.

In the open-ended responses to uncover how the participant integrated inclusion into practice, many (16) used or referred to the word "access" in their description. It should be noted that the word "access" is a concept brand of the NAU enterprise model. A concept brand is a word, slogan, or specific logo that is associated with an abstract idea or concept (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2003).

Table 16

Responses to "How Inclusive Do You Perceive Yourself to be Within Your Work In Higher Education?" by Gender

	Male	% of N = 6	Female	% of N = 21
Very inclusive	3	50%	15	71%
Somewhat inclusive	3	50%	6	29%

Note. Source: Survey

When the participant was asked how often they took an inclusive approach in their practice, 16 (59%) said 'always,' 10 (37%) said 'often' and 1 (4%) said 'every now and then.' I cross-tabulated these findings by gender, area of employment, class year, and length of work experience, and found no differences; which may be due to the unrealistic expectation for someone to identify as non-inclusive in an online survey (Anderson & Kanuka, 2003). If this study were done

again, I would reframe the concept and inquire what the participant understood the term access to be, and how they would integrate a more accessible culture for students.

Discussion. Williams et al. (2005) claim that acting inclusive in higher education should be a given; however, studies have shown it not to be the case due to higher education's organizational and cultural structures that are designed to encourage exclusivity (Clayton-Pedersen & Musil, 2005; Hurtado et al., 1998; Hurtado et al., 1999; Rendon, 1994; Owen, 2009; Trevino, 2008). The NAU enterprise model's greatest assertion is that access and excellence can transpire within the same university, but in order for it to actualize, the institution's framework needs to allow for it (Crow, 2002; Crow, 2010b). Hurtado et al., (1998) argues institutions that address campus climate from an organizational standpoint are shown to be able to shift the attitudes and approaches of the individuals within the organization from limited to accessible. The findings in this section verify the graduate of the program made that shift through how well they understand the NAU concept of inclusion.

The finding that 100% of the participant sample identifies as 'always' or 'often' taking an inclusive approach to their practice may be a result that one of the core courses in the ASU M.Ed. HED program is HED620: Diversity in Higher Education (Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, n.d). This core course, according to the syllabi and my experience as a former student, focuses on educating the student about different student and leadership development theories such as "Inclusive Excellence" (Clayton-Pedersen & Musil, 2005) which discusses

inclusion both structurally (e.g. access, policies, hiring, funding) and around climate (e.g. language and actions across groups based on differences in age, gender, race, and other identities). Finally, that all open-end responses from 16 participants used or referred to the word "access" confirms the NAU is infused into organizations within ASU such as the ASU M.Ed. HED program.

Reflective Practices

Action research scholarship purports that during data analysis the researcher should critically reflect (Dick, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). Throughout the data analysis, presentation of findings, and writing I used two specific reflective practices--audio recording and journaling--to understand what was happening within the phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). First, I frequently recorded into a hand-held audio recorder thoughts, ideas, commonalities, and differences I was observing in the findings. The intent of this exercise allowed me to better interpret the data and to begin to capture supposition about what was happening in my community of practice (Dick, 2002).

The second exercise I practiced during the data analysis process involved journaling in my black notebook about the different observable professional occurrences that were connected to the NAU or my data, discussions with my colleagues, chair, mentors, and peers to better determine how the findings are enacted in real life and my community of practice.

These reflective practices allowed me to begin to conceptualize how I was transforming as a scholar-practitioner (academic-leader) through this action research study, and better understand what actions I would need to take after

completion of this study to progress towards my goal of becoming a leader within higher education. Through these exercises, I was able to remain at the center of this action research study and allow the study to contribute and enhance my worldview of the phenomenon (Dick, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

One example of why this reflective practice was critical to the action research study occurred when I was triangulating my findings with the ASU M.Ed. HED course syllabi. I noticed that particular NAU concepts were understood and/or integrated more proficiently with some graduating classes than others (i.e. 7 of the 8 participants in the class of 2010 identified to be somewhat of an entrepreneur within their professional practice). I recorded this in my notebook as a question to explore, but had not identified thus far in the study. In short, I wanted to see how the four NAU concepts were used in the syllabi from 2007 to 2011. The result of my inquiry, briefly shown in Table 17, showed me the increased proficiency of a particular concept maybe linked to the course syllabi.

