



NATIONAL AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY

ROUECHE GRADUATE CENTER

Preparing Leaders for the 21st Century

The Community College Leadership Program

Roueche Graduate Center, National American University

“Change cannot be achieved without committed and courageous leaders. While many things need to happen to accomplish institutional transformation, none of them will happen without leadership.”

This statement from *Reclaiming the American Dream: A Report from the 21st-Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges*, echoes the views of leading policy makers, legislators, foundations, and community college educators—leadership matters. In the last ten years the community college has been in a state of major transformation as it incorporates a focus on “success” to match its historical focus on “access.” And there is universal agreement that such transformation will not occur without “committed and courageous leaders.”

Those leaders have been prepared in the past in university-based doctoral programs beginning in the 1960s with the Kellogg-funded programs in 11 major universities. Most of those programs no longer exist or prepare only three or four students a year. New doctoral programs for community college leaders have emerged in the past few decades, but most of these reflect the limitations of many of the older programs: staffed by only one or two professors with community college experience, few courses focused on the special characteristics and needs of community colleges, students required to come to the university campus, and focus on research-based degrees rather than practitioner-based degrees.

In 2012, National American University, under the leadership of John E. Roueche, launched a new model and a new opportunity to bring practitioner-based doctoral programs to individual community college campuses. As of the summer of 2015, there are four cohorts of this innovative program on community college campuses: Johnson County Community College (KS), Cuyahoga Community College (OH), Lone Star Community College District (TX), and Bergen Community College (NJ). Several other cohorts are in planning stages, and this paper has been prepared for those colleges considering launching new programs.

A New Model to Prepare Community College Leaders

The Community College Leadership Program (CCLP) at National American University (NAU) was approved by the Higher Learning Commission in the shortest approval process seasoned accreditors and NAU leaders have ever seen. The core elements of the program are modeled on the nationally-recognized CCLP at The University of Texas created by John E. Roueche who heads this new NAU program. The Texas program graduated more community college presidents and vice presidents than almost all other university-based programs combined and has been recognized for its commitment to women and minority leaders. Those values and program elements will provide the basis for this NAU program and include the following:

1. The curriculum, created by national experts with vast experience in the community college, focuses exclusively on community college history, philosophy, issues, organization, programs, and policy. This is the first doctoral program ever created in which all courses are designed specifically for the community college.
2. Community college leaders, with extensive experience in and knowledge of the community college, serve as faculty including George Boggs, President Emeritus, AACC; Christine McPhail, Former Chair of the Morgan State University CCLP; and, Terry Calaway, President Emeritus, Johnson County Community College. Most existing community college doctoral programs are staffed with only one or two professors with experience in and knowledge of the community college; this program includes over 50 nationally-known faculty members all with extensive experience in the community college.
3. The program will be offered in a cohort model of approximately 25 students to encourage collaborative learning and networking. In addition to professors who will meet on the local community college campus for the blended classes, a local Cohort Coordinator (a resident professional with a doctoral degree) will provide logistical support and assistance with class assignments and dissertations.
4. To encourage active and practical learning, the local community college hosting the cohort will serve as a learning laboratory with real-life issues serving as some of the content. In this way, the cohorts will also serve as campus catalysts to explore and implement change and action.
5. The dissertation in this program is a major applied research project that is the culmination of a rigorous program of study leading to the Ed. D. in Community College Leadership. It is “applied” meaning that it has practical use and value; it is “research” meaning that it is conducted in an established framework of scientific analysis. The Ed. D. is designed for those whose goal is to be a faculty leader or community college administrator. The focus of the Ed. D. dissertation is on problems and issues of practice.
6. The professors will come to the students for much of the face-to-face learning thus making this program highly accessible to working adults. The CCLP “blended” program includes face-to-face course sessions augmented with online and Adobe Connect instruction.

7. The program will place a high priority on recruiting women and minorities to ensure that future leaders reflect the demographics of community colleges.
8. The program is designed to expand to meet needs so cohorts can be created in any region where there are enough students to enroll. The blended program draws upon the extensive Roueche Graduate Center network of seasoned community college leaders and scholars, and other national practitioners who serve as distinguished lecturers in the program.

Benefits of the Program

1. Participants learn special leadership skills that can be applied immediately in the college.
2. A cohort of aspiring college leaders works collaboratively within the college and models for other staff the value of collaboration.
3. The cohort can become a force for change and transformation by taking on special projects identified by college leaders.
4. The program allows for trustees and the president to map out steps in succession planning.
5. Participants expand and improve the goals of the college by creating programs, projects, internships, surveys, practicums, papers, dissertations, etc. as part of class assignments.
6. College leaders can identify special issues and problems in the college they would like to see addressed by participants.
7. The program allows college leaders an opportunity to identify and ensure that the participants will meet the diversity goals of the college.
8. There are opportunities between participants and other faculty and staff in the college to interact with each other on projects and activities; cohort professors can also be involved in these efforts.
9. The program serves as a visible reminder that college leaders care about the people of the college.
10. The program reflects and contributes to a college-wide culture of collaboration, learning, service, and planning for the future.

Alex Johnson, President of Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio, is a strong supporter:

As part of our succession planning, Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) has made a significant commitment to developing a cadre of faculty and staff who are educated, experienced, and prepared for leadership positions that become available at the college. For example, we are already reaping the rewards of our partnership with the CCLP through the increased knowledge and skill levels of our participating employees, and their close examination of Tri-C student success data and issues in their

coursework. With the college's focus on closing achievement gaps, persistence, and completion, this program is bringing significant benefits and dividends to the institution.

Kaye Walter, President of Bergen Community College in Paramus, New Jersey, also cites the advantages of bringing such a program to the campus:

We are delighted to bring the Roueche Graduate Center's Ed. D. in Community College Leadership (CCLP) to Bergen Community College in 2015 as a strategic initiative for leadership development and succession planning for our college. The contemporary community college curriculum incorporates Bergen's college data and issues across the doctoral curriculum. This will provide significant opportunities to take what is learned in the program and incorporate current insights and projects that are relevant to evolving needs at the college.

National American University

For more than 70 years, National American University has been a recognized leader in academic excellence. Students from all over the globe are enrolled in NAU's doctoral, masters, bachelors, associate degree, and diploma programs. At the graduate level, NAU offers a Doctor of Education in Community College Leadership, Masters in Business Administration, Masters in Management, Masters of Science in Management, and Masters of Science in Nursing. NAU also offers a five-course doctoral certificate in Community College Leadership. With dedicated staff and faculty guiding these students to their ultimate goals, the university has experienced a dramatic and perhaps unprecedented evolution as an academic institution.

National American University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604, www.ncahlc.org, 800-621-7440.

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