Table 17

NAU Concepts found throughout ASU M.Ed. HED Course Syllabi

	Entrepreneurship	Innovation	Interdisciplinary	Inclusion
	HED 510:Intro to Higher Education Fall Semester			
2007	1	3	1	1
2008	1	2	2	2
2009	7	2	3	1
2010	5	3	3	2
	HED 691: Theories and Practice in Student Learning and Development Spring Semester			
2008	1	1	1	3
2009	1	2	2	6
2010	1	2	2	5
2011	0	1	2	4

Note: Source: Syllabi

However, due to the limitation of my study's small sample size, all I am able to do is verify the concepts were embedded in courses during the time the participant of this study was a student in the ASU M.Ed. HED program.

Summary of Findings

The three sections-- survey and participant demographics, understanding the NAU, and understanding the concepts of the NAU-- provided tables, graphs,

and relevant scholarship to describe and contextualize the findings of how the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understands NAU concepts and integrates them into professional practice. A demographic overview of the respondents to the online survey aligned with larger studies on higher education/student affairs masters programs (Burkard et al., 2005; NASPA, 2010; Stewart, 2010; Turrentine & Conley, 2001). Participant understanding of the NAU enterprise verified what scholars define as organizational success (Aaker & Smith, 2010; Armstrong, 2001; Bok, 2006; Cole, 2009; Collins, 2001; Collins, 2005; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Kirp, 2004 Menand, 2010; Pritchett & Pound, 2007; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). Then, each of the four NAU concepts--entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, and inclusion--were shown to be understood and integrated into professional practice which the research confirms is necessary for 21st century success as a professional in higher education (Capaldi, 2009; Cole, 2009; Crow, 2007; Crow, 2008; Crow, 2010a; Kezar, 2004; Kuh, 2005; Menand, 2010; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). Next, a summation and discussion of this action research study will be addressed in three parts: 1) what the findings and the literature claim are necessary for higher education/student affairs masters programs into graduate programs, 2) how this research study impacted me as a current practitioner and future leader in higher education, and 3) the immediate and future actions of this dissertation study to my community of practice.

Summation and Discussion

The 21st century Masters-level professional. The purpose of this study through a descriptive analysis was to show how graduates from the ASU M.Ed. HED program understand NAU concepts and integrate them into professional practice within higher education. Based on my graduate and professional experience in higher education, I made an assertion at the onset of this study that in order to sustain a 21st century enterprise model such as the NAU, every individual in the college or university must understand his or her specific role in helping to further progress the new model forward (Collins, 2001; Pritchett & Pound, 2007). I further claimed this could be achieved through evaluating higher education/student affairs masters programs to uncover if they were preparing their graduates to meet the needs of the 21st century college student and the local and global organizational culture of higher learning (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Hurtado et al., 1999; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Newton & Richardson, 1976; Rendon, 1994; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Tierney, 2003: Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005).

In response to my assertions, this study was developed with the purpose to learn how graduates from the ASU M.Ed. HED program understand NAU concepts and integrate them into professional practice. I pursued this action research study because there appears to be a disconnect in higher education/student affairs graduate programs between the skills taught in the program and what higher education leadership (Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors) deems as necessary to meet the needs of the 21st century college student and the

local and global organizational culture of higher learning (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Collins, 2001; Hurtado et al., 1999; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Newton & Richardson, 1976; Rendon, 1994; Pritchett & Pound, 2007; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Tierney, 2003: Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005). Therefore, as alumnae of the ASU M.Ed. HED program and as a current higher educational professional in the NAU, I focused this study to examine my own community of practice to better learn how master-level professionals from my program understand and integrate the NAU into practice.

I selected to examine how my community of practice understands the NAU, because 1) I am a professional working within it, 2) I graduated from a masters program that was developed in line with the NAU, and 3) the NAU is considered to be the prototype for how to organizationally and culturally redesign a U.S. higher education institution to align with the direction of local and global societies and markets (Bush & Hunt, 2011; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Lederman, 2010; Menand, 2010; Theil, 2008; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010; Vaughn, 2011).

Through the findings of this study, I hold that the 2007 to 2011 graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understands NAU concepts and was able to integrate them into professional practice, demonstrating this graduate has the skill-set necessary for 21st century higher education. I support my position based on the following findings: 96% of participants indicated 'thoroughly' or 'somewhat well' to understand the NAU enterprise model and 74% of participants said they took an entrepreneurial approach to their practice in higher education;

which is considered critical for success in the 21st century field (Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). To further illustrate the effectiveness of the ASU M.Ed. HED program and alignment with the direction of 21st century higher education, the findings describe the recent graduate (2009 to 2011) with a higher understanding of the entrepreneurship, which has recently evolved as a key component necessary for success in higher education. This example shows how the program continued to grow and align with the changing direction of the NAU and 21st century higher education.

Therefore, through critical reflection, the findings, and a review of the scholarship on 21st century higher education and higher education/student affairs master degree programs, I am able to provide three takeaways from this study. First, the graduate of this program between 2007 and 2011 has a foundational understanding of the NAU concepts, and was able to show an ability to integrate them into practice. Second, the graduate of this program does approach their practice with an interdisciplinary approach, as 96% of the participants understood and frequently integrated 81% better than the other three examined in this study. Finally, the graduates of this program all selected innovation as a NAU concept, and the number one concept/skill needed for success in 21st century higher education.

Resulted Actions and Future Research

Through the results of this action research study I recommend three actions: 1) for the ASU M.Ed. HED program, 2) for the professional practitioner,

and 3) for future research. Finally, I close this dissertation with three proficiencies this study provided me as an academic-leader in 21st century higher education.

M.Ed. HED Program and Practitioner. Renn & Jessup-Anger (2008) assert the new 21st century master-level professional in higher education lacks a macro-level understanding of U.S. colleges and universities. Through the results of my study, I can infer a sample of graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program were able to demonstrate an understanding (96%) of the NAU enterprise model and its concepts. However, due to a small sample size, I cannot make the same generalizable claim as Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008). Rather I call for additional focus on educating the ASU M.Ed. HED student about understanding macro-level redesign models in U.S. higher education. I call for this action within the ASU M.Ed. HED program for two purposes: 1) the findings of this study were verified by the scholarship that the NAU concepts embedded in this program are imperative to understand for success in 21st century higher education, and 2) a thorough understanding of 21st century high education organizational and cultural redesign models will permit the new 21st century master-level professional a greater ability to sustain long-term success in the field (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Kretovics, 2002; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Tierney, 2003).

One of the significant drivers in why the New American University enterprise model is considered to be a prototype for how to redesign a 21st century public institution is that it culturally infuses itself throughout the entire university (Bush & Hunt, 2011; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006;

Friedman, 2005; Lederman, 2010; Menand, 2010; Theil, 2008; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010; Vaughn, 2011). This study demonstrated that the graduate of the M.Ed. HED program, which is aligned with the NAU enterprise model, has an understanding of the NAU and four of its concepts. The practitioner takeaway from this finding is when developing a vision, whether it be for a university, a college/school, or a department within higher education, by providing smaller metrics (i.e. concepts) of the vision, the individual will be more likely to understand it and actualize the concepts because they can adapt components of the vision to their specific role (Aaker & Smith, 2010; Collins, 2001; Kirp, 2004).

Future Research. I learned through this study, action research is a good method of evaluation for 21st century higher education. I contend action research permitted snapshots on what was occurring within the phenomenon and allowed the researcher to shape the study so it produced outcomes which directly inform the learning/research environment and community of practice (Creswell, 2008; Coghlan, 2006; Dick, 2002; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). This study taught me how to grasp what was occurring within the phenomena of study, how to manage and analyze emergent data, and finally how to frame findings in useful ways to inform action.

Based on my action research skill development and interest in leadership, I offer three recommendations for future research. First, I would build more time into this study to conduct in-depth interviews with survey participants. The survey briefly provided the voice of the participant through open-ended responses to describe what they specifically did to integrate the NAU concept into practice. If

this study included interviews, it would have provided the opportunity to learn why the participant integrated the concept, and how their practice affected their workplace.

Second, I would increase the number of questions within the survey to find out why the participant selected to work for a specific area of the institution. Demographic data indicated my participant sample to be nearly split (48% student affairs/services and 44% academic college) in the area of their institutional appointment, which surprised me because research claims that most graduates of similar programs identify to be in student affairs/services (Burkard et al., 2005; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Turrentine & Conley, 2001). I am curious what other factors led the graduate of this program to pursue their current institutional appointment.

In addition to the changes I would make to my study, additional research and evaluation needs to be conducted on higher education/student affairs masters programs to find out how they align in preparing leaders and practitioners for 21st century higher education (Burkard et al., 2005; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). This study examined the graduate of the ASU M.Ed. HED program and how they understand and integrate NAU concepts into professional practice. It directly examined if one specific higher education/student affairs master program provided its graduates with the knowledge and skills that aligns with the direction of the field (Kretovics, 2002). Therefore, additional studies on master programs and evaluation of the graduates of these programs are imperative as higher education is rapidly changing. Further, I contend the metrics of these

evaluations should align with present-day leaders in 21st century higher education such as Presidents Crow and Gee (Armstrong, 2001; Burkard et al., 2005; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008; Tierney, 2003).

Implications for the 21st Century Leader

As I bring this research journey to an end, I close having learned how to conduct an action research study and with a better understanding of my community of practice through learning how graduates of the ASU M.Ed. HED program understand NAU concepts and integrate them into practice. To this end, I present the three takeaways this study provided me as an academic-leader in 21st century higher education.

Take-away one: My belief has been confirmed that an individual cannot lead people very far if they do not educate the people they are leading (Welch & Byrne, 2001). This study demonstrated that the new 21st century master-level professional who graduated from the ASU M.Ed. HED program was able to understand the NAU enterprise model and concepts and integrate them into their professional practice. Collins (2001) describes that organizational visions are understood similar to a pyramid, where the individuals look to a short sentence that is supposed to be a roadmap for individuals to follow and embrace within the organization. I hold having now conducted this study, if the leader flips the pyramid upside down (see Appendix E), and in essence creates a broader vision, but incorporates smaller components or concepts into it, the focus will shift onto the individual who can adapt the relevant components into their specific role to help move the organization forward (Aaker & Smith, 2010; Collins, 2001; Kirp,

2004). The participants in this study demonstrated this through their understanding and ability to integrate the NAU concepts into practice by learning through a graduate program, which is essence, is a smaller component of the organization (e.g. NAU).

Take-away two: The 21st century leader must have a strategy on when to turn the flywheel (Collins, 2001). Collins (2001) describes the concept of the flywheel as a series of small actions and moments that lead up to a culminating breakthrough. Through the findings of this study I learned that graduates identified a higher proficiency with certain concepts based on their class year. For example, 7 of the 8 participants in the class of 2010 identified to be somewhat of an entrepreneur within their professional practice, with entrepreneurship being a recently identified component for success in 21st century (Thorp & Goldstein, 2010). The finding infers the NAU is organizationally nimble and adaptive, a key component to sustained success in higher education (Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Kirp, 2004; Menand, 2010; Tierney, 2003). Therefore, as a leader, building a flywheel that can infuse a new idea into it, and rapidly spin to ensure it reaches all pockets of the organization sets you up for success.

Take-away three: Hold the line! In other words, never lose sight of what *you* want to achieve, as pronounced during the second battle at Gettysburg by Colonel Chamberlin when his officers began to lose sight of victory during the Battle of Little Roundtop (Shaara, 1987, p. 221). U.S. higher education has always led the nation and world in discovery, design, and development of products, goods, and services (Cole, 2009). It rose to global preeminence because

of these characteristics, and if the 21st century higher education institution *holds the line*, it will sustain its world-class preeminence (Cole, 2009; Crow, 2011; Tierney, 2003).

The NAU enterprise model is the prototype for how to organizationally and culturally redesign a four-year, public institution of higher education to sustain its core identity of being solution-focused driver of American society (Bush & Hunt, 2011; Cole, 2009; Hacker & Dreifus, 2010; Florida, 2006; Friedman, 2005; Lederman, 2010; Menand, 2010; Theil, 2008; Thorp & Goldstein, 2010; Vaughn, 2011). To that end, when I unpacked the NAU enterprise model to design this action research study even amidst all the concepts, clamor, and commentary around it, I never wavered in my passion and excitement about the project and the intellectual horsepower I would achieve. This study showed the New American University enterprise model has transformed Arizona State University from a good institution to a great one (Collins, 2001), and has been a model for preparation of the 21st century mater-level professional. Finally, and most importantly, as I launch my career as a 21st century leader, "my own leadership concepts" will include institutional vision transformation; however, it will be through purposeful actions where I will make the concepts an embedded organizational practice.

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APPENDIX A

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY DESIGN ASPIRATIONS

1. Leverage Our Place

ASU embraces its cultural, socioeconomic and physical setting.

2. Transform Society

ASU catalyzes social change by being connected to social needs.

3. Value Entrepreneurship

ASU uses its knowledge and encourages innovation.

4. Conduct Use-Inspired Research

ASU research has purpose and impact

5. Enable Student Success

ASU is committed to the success of each unique student.

6. Fuse Intellectual Disciplines

ASU creates knowledge by transcending academic disciplines.

7. Be Socially Embedded

ASU connects with communities through mutually beneficial partnerships.

8. Engage Globally

ASU engages with people and issues locally, nationally and internationally.

Note: ASU Design Aspirations were taken from http://newamericanuniversity.asu.edu/design-aspirations/

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

June 20, 2011

Dear Participant:

I am a doctoral candidate under the direction of Dr. Kris Ewing in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University.

I am conducting a research study to understand how former students in Higher and Postsecondary Education Master's program integrate their graduate education and experience into professional practice. I am inviting your participation, which will involve completing an electronic survey that should take on average 20 minutes to complete.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your name and any identifying information and responses will be kept confidential. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw from the study at anytime; there will be no penalty.

By participating in this study, your responses can assist faculty and leaders in Higher and Postsecondary Education and Student Affairs graduate programs prepare new practitioners for the rapidly changing field of higher education and the 21st century college student.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact Mark Antonucci at Mark.Antonucci@asu.edu or Dr. Kris Ewing at Kris.Ewing@asu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Submission of your responses to the questionnaire will be considered your consent to participate.

Sincerely,

Mark Antonucci
Ed.D. Candidate
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College

APPENDIX C

ONLINE SURVEY

Antonucci – Final Assessment - QuestionPro

Page -2-

Are you a graduate from the Arizona State University M.Ed. Higher & Postsecondary Education program?

1. Yes
2. No (exits survey)

Page -3-

Are you currently employed at a higher education institution?

1. Yes
2. Other Field, please explain (exits survey)

Page -4-

In what year did you graduate from the ASU M.Ed. Higher & Postsecondary Education program?

1. 2006 (exits survey)
2. 2007
3. 2008
4. 2009
5. 2010
6. 2011
7. Other, please explain

Which term did you complete the ASU M.Ed. Higher & Postsecondary Education program?

1. Spring
2. Summer
3. Fall

Page -5-

Did the ASU M.Ed. Higher & Postsecondary Education program provide you an understanding of the New American University model that is being actualized at Arizona State University?

1. Yes
2. No

How well do you believe you understand what is the New American University model?

1. Thoroughly understand
2. Somewhat understand
3. Understand
4. Somewhat do not understand
5. Thoroughly do not understand

Please select which concepts you understand to be a part of the New American University model? (Select all that apply)

1. Innovation
2. Entrepreneurship
3. Collaboration
4. Holistic
5. Community engagement
6. Partnerships

7. Transdisciplinary research
8. Interdisciplinary
9. Social inquiry
10. Revolutionary change
11. Inclusion
12. Sustainable outcomes
13. Globalized
14. Transformation
15. Borderless
17. Idea fusion

Please select which concepts you believe are the **three** most important for a higher education institution to embrace as a core value to sustain a competitive advantage in the 21st century?

1. Innovation
2. Entrepreneurship
3. Collaboration
4. Holistic
5. Community engagement
6. Partnerships
7. Transdisciplinary research
8. Interdisciplinary
9. Social inquiry
10. Revolutionary change
11. Inclusion
12. Sustainable outcomes
13. Globalized
14. Transformation
15. Borderless
17. Idea fusion

Why did you select these three concepts?

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How well do you believe you understand the concept of *entrepreneurship* as it relates to higher education?

1. Very well
2. Well
3. Somewhat well
4. Not that well
5. Not well at all

Entrepreneurship within the New American University model is often described as looking for opportunities to make multiple connections to encourage relevant structural change within an institution of higher education. An individual who is considered to be an entrepreneur or acts entrepreneurial within their professional capacity is described as one who is willing to take a risk to put forward a new idea or platform that is intended to revolutionize systems or structures to positively benefit multiple stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, etc.) within an institution of higher education. An example of an entrepreneurial venture within higher education is hybrid courses.

Based on what you have learned during the M.Ed. program and the above definition of how the New American University model frames the concept of entrepreneurship, how much of an entrepreneur do you perceive yourself to be within your work in higher education?

1. Very much an entrepreneur
2. Somewhat of an entrepreneur
3. Not an entrepreneur
4. Never thought of myself as an entrepreneur, but do act entrepreneurially

How often do you try to integrate an entrepreneurial approach to your work within higher education?

1. Always
2. Often
3. Every now and then
4. Never

What are some intentional entrepreneurial actions that you have taken in your current workplace? If you have not taken any actions, why have you selected not to?

What results have you been able to show within your current workplace from taking an entrepreneurial approach?

Page -7-

How well do you believe you understand the concept of *innovation* as it relates to higher education?

1. Very well
2. Somewhat well
3. Well
4. Not that well
5. Not well at all

Innovation within the New American University model is often described as the act of integrating a different approach to an existing practice or process within an institution of higher education. An individual who is considered to be an innovator or acts innovative within their professional capacity is described as one who masters practices or processes, and then discovers ways to enhance them to increase the outcome in a more efficient manner. An example of an innovation within higher education is the use of electronic surveys to evaluate an instructor's ability versus the use of paper and pencil.

Based on what you have learned during the M.Ed. program and the above definition of how the New American University model frames the concept of innovation, how much do you perceive yourself to be an innovator within your work in higher education?

1. Very much an innovator
2. Somewhat an innovator
3. Not an innovator
4. Never thought of myself as an innovator, but do act innovatively

How often do you try to integrate an innovative approach to your work within higher education?

1. Always
2. Often
3. Every now and then
4. Never

What are some actions you have taken in your current workplace to be innovative? If you have not taken any actions, why have you selected not to?

What results have you been able to show within your workplace from taking an innovative approach?

Page -8-

How well do you believe you understand the concept of *interdisciplinary* as it relates to higher education?

1. Very well
2. Well
3. Somewhat well
4. Not that well
5. Not well at all

Interdisciplinary within the New American University model is often described as working beyond silos, departments, and traditional structures. Those considered to be interdisciplinary or who take an interdisciplinary approach within their professional capacity are described as individuals who see value in collaboration between departments and disciplines, and develop practice and structures to realize genuine collaborations. An example of taking an interdisciplinary approach/collaboration within higher education is residential colleges, where all perspectives are taken into consideration to formulate a holistic and positive experience for the student.

Based on what you have learned during the M.Ed. program and the above definition of how the New American University model frames the concept of taking an interdisciplinary approach, how much do you perceive yourself to be an individual who takes an interdisciplinary approach within your work in higher education?

1. A very interdisciplinary approach
2. A somewhat interdisciplinary approach
3. Not an interdisciplinary approach
4. Never thought of myself as interdisciplinary, but do use an interdisciplinary approach

How often do you try to integrate an interdisciplinary approach to your work within higher education?

1. Always
2. Often
3. Every now and then
4. Never

What are some actions you have taken in your current workplace to be interdisciplinary? If you have not taken any actions, why have you selected not to?

What results have you been able to show within your current workplace from taking an interdisciplinary approach?

Page -9-

How well do you believe you understand the concept of *inclusion* as it relates to higher education?

1. Very well
2. Well
3. Somewhat well
4. Not that well
5. Not well at all

Inclusion within the New American University model promotes access to first generation, ethnic, gender, age and other diverse identity groups by cultivating a campus learning and working culture which provides a range of learning and professional opportunities. An inclusive university advances intellectual and professional proficiencies by removing obstacles, which hinder the structural (e.g. policies, buildings) cultural (e.g. practices) learning and work environment. An example of inclusion in higher education is the formation of the ASU Office of Transfer Partnership, which provides high performing community college students' admission and a clear academic pathway towards degree attainment at a four-year institution.

Based on what you have learned during the M.Ed. program and the above definition of how the New American University model frames the concept of inclusion, how inclusive do you perceive yourself to be within your work in higher education?

1. Very inclusive
2. Somewhat inclusive
3. Not inclusive
4. Never thought of myself as being inclusive, but do act inclusively

How often do you try to integrate an inclusive approach to your work within higher education?

1. Always
2. Often
3. Every now and then
4. Never

What are some actions you have taken in your current workplace to be inclusive? If you have not taken any actions, why have you selected not to?

What results have you been able to show within your current workplace from taking an inclusive approach?

Page -10-

Do you believe your M.Ed. program and experience provided you an applied understanding of how to translate any of the four concepts (entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, & inclusion) into your professional practice?

1. Yes (skips to page 11)
2. No (skips to page 12)

Page -11-

Please select one concept (entrepreneurship, innovation, interdisciplinary, inclusion) and describe how you have employed it into your professional practice?

Please describe any resistance you faced in applying that concept into your professional practice?

How has your professional practice been influenced as a graduate of the New American University?

1. Greatly influenced
2. Somewhat influenced
3. Minimally influenced
4. Did not influence at all

Page -12-

Which type of institution do you currently work for?

1. 4 year public
2. 4 year private
3. 2 year public
4. 2 year private
5. Online/For Profit
6. Other

How long have you been employed at your current institution?

1. 3+ years
2. 2-3 years
3. 1 year
4. 6 months – 1 year
5. Less than 6 months

Which area of the institution do you work for?

1. Academic college
2. Alumni/Endowment
3. Intercollegiate Athletics
4. University Business Office
5. Human Resources
6. Student Affairs/Services

What is your title at your current institution?

What is the title of your direct supervisor at your current institution?

How much higher education work experience did you have prior to enrolling into the ASU M.Ed. Higher & Postsecondary Education program (ex. 3 years, none, etc.)?

In which year and term did you begin the ASU M.Ed. Higher & Postsecondary Education program (ex. Fall - 2007)?

Where did you complete your practicum experience during your time in the ASU M.Ed. Higher & Postsecondary Education program?

Please select which gender you identify the most with

1. Male
2. Female
3. Prefer not to answer

Please select which race you most identify with

1. White
2. Black
3. Hispanic
4. Prefer not to answer
5. American Indian or Alaskan Native
6. Asian Indian
7. Chinese
8. Filipino
9. Japanese
10. Other Asian
11. Native Hawaiian
12. Guamanian or Chamorro
13. Samoan
14. Other Pacific Islander
15. Other

Please select the area that best describes your undergraduate degree area of study

1. Business
2. Liberal Arts
3. Education
4. Health Science
5. Engineering
6. Design and the Arts
7. Journalism
8. Nursing and Health
9. Public Programs
10. Prefer not to answer
11. Other

Which type of undergraduate degree did you earn (ex. B.S., B.A., etc.)

If you are willing to be contacted for an interview, please enter your name and e-mail address

End

APPENDIX D

ASU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To:	Kris Ewing ED
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair Soc Beh IRB
Date:	02/07/2011
Committee Action:	**Exemption Granted**
IRB Action Date:	02/07/2011
IRB Protocol #:	1102005971
Study Title:	An evaluation of how current and former graduate students in Higher Education/ Student Affairs Master's programs actualize their graduate experience into practice in the field of higher education.

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(2) .

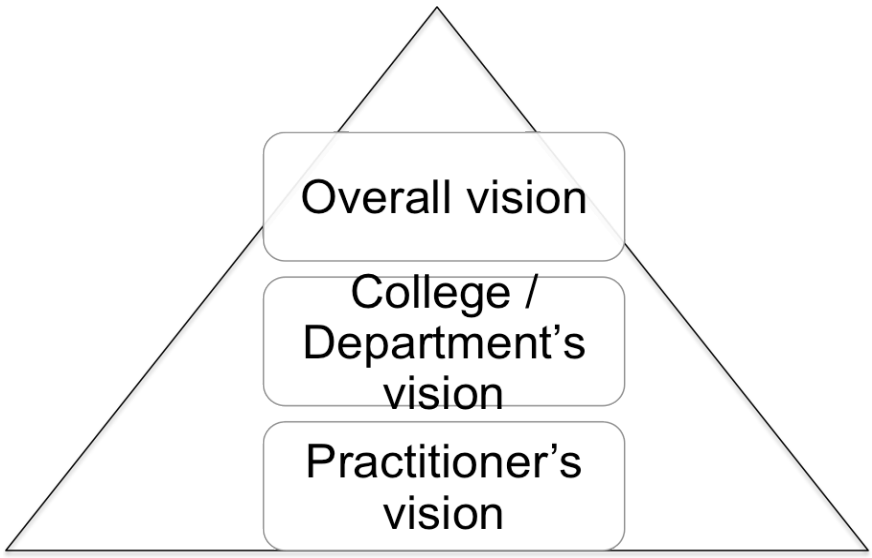
This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

APPENDIX E

ORGANIZATIONAL VISION

Traditional organization vision infusion (Collins, 2001; Welch & Byrne, 2001)



The New American University organizational vision infusion (Crow, 2002)